

15.99.07.C1 Use of Vertebrate Animals in Research, Teaching, and Testing



Approved: November 15, 2016
Next Scheduled Review: November 15, 2021

Rule Statement

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi recognizes the scientific and ethical responsibility for the humane care and use of animals involved in research, teaching, and testing and enjoins all individuals involved to the highest standards of care.

Reason For Rule

This rule provides guidance in complying with federal and state laws, regulations, and guidelines relating to the humane and ethical use of vertebrate animals in research, teaching, and testing. This rule applies to all employees and students who use vertebrate animals in research, teaching, or testing.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

1.1 Use of Vertebrate Animals in Research, Teaching, or Testing

1.1.1 All vertebrate animals, including animals not owned by Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, used in research, teaching, or testing regardless of the funding sources, shall be provided humane care and treatment and fall within the scope of this rule.

1.2 In addition to on-campus activities conducted by any person whether employed by, enrolled in academics at, or otherwise affiliated with the university or not, this rule includes animal teaching, testing, and research conducted:

1.2.1 in the field by member faculty, students, or staff;

1.2.2 by member students at other institutions as part of the completion of a degree;

- 1.2.3 at another institution as part of a joint contract;
 - 1.2.4 in off-campus activities involving an undergraduate student as part of the completion of a member's undergraduate course;
 - 1.2.5 in the teaching of member undergraduate and graduate courses;
 - 1.2.6 by graduate veterinarians for continuing education; and
 - 1.2.7 with client-owned animals participating in clinical research studies.
- 1.3 Use of vertebrate animals in agricultural research, teaching, or testing is overseen by the Institutional Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and is subject to Section 1.2 of this rule in its entirety. Agricultural research, teaching, or testing is defined as research, teaching, or testing activities involving horses and other farm animals, not limited to livestock or poultry, used or intended for use as food or fiber, or used or intended for use for improving animal nutrition, breeding, management, or production efficiency, or for improving the quality of food or fiber. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi must follow the Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching when conducting research, teaching, or testing activities involving food and fiber production in agricultural animals.
- 1.4 A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) registration or license will be obtained prior to performing any activity subject to the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).
- 1.5 A Public Health Service (PHS) Animal Welfare Assurance (Assurance) from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) will be obtained prior to performing any activity supported by PHS involving animals.
- 1.6 As long as Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi does not conduct research, teaching, or testing activities subject to the AWA and as long as it does not receive PHS support for research, teaching, or testing with animals, it is not required by federal regulations to register with the USDA and/or obtain an Assurance from OLAW and will follow:
- 1.6.1 The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* when conducting research, teaching, or testing activities involving non-agricultural animals and biomedical research activities in agricultural animals and;
 - 1.6.2 The *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* when conducting research, teaching, or testing activities involving agricultural animals intended for improving animal nutrition,

breeding, management, or production efficiency or for improving the quality of food and fiber.

- 1.7 The use of vertebrate animals, whether for research, teaching, or testing purposes, shall be described in an Animal Use Protocol (AUP). The AUP is a form designed to capture relevant information regarding the appropriate use of the animals in research, teaching, or testing activities.
 - 1.7.1 For each project involving animals used in research, teaching, or testing, an AUP must be approved by the IACUC.
 - 1.7.2 An approved and current AUP for all animal activities must be in place at all times animals are housed or used for research, testing, or teaching.
 - 1.7.3 All modifications to approved animal activities must be approved prior to initiation of the changes.

2. INSTITUTIONAL OFFICIAL

- 2.1 The President has appointed the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach to serve as the Institutional Official (IO) with administrative authority to commit institutional resources to ensure that the animal care and use program will comply with state and federal requirements.
- 2.2 As the IO, the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach executes the USDA registration(s), PHS assurance(s), and reports submitted to these agencies as required.
- 2.3 The IO has been delegated authority by the President to appoint and remove members of the IACUC.

3. INSTITUTIONAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE

- 3.1 The IACUC shall be appointed, structured, and shall perform duties and functions as set forth in the most current version of the documents referenced at the end of this rule or other applicable documents promulgated by relevant government agencies.
- 3.2 The IACUC shall be appointed by and report to the IO. There may be more than one IACUC appointed by and reporting to the IO.
- 3.3 The IACUC may approve, disapprove, or request modifications of AUPs. The IACUC may also suspend a previously approved research, teaching, or testing activity covered by this rule for noncompliance with protocol description, or if it is otherwise in noncompliance. The IACUC shall have full authority to enter any areas where animals are used or housed for research, teaching, or testing to ensure

compliance. A decision by the IACUC not to approve research, teaching, or testing may not be overridden by the IO.

