

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee		UNTHSC
Title: Laboratory Approval for Animal Use Including Housing Animals Outside the Vivarium >12 Hours or Overnight		
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Approved by IACUC Date: April 16, 2025		

A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- a. According to the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Page 134), “animals should be housed in facilities dedicated to or assigned for that purpose, not in laboratories merely for convenience. If animals must be maintained in a laboratory to satisfy the scientific aims of a protocol, that space should be appropriate to house and care for the animals and its use limited to the period during which it is required.”
- b. The AWARs (§1.1 Definitions): “*Study area* means any building room, area, enclosure, or other containment outside of a core facility or centrally designated or managed area in which animals are housed for more than 12 hours.” (§2.31, c, 2) require animal study areas to be inspected by the IACUC at least once every 6 months.
- c. The PHS Policy (III, B) states that “a satellite facility is any containment outside of a core facility or centrally designated or managed area in which animals are housed for more than 24 hours.”
- d. In order to comply with the federal requirements (USDA AWARs §2.33(b) (3) and the *Guide*, p. 74), research animals may not be housed outside of the vivarium for greater than 12 hours or overnight, unless justified in an animal use protocol and approved by the IACUC. Animals found in the lab without proper authorization can result in the loss of vivarium access or protocol suspension.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The Principal Investigator is responsible for following the guidelines listed in this document.
- b. The IACUC is responsible for reviewing protocol applications and inspecting labs that may be used by the PI for housing animals outside of DLAM for more than 12 hours or overnight.

C. PROCEDURES

- a. All research animals must be housed in an approved, dedicated housing facility for animals (vivaria).

- b. Areas in which animals are taken to (i.e., laboratories, procedure space, etc...) outside of the animal facility, even for less than 12 hours, must be approved by the IACUC and listed on the approved protocol, before animals may be taken to the space.
- c. To receive IACUC approval, a Laboratory Approval for Animal Use Request form must be completed. The IACUC Office will contact the PI once receiving the form to arrange a time for the inspection. A checklist outlining the items to be reviewed will be provided to the PI prior to the inspection.
- d. A subcommittee of the IACUC will inspect the laboratory. The subcommittee will consist of an IACUC Administrator and at least 1 other IACUC member. If the PI indicates Survival Surgery or Housing for greater than 12 hours or overnight on the form, then the subcommittee must also include either the Veterinarian or Facility Manager.
- e. Upon completion of the inspection, the PI must ensure the laboratory is approved on the IACUC protocol before taking animals to the laboratory for use. This can be done through an amendment to an existing protocol or a new protocol form.
- f. Animals may not be housed/ held in the laboratory overnight (regardless of the length of time). An exception to this can be granted by the IACUC for individual protocols, provided that scientific justification is given, and it is approved on the protocol.
- g. To request housing of animals outside of DLAM for more than 12 hours, the following items must be addressed for consideration and approval by the IACUC:
 - i. The request for housing outside of DLAM must be described in the animal use protocol application. A justification must be provided to explain the need for animals to be housed outside of DLAM. The justification will be reviewed by the IACUC at a convened meeting during protocol review.
 - 1. Approval is contingent on the necessity of the use of non-DLAM space, protocol justification, and suitability of the proposed location. Justification must be current with the objectives and design of the approved protocol and will be reviewed annually.
 - ii. A subcommittee, as described above, will inspect the proposed lab space. The subcommittee will review the site for:
 - 1. Appropriate space for holding animals
 - 2. Adequate safety provisions
 - 3. Effective security
 - iii. Facilities Management must be contacted to perform a Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) assessment for appropriate air flow measurements. Air changes per hour in the room must be acceptable according to current regulations.
- h. Requirements for PI-managed housing:

- i. The room must be kept in the temperature and humidity range for the species being housed. For rodents, the recommended temperature range is 68 - 79°F and the acceptable range of relative humidity should be 30% to 70%. The temperature and humidity must be monitored and recorded daily. A monitoring system must be in place that will contact someone if the temperature in the lab goes out of range.
- ii. Light cycles in the room must be on a timer and set to the standard 12:12 cycle unless special lighting is required and justified in the protocol.
- iii. The PI will assure that staff is available and sufficiently trained to perform health, food, and water checks daily, including weekends and holidays. These checks must be recorded every day when the space is occupied. DLAM must be contacted if there are any health concerns while the animals are housed in the lab. Animals must be observed daily, including weekends and holidays, by qualified personnel to assess their health and well-being.
- iv. If feed or other supplies are kept in the lab, they must be appropriately stored and labeled, dated, lidded, in leak-proof containers and used within the expiration date. The person dating and labeling the supplies will enter their initials.
- v. DLAM Vet Staff must be granted keys or an access code (key request signed by the PI's department head) to the room in case of emergency or in order to check the health status of the animals. Veterinary staff may visit the lab at any time.
- vi. The animal housing log (or similar lab-created log that includes the same information) must be completed when animals are present in the laboratory (see attachment).
 1. The date is entered when animals arrive in the lab.
 2. Each day the animals are present, a check of their health, bedding, food and water is done.
 3. Temperature and humidity must be documented.
 4. The person making the observations will enter their initials.
 5. The name and number of personnel responsible for the animals should be listed in case of an emergency.

D. ATTACHMENT:

- a. [Laboratory Approval for Animal Use Request form](#)
- b. [Laboratory Inspection Checklist](#)
- c. [Laboratory Animal Housing Log](#)

E. REFERENCES:

- a. APHIS, USDA Animal Welfare Act Regulations, January 1, 2009.

- b. Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources (2011). *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. National Academy Press, Washington, D.C.
- c. PHS Policy on Humane Care and use of Laboratory Animals. NIH, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare. Revised August 2002.