Requirements for Animal Housing Locations

Overview/Purpose

The IACUC and AV have oversight of the health and well-being of all laboratory animals used at the institution with regards to veterinary care and animal husbandry and housing. The IACUC must review and approve any exceptions or departures from the Guide standards, Ag Guide standards, or the SOP/SMP of the housing area. The purpose of this policy is to ensure uniform procedures for housing.

Definitions

- **Housing**: An area that houses USDA covered species for greater than 12 hours or any other vertebrate species for greater than 24 hours.
- **Dedicated Housing Areas**: Facilities designed to provide animal housing and managed by dedicated staff. In e-protocol, these housing areas can be selected from the drop-down menu. (i.e. ULAR vivarium, BRT- BSL3, FAES, Veterinary Medical Center, etc.)
- **Satellite Housing Areas**: Locations outside of dedicated housing used to house animals. In the e-protocol drop-down list you must select “Non-ULAR / Investigator Spaces”.

Requirements for all housing areas

1. A **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** or Standard management plan (SMP) must be developed in consultation with the Office of the Attending Vet (OAV) to outline husbandry practices. Social housing and environmental enrichment should be addressed.
   a. Protocols requesting housing of animals in a dedicated area but requiring housing needs or special equipment not currently addressed in an IACUC approved SOP/SMP must provide the details in the housing section of the protocol (select Housing location and check “Yes” to non-standard care).
   b. Alternatively, details can be outlined in a standalone SOP.
2. **Guide exceptions**
   a. The IACUC must review and approve any programmatic exceptions or departures from the Guide standards, Ag Guide standards; or protocol specific exceptions to the housing SOP/SMP.
   b. Requests should include sufficient information showing the exception will not adversely affect the welfare of the animals or demonstrate that production standards will continue to be met despite the departure.
   c. Examples of departures from the Guide include:
      i. Single housing of social animals
      ii. Housing animals at temperatures outside the recommended ranges
      iii. Sanitization schedules outside the recommended frequency
      iv. Housing rodents without contact bedding (i.e. metabolic cages or CLAMS cages)
3. A **work schedule/log sheet** or electronic record must be used to document task completion.
   a. See IACUC policy Documentation of Husbandry Procedures for specific items that require documentation
   b. Work Schedule examples are available on the IACUC Investigator Guidance web page (mouse static; mouse & rat ventilated; aquatic species) and can be modified as needed.
4. An **Emergency Plan**
5. An environmental alarm system must be in place for housing locations with environmental controls.
   a. Alternatively, justification for an exemption (i.e., increased frequency of animal checks, type of housing minimally impacted by temperature excursions) must be approved by IACUC.
b. Alarm set points must be noted in the SOP/SMP and should be designed specific to the needs of the species, season, and/or facility. For example: Mice are more sensitive to the higher end of the temperature range.

c. Environmental alarm systems must be tested/verified semi-annually (at a minimum) with documentation made available during IACUC semi-annual inspections.

d. Alarm systems with a battery backup must be tested monthly.

6. Oversight

a. The Office of Attending Veterinarian must be provided access to all animal housing locations per regulatory requirements.

Additional Requirement for Satellite Housing:

1. Protocols that request satellite housing must include:
   a. Justification for housing animals outside of a Dedicated Housing Area
   b. A complete description of the physical space and/or equipment
   c. Identification of Guide or SOP/SMP exemptions when applicable

2. Resources
   a. [IACUC approved templates](#) are available on the IACUC web page under Investigator Guidance, and must be used for satellite housing of rodents.
   b. For aquatic housing, the available template must be modified as needed to fit the space.
   c. For all other species, SOPS should be developed in consultation with the OAV

Applicable Regulations

2. Animal Welfare Act Regulations (AWAR, 9 CFR, Chapter 1, Subchapter A)
3. Health Research Extension Act of 1985 and Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals

Additional Information/Guidance

1. See Investigator guidance for additional information including [Best Practices for Satellite Housing](#), approved SOPs, SOP template, work schedule/log sheet templates and emergency plan templates

History of Revisions

015-00 - new policy approved 04/24/2006
015-01 – revised 03/23/2007
015-02 – revised 08/21/2009
015-03 – revised 06/21/2013
015-04 – revised 12/20/2013
015-05 – revised the frequency of reviewing SOP/SMP from at least annually to at least once every three years, also the policy was put into the new format; approved 11/20/2015
015-06 – revised to require a work schedule/log sheet for documentation of tasks completed as part of the SOP/SMP and use of template SOPs (mouse static/ventilated or rat ventilated) when applicable; approved 08/18/2017
015-07 – revised to remove required use of template work schedule/log sheet; approved 09/15/2017
015-08 – revised to add additional example of Guide exception and additional guidance documents;
    Requirement #1 edited to clarify information needed for any requests for special housing needs or
    equipment; Requirement #5 revised to add attending veterinarian (AV); approved 11/17/2017
015-09 – revised to make use of aquatic template SOP mandatory; approved 5/17/2019
015-10 – Name changed from Housing Requirements for Animals to Requirements for Animal Housing
    Locations. Overview/purpose updated, definitions updated, and requirements reformatted; approved
    4/15/22