



General Policy & Procedure for PROVISION OF ADEQUATE VETERINARY CARE

Policy: All animals will be provided with adequate veterinary care according to the requirements set by the USDA and the guidelines described in the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and The Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching.

Applicable: All faculty, staff, students, and student employees caring for and using animals in research, teaching, or extension at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and its' satellite facilities.

Purpose: Describe the procedures used to ensure that adequate veterinary care is provided to all animals used in research and teaching at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and associated satellite locations.

Background: Veterinary care for animals used in research, teaching, and extension is provided by the Attending Veterinarian, a veterinary technician and other staff affiliated with the Office of the Institutional Animal Care Program (IACP) under the supervision of the Attending Veterinarian. The goal of the IACP staff is to provide investigators with healthy, properly cared for animals while ensuring the animals' welfare at all times. Veterinary care is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All animals are observed daily by animal care staff for health related issues and the Attending Veterinarian is to be contacted if a problem is noted. Any person who observes an injury or health related problem is to follow the procedures described in this document.

Protocol for initiating veterinary care if an animal is sick or injured:

1. Contact the Attending Veterinarian and the animal facility manager.

During regular business hours (8 am to 5 pm) Monday through Friday:

- a. Contact the facility supervisor or one of the animal caretakers in the area where your animals are housed to report the problem **AND**
- b. Call the Attending Veterinarian at the IACP office **(402-472-6958)** or on their cell phone **(402-314-4341)**. If the AV cannot be reached, call the IACP Office at **402-472-4486** and leave a message, or call the IACP Director at **402-472-4430** or **402-314-4333**.

After 5 pm or on weekends or holidays:

Call the Attending Veterinarian cell phone number **402-314-4341**. You will need to dial 9 first if you are calling from a UNL telephone.

2. Provide the following information:
 - a. The nature of the problem
 - b. The animal species involved
 - c. Animal Identification number or tattoo designation if available
 - d. The location of the animal(s) affected (facility, room number, location within the room)
 - e. Current experimental manipulation, treatments, or recent surgical procedures
 - f. Information on the project goals and objectives and animal ownership
 - g. A contact phone number where you can be reached

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If an animal requires IMMEDIATE MEDICAL HELP:

1. During normal business hours, call the IACP office **(402-472-4486)** so that the Attending Veterinarian or qualified assistants can be contacted. **Do not leave an animal unattended in an emergency situation until a veterinarian has arrived. Get someone to stay with the animal.** If you do not receive a prompt response to your call, repeat until you get a response. **Make sure that the number you leave with a voice mail message is correct and that you remain at that number until the Attending Veterinarian returns your call.**

Protocol for Diagnosis and Treatment:

1. Veterinarian examines animal, determines a tentative diagnosis, or decides that additional diagnostic tests are required. **Only a veterinarian can diagnose and prescribe treatment**, other than that approved in the protocol or husbandry SOP.
2. The Veterinarian will contact the PI or designee if available to outline proposed diagnostic tests or proposed treatment regimens. Otherwise, the veterinarian will exercise professional discretion to decide a course of action.
3. Results of the initial examination, assessment of the animal's problem, and proposed plan of action are recorded on an Animal Health Record (AHR). This AHR constitutes the medical record of the animal and documents all observations, tests, diagnoses, treatments and outcomes.
4. Treatments are administered by the veterinarian, a trained animal care staff member, the veterinary technician or the trained PI's staff as defined by the Attending Veterinarian in the treatment plan.
5. The AHR remains posted and active until the case is resolved and signed off by the IACP Attending Veterinarian.

In situations where the PI is a graduate veterinarian, medical care can be provided by that individual. In this case, an Animal Health Record (AHR) is also used. The information recorded is the same as would be recorded by the Attending Veterinarian. The IACP veterinary staff needs to be informed about all cases in which the PI is providing veterinary treatment. If the PI wants anyone other than his/her research staff to administer treatments, arrangements should be made with the facility supervisor and after getting approval of the IACP veterinarian. Otherwise it is assumed that the PI or his/her trained staff will be administering all treatments.

