**Purpose:**

This guideline is implemented to ensure the highest quality of animal health and human safety and to ensure personnel handling livestock perform their duties in a manner that complies with all current laws, regulations, and guidelines via good equine practices, IACUC oversight, and Attending Veterinarian advice and participation.

**Scope:**

This guideline applies to all Texas A&M University-Commerce (A&M-Commerce) students, faculty and staff, visiting students, faculty and staff, visiting horses, working horses, boarders and their horses, vendors, and observers.

**Materials:**

A. Communication
   1. Current on-call list
   2. Emergency contact information
B. Veterinary Medical Records
   1. Daily animal observation record sheets
   2. Animal illness/injury report
   3. Treatment card and/or treatment sheets
   4. Coggins certificates
   5. Proof of rabies vaccination
   6. Certificate of Veterinary Inspection

**Responsibilities:**

A. The University Attending Veterinarian (AV) oversees all aspects of animal health and is assisted by program faculty and staff. In any case of animal welfare negligence, the AV and his designees have the authority to intervene immediately.
B. The Director of the School of Agriculture, the Equine Program Coordinator, and the Equine Supervisor ensure implementation of all procedures including husbandry, documentation, student oversight, and IACUC and AV regulator compliance.
C. The Director of the School of Agriculture, the Equine Program Coordinator, the Equine Supervisor, and the A&M-Commerce Animal Care Supervisor ensure provision of supplemental husbandry and programmatic oversight, and assist the AV in enforcing and implementing the veterinary care program.
D. The Research Compliance Coordinator and his/her designee(s) ensure compliance with this ACUP and all other applicable A&M-Commerce IACUC and AV regulations, SOPs, guidance, and directives.

E. Students, faculty, staff and boarders are responsible for the daily care of their personally-owned animals.

**Procedures:**

All A&M-Commerce students, staff, faculty caring for and using horses are required to attend IACUC training and to participate in the Occupational Health and Safety Program. Students are required to leave contact information in case of emergency.

**A. TRAINING**

1. All students, faculty, and staff are required to complete the annual Animal Care and Use Program training provided by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) and Online training (CITI Program, [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org)):
   a. Working with IACUC, Basic Course
   b. Protocol specific training – complete all courses related to Working with Horses in an Agricultural Research Setting

2. All students and staff will be trained by the Equine Supervisor in:
   a. Equine Husbandry
   b. Handling and Restraint
   c. Methods for minimizing pain, distress, and infection
   d. Acceptable and unacceptable equine husbandry practices at A&M-Commerce, e.g., no horses may be left tied and unattended, all horses have clean water available at all times, etc.

3. All boarders will be trained by the Equine Supervisor in:
   a. Proper use of equipment/facilities
   b. Details of husbandry materials, facilities, and assets at the Equine Center
   c. Proper routes of communication

**B. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND RISK ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

1. All A&M-Commerce students, faculty, staff and boarders will participate in the Occupational Health and Risk Assessment Program.
   a. Students, faculty, staff and boarders will have a tetanus vaccine every ten years.
   b. Personnel will be notified of the potential for horse and general animal allergies
   c. Personnel will be notified of the risk of injury or illness associated with handling and working with horses
   d. First Aid kits will be available in designated areas on site
C. PARTICIPATION AND VETERINARY RELEASE FORMS AND LIABILITY WAIVERS

1. Each border, student, faculty member, or staff member will complete the appropriate Veterinary Authorization Form and the Texas A&M University-Commerce Liability Waiver from the list here:

   1) The Texas A&M University-Commerce Equine Center and Rodeo Team Veterinary Authorization
   2) The Texas A&M University-Commerce Equine Center and Rodeo Team Visitor’s Veterinary Authorization
   3) The Texas A&M University-Commerce Waiver, Indemnification, And Medical Treatment Authorization Form

D. FACILITIES AND ENVIRONMENT

1. Housing
   a. Stalls are equipped with either sand or wood bedding (shavings, pellets). Stall size is in accordance with the Ag Guide. Stalls will have adequate ventilation and safe footing. Horses housed in stalls will be turned out or exercised frequently (permitting health and weather) and stalls will be cleaned daily. Noise: Loud or sudden noises will be kept to a minimum, however, white noise like a radio may be kept in barns to mask or accustom the horses to startling sounds.
   b. Dry lot pens
      Pens will be free of harmful objects, have shade and fresh water at all times, and will be cleaned of manure and debris daily. Pastures will be free of harmful objects, have shade and fresh water at all times and will be dragged regularly.