- 3.4 The IACUC shall carry out all of those duties specifically assigned to it in government regulations and policies. In addition to duties mandated in government regulations and policies, the IACUC shall review all aspects of the program for the humane care and use of animals, including short-term and long-term goals and regulations and procedures pertaining to animal care and use every six (6) months.
- 3.5 Membership must include an attending veterinarian, a community representative, a non-scientific representative from the university, and two scientific members from the university representing the wide diversity of activities utilizing animals on campus.
 - 3.5.1 The attending veterinarian, or designee, shall provide guidance to the campus animal facility managers, animal users, and administrators on current standards for the care and use of animals in teaching, testing, and research programs, and shall serve as the Attending Veterinarian of Record under the Federal Animal Welfare Act.
 - 3.5.2 The attending veterinarian has direct or delegated authority for activities involving animals at the institution, serves as a voting member of the IACUC, and coordinates campus programs for provision of adequate husbandry and veterinary care of research, testing, and teaching animals.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

- 4.1 Principal Investigators are primarily responsible for compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations involving activities covered by this rule and are accountable for:
 - 4.1.1 ensuring that animal work is appropriately reviewed and approved prior to initiation of any activities or changes to approved activities. Regardless of funding sources, an AUP involving the use of animals in research, teaching, or testing must be prepared and signed by the Principal Investigator and must be reviewed and approved by the IACUC. If research is collaborative or involves other institutions, approval must be obtained from each institution.
 - 4.1.2 ensuring that conduct of animal research, teaching, or testing activities is restricted to the animal activities described in the approved AUP or approved amendments, and is in congruence with funding grants, if applicable.

- 4.1.3 ensuring that all participants in animal activities are appropriately qualified through training and education to perform their responsibilities as listed in the AUP.
- 4.1.4 ensuring that all participants in animal activities are enrolled in an Occupational Health and Safety program.
- 4.1.5 ensuring that all animal activities involving hazardous and biohazardous activities are approved by the appropriate safety committees.
- 4.1.6 abiding by all determinations of the IACUC, including but not limited to, directives to terminate participation in designated research, teaching, or testing activities;
- 4.1.7 notifying the IACUC as soon as possible after the discovery of any incident that involves adverse events relating to the care or use of animals covered by this rule, including reporting any animal concerns or noncompliance.

5. REPORTING THE MISTREATMENT OF ANIMALS AND DEFICIENCIES IN THEIR CARE

- 5.1 It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi that the care, use and treatment of university-owned laboratory animals should be of high quality and in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations. Anyone who is aware of potential violations to existing animal care and use regulations or observes misuse or mistreatment of animals is strongly encouraged to report their concerns to the IACUC, the attending veterinarian, or the IO. No university employee or student shall be discriminated against or subject to any reprisal for good faith reporting of actual or potential violations.
- 5.2 Allegations of animal mistreatment and deficiencies in care include the wrongful or abusive physical or psychological treatment of an animal and non-compliance with established procedures, policies or protocols.
- 5.3 The IACUC will investigate allegations and report its findings and recommendations to the IO.
- 5.4 The IO is responsible for ensuring the prompt notification to governmental authorities after the discovery of any incident that requires notification to the IACUC, OLAW, USDA, or other governmental authority with respect to the care or use of animals that are involved in research, teaching, or testing activities covered by this rule.
- 5.5 Reports of allegations may be made in writing to the IACUC, attending veterinarian, or the IO and may include the nature and the place of the occurrence, the person or persons alleged to be delinquent, the date, the time, and any

supporting facts. Concerns may also be reported anonymously online via EthicsPoint:

<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/20499/index.html> or 888-501-3850.

- 5.6 Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible and appropriate and permissible under the law.
- 5.7 The IACUC's determination of noncompliance may be grounds for sanctions, suspension of animal use activities, or other disciplinary actions.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[The Animal Welfare Act \(7 U.S.C. § 2131-2159\) and Amendments and the Animal Welfare Regulations \(9 CFR chapter 1\)](#)

[Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals \(National Institutes of Health\)](#)

[Health Research Extension Act of 1985](#)

[U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training](#)

[Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#)

[Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching](#)

[United States Department of Agriculture Animal Care Policies](#)

System Regulation [15.99.07 Use of Vertebrate Animals](#)

[Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Standard Operating Procedures](#)

Contact Office

Contact for interpretation or clarification: Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach
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