IACUC GUIDELINE: Reporting Animal Welfare Concerns

SOP # 110  IACUC Approval: July 13 2016

Purpose:
Texas A&M University Commerce promotes the highest standards of animal care and use and is committed to the humane and responsible treatment of all animals being used for research, production or education.

Scope:
This policy applies to all animal care and use subject to oversight by Texas A&M University Commerce IACUC. This includes non-university owned animals on university property.

Responsibilities:
All personnel have the ethical and legal responsibility to report animal welfare concerns to the IACUC.

Procedure:
Any observed or suspected animal abuse, mistreatment, or non-compliance with federal, state, or local regulations or non-compliance with an approved protocol, must be reported to the proper personnel. Inappropirate care and use of live vertebrate animals may include inhumane treatment, neglect, or unapproved procedures. If there is an immediate threat to animal welfare, please contact the Attending Veterinarian or the IACUC Chair for immediate action. If unavailable, contact the IACUC office directly, in writing (iacuc@tamuc.edu), by phone (903-886-5766), online at http://www.tamuc.edu/research/forms/animalCareForm.aspx, or anonymously via the Texas A&M University-Commerce Ethics Points Hotline.

Anyone concerned with an animal’s welfare or is aware of non-compliance with policies, rules, regulations, and laws regarding animal care and use for research, teaching, or production may contact a member of the IACUC, the Attending Veterinarian, Institutional Official, or Office of Research Compliance. Complaints may remain anonymous. Reports should include (if known) names of personnel involved, principal investigator, who else witnessed the incident, protocol number, location of incident, date and time the incident occurred, and description of what was observed with as much detail as possible.

Members of the IACUC or the Attending Veterinarian will forward the information to the Office of Research Compliance, and the Policy “Investigations of alleged noncompliance and animal concerns” will be followed.

Give the report to your immediate supervisor or confidentially report to any of the contacts listed below:

Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Official
IACUC Chair
Attending Veterinarian
The IACUC expects all staff to use good judgment when making decisions regarding compliance issues for animal care and use. In all cases, anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained to the limits allowed by law. The Animal Welfare Act provides that “No facility employee, Committee member, or laboratory personnel shall be discriminated against or be subject to any reprisal for reporting violations of any regulations or standards under the Act.” (9 CFR § 2.32(c)(4)). Furthermore, it is each institution’s policy to prohibit any discriminatory or retaliatory action against employees who report such violations.

The IACUC is required by regulations to investigate reports of suspected animal abuse, mistreatment or non-compliance.

**History:**
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