      For details see Appendix 1.

2. Pest Control

   Pest Control will be provided in conjunction with the rest of the Equine facilities as scheduled and managed by the Equine Supervisor.

E. FEEDING & WATERING

1. Feed troughs or pails will be kept clean and free of sharp edges. Horses will either have access to safe, free choice hay, or will be fed twice per day.
2. Water containers will be kept clean, full of fresh water and free of sharp edges.
3. Feed containers will be vermin-proof containers with a lid. Lids must be locked at all times to prevent horses from unscheduled feed access to prevent colic or laminitis. Hay may be stored on pallets.

For details see Appendix 1.
F. HERD HEALTH

1. Records
   a. Records will be kept on all horses in a file in the AV’s office. This will include:
      1) Owner information including emergency contact numbers
      2) Identification of each horse along with photos
      3) Registration papers if available
      4) Negative EIA (Coggins) test
      5) Information provided by the owner for medical treatment, first aid, routine treatments
         (vaccinations, deworming, hoof-care) dental records, and other health-related
         information.
   b. Identification and emergency contact will be posted on or next to each horse’s stall or pen.

2. Equine Health Status
   a. Veterinary medical records (or a signed letter from a licensed veterinarian), as interpreted
      by the A&M-Commerce AV, will determine the health status of each horse as listed below. The
      A&M-Commerce AV (or his designee) is authorized to provide the specified preventive
      care, vaccinations, testing, and parasite control treatments by release statements signed by
      each participating student, faculty and staff member and border, including visitors, to bring
      each horse into A&M-Commerce health status requirement compliance.
   b. The horse’s owner will be required to reimburse the A&M-Commerce Equine Program for
      the costs of any veterinary care provided to the owner’s horse on the owner’s behalf or in
      order to maintain compliance with the veterinary health conditions described herein.
   c. Exemptions to specific elements of the A&M-Commerce standard equine veterinary care
      program may be requested from the AV based upon documentary evidence provided in an
      individual animal’s veterinary medical history or other written communication from a
      licensed veterinarian. This includes any vaccinations other than rabies, and/or any other
      anthelmintic treatment, where it has been documented by the referring licensed
      veterinarian that the individual horse has experienced a negative or otherwise adverse
      reaction to a specific vaccination or group of vaccinations or treatments (e.g., allergic
      reaction, anaphylactic shock, purpura hemorrhagica, etc.). This exemption can only be
      granted by the AV at his/her sole discretion, in consultation as needed with appropriate
      expertise retained by the AV.
   d. The Equine Supervisor and Director of the School of Agriculture will ensure that all
      applicable veterinary forms and documentation are provided to the AV at least 14 days prior
      to the first arrival/entry of a given horse to A&M-Commerce facilities.
   e. The Equine Supervisor, Equine Program Coordinator and Director of the School of
      Agriculture will enforce A&M-Commerce animal care and use policy, IACUC Guidelines, this
      ACUP, health status documentation, activity participation restriction notifications from the
      AV and the IACUC, and any pursuant horse isolation or eviction notices from the IACUC or
      AV.
   f. A&M-Commerce Student, Faculty, Staff and other boarders’ Horses
1) The following health status requirements will be maintained by all horses that belong to or are utilized by A&M-Commerce students, faculty, staff members, or boarders, and that are in residence in A&M-Commerce facilities for longer than 12 hours in a given day, or for more than 24 hours in a given month.
   a) Negative Official Coggins Certificate within the last 12 months and every 12 months thereafter
   b) Records from a licensed veterinarian documenting the following vaccinations within the last 12 months:
      ▪ Rabies
      ▪ Tetanus
      ▪ West Nile Virus
      ▪ Eastern, Western Encephalomyelitis
      ▪ Rhinopneumonitis (EHV-1 & EHV-4)
      ▪ Equine Influenza
      ▪ Strangles
      ▪ For initial entry: Fecal Egg Count during the quarantine period and anthelmintic treatment as indicated and prescribed by the A&M-Commerce AV
   c) While in residence in A&M-Commerce facilities, full participation in the A&M-Commerce Equine Parasite Control Program.
   d) Any other quarantine or veterinary processing conditions required by the A&M-Commerce AV in order to bring the horse into compatible health status with the rest of the exposed A&M-Commerce herd.

