

## **Rice University Research Policy No. 314**

### **CARE AND HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS USED IN RESEARCH, TESTING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### **I. General Policy**

It is the policy of Rice University that animals used in research, testing, education and training deserve a compassionate caring environment. Animal abuse or neglect will not be tolerated.

All activities involving vertebrate animals must have advanced written approval from the Rice University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). It is the responsibility of the IACUC to oversee and routinely evaluate the Animal Care Program.

All research, testing, education, and training activities involving animals will be in accordance with University Policy and the following federal regulations, guidelines and references (which will be referenced by letter throughout this policy):

- (a) Animal Welfare Act - Public Law 89-544 as amended;
- (b) Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use Laboratory Animals by Awardee Institutions (Revised 2015);
- (c) Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (NIH Publication No. 85-23, Revised 2011); and
- (d) Assurance of Compliance with Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, Animal Welfare Assurance number A3010-01.

The University will not retaliate against or permit retaliation against a person who, in good faith, reports a suspected violation of any of the above-listed regulations or standards.

#### **II. Roles and Responsibilities**

Humane care and use of animals in research is the responsibility of all faculty, staff and students involved with research animals. All personnel involved with research animals must comply with University policies, and relevant federal, state, and local regulations.

##### **A. Personnel with Animal Care Responsibilities**

Individual staff, faculty, or researchers assigned to care for animals must ensure that animals: are checked daily; have appropriate species-specific housing and environmental conditions; are provided palatable feed and potable water; and have adequate health care as prescribed by the Attending Veterinarian (AV). This includes those individuals at off campus or satellite facilities and their laboratory personnel (with appropriate IACUC approval).

Animal care personnel must allow the AV access to examine animals and animal medical records, and must follow any care and treatment instructions provided by the AV. Animal care personnel are responsible for infection control within the facility, including proper sanitation of caging equipment, rooms, and corridors.

##### **B. Attending Veterinarian (AV)**

The AV will provide regular and continuing counsel, advice, and services to Rice University concerning the care and use of animals for research, testing, education and training. The AV is the final authority for issues or concerns related to the care or welfare of animals. Specific duties include the following:

1. Serve as a member of the IACUC;
2. Examine animals and animal medical records to evaluate health;
3. Be available for emergencies;
4. Advise investigators and instructors regarding the humane care and use of animals, with particular attention to reducing or eliminating pain and distress; and
5. Give immediate notice to the IACUC Chair and Vice Provost for Research for any deficiencies in the care or treatment of animals.

#### C. Principal Investigators, Students, and Laboratory Assistants/Staff

It is the responsibility of each faculty member under whose authority, responsibility, or cognizance animals are used for research, testing, education, or training to ensure that persons performing anesthesia, surgery, or other experimental manipulations are qualified through appropriate training or experience to accomplish these tasks in a humane and scientifically acceptable manner and in accordance with the approved animal protocol.

If animal research activities involving Rice faculty, staff, or students are conducted at domestic or foreign sites (host) other than Rice University, then the IACUC must satisfy itself that appropriate animal care and use policies are being followed. The IACUC, at its discretion and depending on the nature of the animal and the roles of Rice faculty, staff, or students, shall choose one of the four (4) options to ensure appropriate oversight of the project including:

1. Accept the host institution's IACUC approval, taking into account if the host institution holds a current Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) assurance or is appropriately accredited;
2. Conduct its own review of the protocol in the host institution's protocol format (i.e. not require the Rice PI to write a second protocol for review);
3. Conduct its own review of the project submitted in the Rice protocol system; or
4. Determine that no formal IACUC review is required.

In any case, the approval by the Rice IACUC requires documentation from the host institution that the host institution's IACUC has reviewed and approved the project.

#### D. Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)

The IACUC's oversight functions include review and approval of proposed vertebrate animal use (protocol review) and of proposed significant changes to animal use; regular inspection of facilities and animal use areas; regular review of the Animal Care Program; ongoing assessment of animal care and use; and establishment of a mechanism for receipt and review of concerns involving the care and use of animals at the institution.<sup>(c)</sup>

The IACUC is the final authority for issues or concerns related to proposed or approved animal protocols (unless the issue or concern is related to the care or welfare of animals), and has the authority to suspend any activity involving animals or Approved Animal Protocols if it determines that the activity is not being conducted in accordance with the protocol, university policy, or relevant statutes and regulations.

#### E. Institutional Official (IO)

The Vice Provost for Research, as a representative of senior administration, serves as the IO, bears ultimate responsibility for the Animal Care Program, and is responsible for resource planning and ensuring alignment of program goals with the institution's mission.<sup>(c)</sup> This responsibility includes signing the University's Animal Welfare Assurance, reviewing reports from the IACUC, and taking corrective actions as necessary (including reporting to OLAW for any serious or continuing noncompliance).

