



Occupational Health and Safety Program - Animal Facilities

Policy Number: 04-004

Research/Academic Policy

Original Date of Approval: 8/25/2004

Revisions: 1/4/2005, 6/23/2008

Responsible University Officer

- Vice Chancellor for Research

Responsible University Offices

- Office of Research Integrity
- Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
- Veterinary Services

Related Policies

- Animal Care and Use (#04-003)

Policy Statement:

Individuals working within University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) animal facilities who are involved in the direct care of vertebrate animals and their living quarters, and those individuals who, during the course of their work in UAF animal facilities, have direct contact with live or dead animals, their viable tissues, body fluids or wastes must participate in the UAF Occupational Health and Safety Program (OHSP) - Animal Facilities.

Background:

All UAF institutes, departments, units and employees must comply with applicable laws and internal requirements to assure the health and safety of personnel. The same federal health and safety regulations that apply to university offices, support facilities and research laboratories (29 CFR: Labor, 40 CFR: Environmental Protection and 49 CFR: Transportation) also apply to animal facilities; however, there are health and safety concerns unique to working in animal facilities. These concerns include, but are not limited to, increased rates of asthma and allergy in animal care workers and the potential for transmission of zoonoses (diseases transmissible from animals to humans). U.S. Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and our Institutional Assurance of Compliance requires that UAF maintain an occupational health and safety program for individuals who work in animal facilities.

Definitions:

- **Authorized Personnel** refers to any person authorized by the Office of Research Integrity to work with animals and/or access UAF animal facilities. Such authorization may be given to university faculty, staff, students and volunteers, as well as non-UAF

collaborators, visitors and contract service providers if they are not continually in the presence of Authorized Personnel.

- **Department of Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management (EHS&RM).** refers to the University of Alaska Fairbanks Department of Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management
- **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)** – Provides oversight of the UAF animal care and use program which includes UAF's occupational health and safety program (OHSP) for individuals accessing the UAF animal facilities as part of their university activities .
- **Office of Research Integrity (ORI)** – Responsible for ensuring compliance of UAF personnel with internal policies and with local, state and federal regulations governing the conduct of research.
- **Veterinary Services** – Ensures the health and welfare of all vertebrate animals at UAF and monitors UAF animals for the presence of zoonotic disease.

Responsibilities:

Authorized Personnel

Only Authorized Personnel (see definitions) are allowed access, to the extent of authority granted, to animal facilities and/or to use or handle animals.

All authorized Personnel shall:

1. follow all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, UAF policies and procedures, and any applicable directives concerning specific hazards issued by EHS&RM or one of the other compliance committees;
2. enroll in the University's OHSP - Animal Facilities;
3. participate in all required OHSP training and continuing education; and
4. immediately report potentially unsafe working conditions to:
 - a. ORI or Veterinary Services if it relates to animal health or safety; and
 - b. EHS&RM if it relates to personnel health or safety.

Principal Investigators

Only individuals meeting the requirements of UAF Policy #05-003 *Principal Investigator Eligibility* may serve as principal investigators.

Principal investigators shall:

1. maintain a safe work environment;
2. provide staff and students with personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for the safe conduct of their assigned activities; and
3. ensure that staff and students receive training regarding the health and safety risks associated with their activities, safe conduct of procedures, use of PPE, spill and exposure response, and proper use of equipment for personnel protection (e.g. fume hoods, biosafety cabinets, anesthetic gas scavenging systems, or downdraft tables).

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

The UAF Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee shall evaluate all aspects of this program during its biannual review of the UAF Animal Care Program. This review includes evaluation of the forms and procedures associated with the implementation of this policy.

Office of Research Integrity

The Office of Research Integrity shall:

1. establish and maintain an OHSP for animal care workers and others who have substantial animal contact;
2. develop procedures and forms necessary to implement this policy in consultation with the IACUC, EHS&RM, and the university's contract health care provider;
3. provide information and training to university members regarding health and safety risks associated with the care and use of animals;
4. administer the OHSP including authorization of occupational health services by the university's contract health care provider; and
5. monitor the standards of hygiene among university members involved with animal care and use;

Veterinary Service

Veterinary Services shall:

1. assist ORI in establishing and maintaining an OHSP for animal care workers and others who have substantial animal contact;
2. assist ORI in monitoring standards of hygiene among university members involved with animal care and use;
3. advise on and monitor biohazard control policies and procedures as they apply to research animal care and use; and
4. monitor university animals for zoonotic diseases.

Non-Compliance:

Failure to comply with this policy, associated procedures, or to fully participate in the OHSP will result in termination of all access to university animal facilities. Noncompliance can also lead to disciplinary action by the university and, if applicable, suspension or termination of research by the University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, referral for misconduct proceedings, and/or reporting to state and federal regulatory agencies. Any disciplinary action taken by the university will follow the employment rules governing the individual's employment category.

Exclusions:

Individuals who need access to the animal facilities for a brief time (i.e. inspectors, visitors, prospective students) do not need to enroll in this program if they will not be handling animals and will be accompanied by and follow the directions of Authorized Personnel at all times while in the UAF animal facilities. It is the responsibility of the Authorized Personnel accompanying such individuals to inform them of appropriate occupational health and safety issues and to ensure that they abide by all animal facility policies and procedures. This policy does not cover individuals working with free-ranging species.

Approved by:


Brian Rogers, Chancellor, UAF

7/1/2008
Date