g. Visiting (non-A&M-Commerce) Students, Faculty, and Staff Member Horses and Other Visiting Horses
   1) The following health status requirements will be maintained by all horses that belong to or are utilized by non-A&M-Commerce students, faculty, staff members, or visitors, and that are in residence in A&M-Commerce facilities for longer than 12 hours in a given day, or for more than 24 hours in a given month.
      a) Negative Official Coggins Certificate within the last 12 months and every 12 months thereafter
      b) Records from a licensed veterinarian documenting the following vaccinations within the last 12 months:
         ▪ Rabies
         ▪ Tetanus
         ▪ West Nile Virus
         ▪ Eastern, Western Encephalomyelitis
         ▪ Rhinopneumonitis (EHV-1 & EHV-4)
         ▪ Equine Influenza
         ▪ Strangles
         ▪ For initial entry: Fecal Egg Count during the quarantine period and anthelmintic treatment as indicated and prescribed by the A&M-Commerce AV
      c) While in residence in A&M-Commerce facilities, full participation in the A&M-Commerce Equine Parasite Control Program
      d) Any other quarantine or veterinary processing conditions required by the A&M-Commerce AV in order to bring the horse into compatible health status with the rest of the exposed A&M-Commerce herd
1) The following health status requirements will be maintained by all horses that belong to or are utilized by non-A&M-Commerce students, faculty, or staff members, and that are in residence in A&M-Commerce facilities for less than 12 hours in a given day and less than 24 hours in a given month.
   a) Negative Official Coggins Certificate within the last 12 months and every 12 months thereafter
   b) For animals coming to Texas from other states: a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection Signed within the last 30 days

3. General Health
   a. Animals will be observed during the day periodically but at a minimum two times per day. Observations will be recorded on the Daily Health Check sheets as utilized in other A&M-Commerce Animal Facilities by the Equine Supervisor at the Equine Center, and the Rodeo Coach at the Rodeo Barn.
   b. All horses will maintain a current negative Coggins test.
   c. All horses that are in A&M-Commerce facilities for longer than 12 hours in a given day or longer than 24 hours in a given month will participate in the A&M-Commerce Equine Parasite Control program as administered by the AV, veterinary assistant(s) and the Equine Supervisor.
   d. Hoof care will be monitored by staff, owner, and professional farrier.

G. IACUC and AV OVERSIGHT AND CONTROL

1. The A&M-Commerce IACUC has oversight of all animals on campus, including privately-owned horses. All horse owners and horse users and all participants agree to abide by and assist in the appropriate care and use of animals in A&M-Commerce Programs and Facilities as espoused and regulated by the IACUC and AV.
2. The A&M-Commerce AV is hereby authorized to provide emergency or interim veterinary care to all horses as needed, until definitive care can be sought from the horse's normal veterinarian or another licensed veterinarian retained by the owner.
3. No third party veterinarians will be allowed to practice in A&M-Commerce facilities or programs until they have been approved by the A&M-Commerce AV.
4. The A&M-Commerce AV is authorized to utilize his designees to assist in the provision of veterinary care, including but not limited to his professional staff and the following individuals: the A&M-Commerce Animal Care Supervisor(s), the A&M-Commerce Equine Supervisor, the A&M-Commerce Farm Manager, Dr. Kevin Gray, Dr. Petra Collyer, Dr. Jon Manning, Hopkins Cty Veterinary Clinic, Dr Denise Fowler, Dr John Allen, or another Texas-licensed veterinarian competent to provide care for the specific veterinary situation as determined by the A&M Commerce AV.
5. If an animal is sick or injured, it will be evaluated by a member of the AV’s staff and the owner will be notified immediately. If the owner is unable to be reached immediately, the AV or his designee will treat the injury and record the treatment. If it is a major injury or illness, immediate assistance will be provided to the animal and the owner will be notified. If the owner cannot be reached, veterinary care will be provided per the AV’s professional discretion. Once veterinary care has been provided, the owner will provide a copy of the medical treatment for the horse’s records.
6. Equine first aid supplies will be kept in a locked designated area and supplies will be restocked regularly. Light, mobile, equine first aid kits will be kept in the supply room for easy and quick access. Temperature sensitive medications will be kept in a refrigerator designated for animal medications located in the supply room. All outdated or expired materials will be disposed of properly. Sharps containers will be located in the supply room and will be disposed of properly when full.

