

OLAC CARE OF VERTEBRATE ANIMALS

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Background

The University of California, Berkeley (UCB) Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) typically assigns primary responsibility for routine daily animal care to Office of Laboratory Animal Care (OLAC) personnel. Routine daily animal care is defined as the provision of proper husbandry (e.g., housing, food, water, enrichment) and health monitoring and reporting. Except for cases where the ACUC has approved PI care, OLAC personnel are responsible for husbandry and for ensuring basic welfare of all animals used in research and teaching on the UCB campus. The Attending Veterinarian and OLAC Clinical Veterinarians are responsible for overseeing the welfare and care of animals when OLAC provides that care. The ACUC is responsible for ensuring OLAC program of animal care satisfies applicable standards and regulations.

Overview

In general, UCB policies require that OLAC, under the auspices of the Attending Veterinarian, provide care for all animals used in research and teaching. The ACUC has overall responsibility for ensuring the program of animal care sufficiently addresses animal welfare needs. The Attending Veterinarian and OLAC Clinical Veterinarians have day to day responsibility for ensuring the health and welfare of animals used in research and teaching, in accordance with approved animal use protocols and federal regulations and policies. This document outlines responsibilities of OLAC and the PI in cases where OLAC provides primary animal care. Exceptions to this document must be specifically addressed in an animal protocol and/or supporting standard operating procedures (SOPs) as approved by the ACUC.

A. OLAC RESPONSIBILITIES IN CASES OF OLAC PROVIDED CARE:

1. OLAC personnel are assigned to specific animal care duties. All care must be compliant with applicable federal policies and regulations, ACUC mandated policies, OLAC approved policies, and, if applicable, unique criteria outlined in an approved animal protocol.

2. OLAC assumes the responsibility of ensuring that animal welfare needs are addressed. This includes (a) daily feeding, care, and observation of animal condition as well as (b) ensuring that appropriate cleaning schedules are maintained. OLAC personnel must visually observe the condition of all animals every day of the year.
3. Unless otherwise specified in an SOP and the associated animal use protocol, OLAC personnel are responsible for ensuring that specialized equipment such as ventilated cage racks, change stations, water systems, etc. are functioning properly. OLAC personnel must check essential equipment every day of the year.
4. Animal care practices must meet all standards as set forth in applicable regulations and guidelines. OLAC staff must maintain appropriate husbandry standards for all animals under OLAC care.
5. OLAC personnel are responsible for ensuring veterinary staff, animal care staff, and/or PIs are informed of all animal health concerns in a timely manner.
6. Unless otherwise specified, OLAC is responsible for providing standard housing, caging, or animal enclosures.
7. Unless otherwise specified, OLAC is responsible for maintaining records of cage numbers, as well as cleaning and health check logs.
8. OLAC is responsible for labeling and maintaining proper labeling of all cages (i.e., identification of animals strains, sex) unless the animals are under PI care (as approved by the ACUC and in accordance with [ACUC Guidelines on Investigator Care of Vertebrate Animals](#)).

B. PI RESPONSIBILITIES IN CASES OF OLAC PROVIDED CARE:

1. PIs are responsible for responding to OLAC notices regarding animal welfare concerns within 24 hours after the PI and/or primary lab contact is notified via email by OLAC (e.g. fighting animals, overcrowded cages, and the need for infectious disease treatments).
2. PIs who require unique husbandry arrangements are responsible for ensuring these arrangements are approved in an animal use protocol and that the cages are marked as such.
3. PIs should regularly communicate with the Attending Veterinarian and OLAC management if they have concerns regarding animal care.
4. PIs must consult with OLAC when moving animals or changing husbandry conditions and must notify OLAC in advance of incoming animals.

5. It is the PI's responsibility to ensure that all animals covered by their protocol are checked as often as necessary to insure that approved research procedures are followed and to insure that research outcomes comply with approved humane endpoints.