



Suspension of Animal Use Activities

Purpose: This standard provides information regarding the authority of the Institutional Official (IO), the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and the University Attending Veterinarian (UAV) to suspend animal use activities and important considerations if an activity is suspended.

Background: The IO (or another authorized official) may unilaterally halt, terminate, or impose sanctions on any animal activity. The IACUC and the UAV have the authority to suspend animal use activities that are not compliant with approved protocols or are not consistent with applicable provisions of the following: Animal Welfare Act; *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*; *Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (PHS Policy); the institution's PHS Animal Welfare Assurance; or written operating procedures. Suspensions may be indefinite.

Definitions: (if applicable)

1. *Activity* – those elements of research, testing or teaching procedures that involve the care and use of animals.
2. *Suspension* – the temporary prevention of something from continuing or being in force or effect.

Standards: Animal use activities are described in writing in the approved Animal Study Protocol (ASP). The IACUC conducts continuing reviews of approved animal use activities. The IACUC also reviews, evaluates and, if warranted, investigates concerns involving the care and use of animals and reports of noncompliance. If the IACUC identifies serious concerns involving the care and use of animals, threats to animal welfare or personnel safety, or continuing or serious noncompliance, the IACUC may elect to suspend all or part of the related animal use activities.

The UAV (or a designee) participates in continuing review of animal use activities and routine/emergency animal health monitoring, care, and treatment. If the UAV (or designee) identifies serious concerns involving the care and use of animals, threats to animal welfare or protocol deviations that adversely impact animals, the UAV (or designee) may immediately suspend those specific animal activities.

The IO, who holds the administrative and operational authority to commit institutional resources to ensure compliance, may unilaterally halt, terminate, or impose sanctions on any animal activity. An institution is not required or obligated to conduct the activity even if it has been approved by the IACUC.

Methodology:

1. The IACUC has established procedures for continuing review of animal use activities, reviewing and investigating animal care and use concerns or reports of noncompliance, and

suspending animal activities. The UAV (or a designee) participates in continuing review of animal use activities and has established procedures for routine/emergency animal health monitoring, care and treatment. Other institutional reviews may be performed by the IO or other authorized official (e.g., investigations regarding personal, financial, or scholarly misconduct) that may result in suspension of activities.

2. The IO (or another authorized official) may unilaterally halt, terminate, or impose sanctions on any animal activity. The IACUC may suspend an activity **only after review** of the matter and majority vote of the quorum present at a convened meeting. The UAV (or designee) has full authority **to immediately** suspend animal activities that are inconsistent with adequate animal care or for protocol deviations that have a negative impact on the animal. In cases where the UAV (or designee) suspends an animal activity, the UAV (or designee) promptly forwards the incident to UMD IACUC for further review.

3. If the IACUC votes to suspend animal activities, **all animal use activities related to the suspension must stop**, including breeding for research or teaching purposes. (Exceptions to suspended breeding may be considered on a case-by-case basis.)

4. When animal activities are suspended, the Principal Investigator is notified immediately by phone call and/or by email, with a formal letter from the IACUC Chair or IO to follow within 1 business day.

5. Animals on suspended protocols may be transferred to the Dept. of Laboratory Animal Resources animal holding protocol, transferred to another suitable protocol, euthanized, or the PI may propose an alternate disposition (e.g., adoption of suitable animals). The IACUC will review and approve the disposition of animals on suspended protocols, to include time limits, if any, on holding protocol transfers.

6. In general, research funding may not be used to pay *per diems* and support animal care during the suspension. Specifically, PHS funding may not be spent on animal maintenance under suspended activities, and the institution may elect to stop funding regardless of the source. The PI must arrange alternate funding (e.g., departmental, college, or other sources).

7. If the IO, IACUC, or UAV (or designee) suspend an animal use activity, the IO, in consultation with the IACUC, shall review the reasons for suspension, take appropriate corrective action, and report that action with a full explanation to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, AAALAC, International, and any funding agencies (e.g., Dept of Defense) requiring institutional notification of suspensions. If the suspension involves U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA)-regulated animals, the suspension must also be reported to USDA (APHIS) and any Federal agency funding that activity.

8. Animal use activities may be reinstated at the discretion of the IACUC. The IO (or another authorized official, e.g., the UAV) **may not** reinstate any animal activity without IACUC approval.

References:

1. USDA [US Department of Agriculture]. 2023. 9 CFR 1A. (Title 9, Chapter 1, Subchapter A): Animal Welfare. Available at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/AC_BlueBook_AWA_508_comp_version.pdf; accessed January 25, 2024.
2. Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, National Institutes of Health. (2015). Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. NIH Publication No. 15-8013. Bethesda, MD: National Institutes of Health.
3. US Dept of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health. (2022). National Institutes of Health Grants Policy Statement (Part II.A.4.1.1.5. Available at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/nihgps.pdf>; accessed January 25, 2024.
4. American Dairy Science Assoc (ADSA), American Society of Animal Science (ASAS), Poultry Science Assoc (PSA). (2020). Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching. 4th Edt. Champaign, IL: ADSA, ASAS, PSA. Available at https://www.asas.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/agguide_4th.pdf?sfvrsn=56b44ed1_2