An AHR Anesthesia/Surgery Form is used to track anesthesia and surgery, and a separate Postoperative Recovery Form is used to document postoperative care. These forms must be filled out completely any time an animal is anesthetized for an invasive procedure or for surgery.

All forms must be filled out completely and accurately and posted prominently inside or directly outside the animal room where the animal is housed until either the case is resolved or the postoperative monitoring period is completed. These forms constitute part of the animal's permanent records and must be kept for the required 3 years after the animal's disposition. These records are sent to the IACP office when the case is resolved and will be kept in the IACP Office.

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A client-patient relationship (CPR) exists between the PI and the veterinary staff; as such, the PI is consulted and involved in treatment decisions regarding his/her animals. If the PI or other designated individual cannot be reached in a timely manner, the veterinarian will act in the best interest of the animal. Likewise, if the PI and the veterinarian do not agree on what should be done for the animal, the veterinarian will act to alleviate pain and suffering of the animal. The authority to do so is a statutory requirement of the Animal Welfare Act and Public Health Service Assurance Policy.

Vaccination Program:

- All animals at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will have appropriate vaccinations to prevent communicable diseases unless the area of study is in the development or testing of new or modified vaccines where the standard vaccines would interfere with the study.

Parasite Control Program:

- All animals arriving at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will be tested for the presence of internal and external parasites and treated appropriately to eliminate any parasitic infestations. Parasitic infestations have been reported to complicate collection of data from any parasitized animal being used for research, testing or teaching.

Emergency Care:

- The IACP veterinarian will be on call at all times. See contact information above.

Euthanasia Methods:

- The UNL research and teaching community using animals will follow the recommendations of the AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia 2007 (www.avma.org/issues/animal_welfare/euthanasia.pdf). The veterinarian and other staff in the IACP Office are available to provide instruction in proper methods of euthanasia for the various species being used at UNL. Training can be scheduled by calling the IACP Office at **402-472-4486**.

Nutritive value of diets:

- The nutritional value of each diet used at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will be adequate to support the health, well being and physiological status of the animal unless the experimental work requires nutrient deficiencies or excesses as described in an approved IACUC protocol.

Handling of biologicals and drugs:

- All biologicals and pharmaceuticals will be handled and administered according to the package insert instructions. Expiration dates will be checked by the IACP veterinarians or IACUC inspection teams at least twice yearly, and more frequently if a problem is identified. Outdated drugs and biologicals will be collected by the IACUC inspection teams during their semi-annual inspection visits.

Pest Control and Product Safety:

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- All animal housing and holding facilities at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will have a documented pest control program to prevent disease transmission by vermin and to ensure that feeds remain free from contamination by pests. All feed will be stored in vermin proof containers.

Quarantine Procedures:

- Newly arrived animals will be placed in quarantine if they are not from a vendor with a known and proven record of supplying the University with clean disease-free animals.
- Quarantine is generally accomplished by isolating animal shipments in separate rooms within the various facilities. Time frames for quarantine are species specific. The IACP veterinarian can be consulted for the various species specific quarantine periods.

Exercise program for dogs:

- All dogs must be able to exercise at will with their pen mates, or supplemental exercise is required according to federal statutes if pen housing is not used.

Capture & Restraint Methods (Wild or Exotic Animals):

- All capture and restraint of wild and exotic animals will be in compliance with the permit regulations of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, or the conditions set by the other states and countries where the animals are being captured and restrained.

General Observation of Animals:

- Every animal being held in University of Nebraska-Lincoln facilities for biomedical research, teaching, or testing in animal holding facilities will be observed daily.
- Those animals involved in food and fiber production operations will be observed according to the recommendations of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching*. This pertains to pasture or range held herd animals.

Facility Condition:

- The condition of animal holding primary enclosures will be maintained in working order and free from conditions that could harm or result in injury to the animals being held in the enclosure.

General Animal Husbandry Practices:

- General husbandry practices will provide for the basic requirements of the animals being held in UNL animal facilities (i.e., food, water, an environment suitable for the security and well-being of the animals).