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

Revised: June 23, 2025
Next Scheduled Review: June 23, 2030
Revision History

Rule Summary

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC) is committed to the humane and ethical treatment of vertebrate animals involved in research, teaching and testing. 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 of TAMU-CC who use vertebrate animals in research, teaching and/or testing.

Rule

1. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

1.1. All vertebrate animals, including animals not owned by TAMU-CC, used in research, teaching or testing regardless of the funding sources, fall within the scope of this rule and must be provided humane care and treatment.

1.2. A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) registration or license must be obtained prior to performing any activity subject to the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).

1.3. The use of vertebrate animals, whether for research, teaching, or testing purposes, must 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.

1.3.1. For each project involving animals used in research, teaching, or testing, an AUP must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

1.3.2. An approved and current AUP for all animal activities must always be in place when animals are housed or used for research, testing, or

teaching.

1.3.3. All modifications to previously approved AUPs must be approved prior to the initiation of the changes.

2. INSTITUTIONAL OFFICIAL

2.1. The president has appointed the executive vice president for Research and Innovation (EVPR) to serve as the Institutional official (IO) with administrative authority to commit institutional resources to ensure that the animal care and use program complies with state and federal requirements.

2.2. As the IO, the EVPR executes the USDA registrations, Public Health Service Animal Welfare Assurances, 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 ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE

3.1. The IACUC will be structured, have members appointed and perform duties and functions as set forth in this rule, applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and guidelines, and any other relevant documents promulgated by appropriate government agencies.

3.2. Members of the IACUC will be appointed by and report to the IO.

3.3. The IACUC may approve, withhold approval 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 otherwise noncompliant. The IACUC must be able 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 withhold approval for research, teaching or testing cannot be overridden by the IO.

3.4. The IACUC will carry out those duties specifically assigned to it in government regulations and policies. In addition to duties mandated in government regulations and policies, the IACUC will review all aspects of the program for the humane care and use of animals, including short-term and long-term goals, regulations, and procedures pertaining to animal care and use every six months.

3.5. The IACUC membership must include an attending veterinarian, a non-affiliated member, a non-scientific member, and two scientific members from the university representing the wide variety of activities utilizing animals on

campus.

3.6. The attending veterinarian, or designee, will 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.

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:

(a) ensuring that animal work is appropriately reviewed and approved prior to initiation of any activities or changes to approved activities.

a. 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.

b. If research is collaborative or involves other institutions, approval must be obtained from each institution.

(b) ensuring that conduct of animal research, teaching, or testing activities is restricted to the activities described in the approved AUP or approved amendments, and is in congruence with funding grants, if applicable.

(c) ensuring that all participants in AUPs are appropriately qualified through training and education to perform their responsibilities as listed in the AUP.

(d) ensuring that all participants in AUPs are enrolled in an Occupational Health and Safety program.

(e) ensuring that all AUPs involving hazardous and biohazardous activities are approved by the appropriate safety committees.

(f) abiding by all determinations of the IACUC, including but not limited to, directives to terminate participation in designated research, teaching, or testing activities.

(g) notifying the IACUC as soon as possible after the discovery of any incident that involves adverse events or non-compliance 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 practice of TAMU-CC 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 may bring a concern to the IACUC, the attending veterinarian, or IO. No university employee or student will be discriminated against or subject to any reprisal for the 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 review allegations in a timely manner and report its findings to the IO.

5.4. The IO is responsible for ensuring prompt notification to governmental authorities after the discovery of any incident that requires notification to the IACUC, USDA, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, or other governmental authority, as applicable, with respect to the care or use of animals involved in research, teaching, or testing activities covered by this rule.

5.5. Allegations or concerns may be made in writing to the IACUC, attending veterinarian, or the IO and should 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 as appropriate. These allegations or concerns may also be reported anonymously via EthicsPoint: https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/default_reporter.asp 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 as determined by the IACUC. The IO can impose additional sanctions as needed.

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
System Regulation *15.99.07, Use of Vertebrate Animals*

This rule supersedes:

- *15.99.99.C1.01, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee*

Contact Office

Contact for interpretation or clarification:	Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation 361.825.3881