### III. Definitions

Animal Care Program - The research activities conducted by faculty, research staff, and students at the institution that have a direct impact on the well-being of animals. These include husbandry and veterinary care, policies and procedures, personnel and program management and oversight, occupational health and safety, IACUC functions, and animal facility design and management.<sup>(c)</sup>

Approved Animal Protocol - The animal use protocol is a detailed description of the proposed use of laboratory animals as reviewed and approved by the IACUC.<sup>(c)</sup>

Attending Veterinarian (AV) - The veterinarian responsible for the health and well-being of all laboratory animals used at the institution.<sup>(c)</sup>

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) - The IACUC is responsible for assessment, approval and oversight of the institution's Animal Care Program components and facilities.<sup>(c)</sup> The IACUC shall be comprised of at least five (5) members appointed by the President and, at a minimum, they shall perform a review/inspection of the Animal Care Program and facilities at least every six months, and provide a report of such review to the President and IO. All activities involving vertebrate animals must have advanced written approval from the IACUC.

Institutional Official (IO) - The designated individual responsible for committing, on behalf of Rice University, to meet the requirements of Animal Welfare Act and who signs the University's Animal Welfare Assurance to the government.<sup>(a,b)</sup>

Principal Investigator (PI) - The person, usually a faculty member, who has precise knowledge of both the objectives of the study and the proposed model stated in the Approved Animal Protocol. The PI is ultimately responsible and accountable for activities undertaken under the Approved Animal Protocol. Please see University Policy 301, [\*Submission and Administration of Sponsored Projects\*](#), for further discussion of the role of the PI.

Vertebrate Animals - This term includes all animals with a backbone, including all mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

### IV. Elaboration of Policy

#### A. Assurance of Animal Welfare

All care and utilization of research animals will be performed in adherence to the Animal Welfare Assurance, as filed with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and National Institutes of Health (NIH), and all other applicable federal, state and local regulations and guidelines governing the use of animals in research at Rice University.

#### B. Monitoring, Care and Use of Animals

A health check of all animals will be performed every day, including weekends and holidays, by a member of the animal care staff in the central facility, or by personnel trained and experienced in the species being cared for in satellite facilities. The AV is responsible for the health and well-being of all research animals used at Rice.

#### C. Purchase of Live Vertebrate Research Animals

Vertebrate animals to be purchased or acquired for use in research, testing, education or training may only be purchased or acquired through the ordering desk of the Rice University Animal Resources Facility or with prior approval of the Animal Resources Facility Manager and the AV on an Approved Animal

Protocol. Animal vendors will only accept orders received by designated personnel of the Animal Resources Facility. No animals shall be delivered to individual investigators or their laboratories without prior approval of the Animal Resources Facility Manager and the AV.

#### D. Occupational Health and Safety of Personnel

An occupational health program is essential for personnel who work in laboratory animal facilities, or personnel who through their work may have intermittent contact with animals and should be tailored to individuals according to the risks they will encounter and their medical history. All personnel who work in or who have access to the animal resources facilities and/or are identified on an Approved Animal Protocol must have an initial risk assessment based upon the research activities, hazards and animal species involved as documented by the IACUC's approved protocol. Re-evaluation should be done periodically, or whenever there are changes in the health status of the individual, amount of animal exposure, the type of activity/hazard and/or the type/species of animal.

Risk assessment levels are defined as a general guide and used to determine the scope of the health and safety requirements, including training and education, and may include some or all of the following: completion of a medical questionnaire, medical examination, and vaccinations.

#### V. Cross References to Related Policies

Rice University Policy No. 301, Submission and Administration of Sponsored Projects  
Rice University Policy No. 313, Laboratory Safety  
Rice University Policy No. 324, Research Misconduct  
Rice University Policy No. 805, Environmental Health and Safety  
Rice University Policy No. 814, Procurement

#### VI. Responsible Official and Key Offices to Contact Regarding the Policy and its Implementation

Responsible Official: Vice Provost for Research

Other Key Offices: Office of Research Animal Resources Facility; Office of Sponsored Projects and Research Compliance; Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee; Environmental Health and Safety

#### VII. Procedures and Forms

1. Rice Office of Sponsored Projects and Research Compliance IACUC site. <http://sparc.rice.edu/iacuc>
2. Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed. <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/Guide-for-the-Care-and-use-of-laboratory-animals.pdf>

*Signed David W. Leebron* \_\_\_\_\_  
President

#### Policy History

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