7. Monitoring System
   a. The veterinary assistant(s), the Equine Supervisor, or a designee of the AV will observe the horses daily. They will note any physical injuries and notify owners.
   b. Negligence (lack of feed or water, refusal to address injuries or sickness or unacceptable living conditions) will be recorded and the owner will be notified.
   c. The owner MUST respond IN WRITING as to how the problem is and will be addressed.
   d. If a pattern occurs, (three notices), the horse may be evicted. All records, notices, and correspondence will be kept in a file in the AV’s office. If the negligence is an animal welfare issue, the IACUC committee and the AV have the authority to intervene immediately.

H. Personnel Safety

1. For human medical emergencies: Call 911
2. For questions regarding handling of chemicals, contact the A&M-Commerce Environmental Health & Safety Office or refer to the Chemical Hygiene Plan on the website.
3. When working with animals, wear appropriate PPE, observe proper hygiene, and be aware of allergy, zoonosis, and injury risks. Refer to the A&M-Commerce Occupational Health and Safety webpage for more information.

I. Animal Related Contingencies

1. Contact information for emergency assistance will be posted in a conspicuous location within the equine and animal facilities
2. Veterinary Care
   Emergency veterinary care and advice is available at all times including after working hours and on weekends and holidays:
   **Always contact Dr Taylor (AV) first at 214.532.3420**
   In the event that Dr. Taylor cannot be contacted, the following veterinarians are approved to provide animal care in A&M-Commerce facilities:
   - Dr. Kevin Gray 903.994.2909
   - Dr. Jon Manning 903.886.3911 (business hours) and 903.886.1004 (after hours)
   - Dr. Denise Fowler 903.563.1088
   - Hopkins Cty Veterinary Clinic 903.885.0085
   - Dr. John Allen 903.439.5542
3. Biomedical Settings: phone Dr. Taylor 214.532.3420
Appendix 1- Stall Standards Equine Center and Rodeo Facility

**Stall Standards for Horses at All A&M-Commerce Barn Facilities**

1. Stalls shall be cleaned and feces removed daily, or more frequently as needed to prevent excessive manure and urine buildup.

2. Water buckets shall be cleaned daily, filled at each feeding, or additionally as needed to ensure continuous access to clean water. Buckets will be cleaned and disinfected weekly by washing with soapy water and a brush followed by disinfecting with a 10% bleach solution, which is then rinsed with clean water.

3. Feed/hay buckets/containers will be cleaned and disinfected weekly by washing with soapy water and a brush followed by disinfecting with a 10% bleach solution, which is then rinsed with clean water. It is strongly recommended to use safety glasses and gloves when handling bleach.

4. Stalls have clean bedding over the dirt floor daily. Bedding may include:
   - Wood bedding (shavings, pellets, sawdust, etc...) for ALL Equine Pavilion and Show Barn and Working Barn stalls
     - Rodeo Barn stalls may have bare sand rather than alternative bedding materials.

5. Horses without turn out shall have hay available at all times. It is recommended to use a feed system to maximize slow consumption and minimize hay loss, such as Dura-Tech® Extra Slow Feed Hay net.

6. Horses with turn out shall be fed twice daily including both hay (owner’s choice of type) and the horse’s regular ration.
   - Morning feedings should be complete by 9:00 am
   - Evening feedings should be complete by 7:00 pm
   - Feeding time may vary due to class, practice, or other special events, but time and reason should be noted on feeding log and appropriate staff notified.

7. Each horse shall have an identification card on the stall. Information shall include:
   - Owner’s name
   - Owner’s phone number
   - Horse’s name
   - Preferred Veterinarian (must be a DVM approved by the A&M Commerce Attending Veterinarian)

8. Stall walls will be cleaned and disinfected by university staff monthly, or between residents, with Roccal-D plus. Horses must be removed from the stalls during disinfecting. Horses may be removed by the owner or moved by university staff to turnout pens or temporary pens, as are available and appropriate given weather conditions. Boarders will be given at least 48 hours’ notice before cleaning begins.

Authors: Wesley Taylor, Petra Collyer
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