

## Miscellaneous

### Item 7 – Transportation of Animals

The following are requirements for the transportation of animals from the Department of Laboratory Animal Resources (DLAR) to other sites for experimental use with or without their subsequent return to DLAR. All personnel involved in animal care and use must follow this policy to ensure that animal transport is conducted in a safe and appropriate manner. Investigators and their research associates are reminded that all transferring of animals between institutions, facilities, animal housing rooms, investigators or protocols requires notification of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and/or DLAR to assure regulatory compliance and to maintain the colony health status. Contact DLAR (4-6563) for detailed information regarding requirements.

#### BACKGROUND:

1. This Policy provides guidance on how to safely and effectively transport animals.
2. Transporting animals from one location to another can be stressful to laboratory animals and can increase the potential for disease transmission or injury. The [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, Eighth Edition](#) states that transportation “should be planned to minimize transit time and the risk of zoonoses, protect against environmental extremes, avoid overcrowding, provide food and water when indicated, and protect against physical trauma.”
3. DLAR facilities have been classified as either standard or as barrier facilities, to protect animals/people from infectious diseases. Access to standard facilities is not as tightly controlled as that to barrier facilities. Animals that exit barrier facilities may not return to these facilities and must be euthanized or housed in standard facilities (if appropriate).
4. Exceptions for special experimental requirements may be granted by the DLAR Director.

#### General Requirements for Transport of Animals or Dirty Caging

All transportation of animals should be planned to minimize transit time, reduce the risk of allergen or zoonotic disease exposure, avoid the visibility of animals to the public, assure adequate ventilation, and protect the animals against physical trauma.

1. Whenever possible, the route taken should minimize or eliminate the use of areas frequented by the general public.
2. Minimize noise and vibration by using a cart with wheels in good repair. The use of “soft” wheels is highly recommended.
3. When transporting animals or dirty caging on a cart, drape the cart with a cloth/sheet to ensure animals and cages are shielded from public view.
4. Do not leave animals unattended outside of the vivarium.
5. Return all caging, dirty bedding and discarded carcasses to DLAR at the end of the experimental procedure. Dirty caging should be covered and carcasses should be appropriately bagged to prevent leakage.
6. Arrange transportation of large numbers of rodents or other animals with DLAR.

### Transport of Small Numbers of Rodent Cages

1. Transport animals within intact filter-top cages. If the distance of transport is long, consider securing lids in some manner (rubber bands, straps, etc.). Alternative containers may be used if adequate ventilation is provided and the containers are sanitized between animals.
2. Place cages on second and/or lower tiers of cart, whenever possible, and leave top shelf to support weight of drape.
3. Avoid stacking cages, since it can decrease air circulation through the filter tops and can lead to instability on the cart.
4. For single cages, it is acceptable to place the cage inside a bag or other opaque container for transport as long as it allows adequate air transfer for the animals.
5. **DO NOT** carry cages in your hands without secondary containment. If the cage is dropped, you will not be able to capture or contain the animals in public spaces.

### Vehicular Transportation (non-DLAR vehicles)

1. Transportation in private vehicles is generally discouraged due to concerns over allergen exposure of non-research personnel as well as concerns over adequate maintenance of the animal's environment during transport.
2. Transportation must have prior approval, which includes inclusion of the transportation activity in the protocol (or as amendment to the protocol). Generally, transportation in private vehicles will only be approved for short distances or under extenuating circumstances that would make commercial or DLAR transport impractical.
3. General criteria for approval of transport include:
  - a. Adequate heating/cooling to maintain general animal comfort.
  - b. Protection from direct sunlight.
  - c. Protection from public view.
  - d. Method to contain waste (e.g. plastic sheet or tray under the cage).
  - e. Method to minimize allergen exposure (e.g. filter top cage).
  - f. Method to secure animals inside of the cage (e.g. rubber bands, bungee cords).

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