

Version: 1.1 Effective Date: 8/24/2012	FASTING ANIMALS, SPECIAL/REGULATED DIETS/WATER/HOUSING POLICY	Supercedes Document Dated: <i>June 2009</i>
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I. Background

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* indicates that topics to be considered in the animal use protocol include nonstandard housing and husbandry requirements. Some studies require temporary husbandry procedures that fall outside standard procedures and are overseen by investigators rather than animal care staff.

II. Policy

This policy ensures the welfare of research animals undergoing nonstandard husbandry procedures (fasting, feeding/watering or special housing conditions) provided by investigators.

III. Definitions

- A. Special diets – Any diet or water that replaces the standard animal chow or water.
- B. Regulated diets – Diet or water that deviates from OLAC Standard Operating Procedures. If there is any portion of the day where food or water is not available, it is considered regulated.
- C. Fasting – A period of time, usually a one-time \leq 24-hour period, when the animal does not have usual access to food or water.
- D. Special housing conditions – Conditions that replace standard housing conditions, such as extended exposure to cold to induce torpor, exposure to nonstandard temperatures for the study of thermoregulation, or housing of animals in metabolic cages.

IV. Responsibilities

- A. Principal Investigator (PI) – The PI is responsible for ensuring that all laboratory personnel who oversee nonstandard husbandry procedures for research animals understand and abide by this policy.
- B. Office of Laboratory Animal Care (OLAC) – Animal care personnel are responsible for communicating problems with the monitoring documentation (currently cage cards and daily log) for animals undergoing nonstandard husbandry procedures and reverting animals to standard husbandry conditions if appropriate.
- C. Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) – Nonstandard husbandry procedures for research animals must be described and justified in the Animal Use Protocol (AUP) and approved by the ACUC before implementation.

V. Procedures

- A. If animals are being fasted, a card indicating the start and end (date and time) of the fast must be placed on each cage of fasting animals. Yellow “fasting” cards for this purpose are available from OLAC. If it is a one-time fast, a feeding/care log is not needed. A feeding/care log (see Appendix 1) must be posted and maintained

in each room where animals are being fed special or regulated diets/water, or are being maintained under special housing conditions. The log must clearly designate start and end dates for that month of this special procedure. Updated contact names and emergency phone numbers must also be included on this sheet.

- B. Each cage of animals must be clearly marked with a “special diet/water” cage card that correspond to the feeding/care log (a sample feeding/care log is attached; cage cards and logs are available from OLAC). The cards should indicate the start and end dates of the procedure. However, if this is to be continuous over many months, this information may be noted on the cage card (e.g., “ongoing”, “always”, “daily”). If special procedures are complex and/or entail more than simple dietary changes, a daily check list, as outlined in the PI's AUP, must be incorporated with the feeding/care log and must be maintained and posted in the animal housing area.
- C. When returning care to OLAC, the PI must do all of the following:
 - 1. Supply all cages with standard diet and/or water
 - 2. Remove “special diet/water” cards from all cages. “Special diet/water” cards may be placed behind standard cage cards for later use, but the standard cage card must be visible so that all cages appear normal to OLAC animal care staff.
 - 3. Indicate return to OLAC care clearly, with appropriate dates, on the feeding/care log, or remove the feeding/care log and maintain with lab records.
- D. Due to the fragile nature of many special diets, the level of food available to each animal must be checked a minimum of three times a week. All animals should be checked by responsible laboratory personnel at the end of the week to ensure that enough diet/water is present for weekends and/or extended holiday periods. Stored special diets or supplements must be covered and clearly labeled, noting contents, responsible investigator and expiration date.
- E. Animals that are on regulated diets/water or in special housing conditions must be checked daily including weekends. A description of acceptable amount of food/water (e.g., food hopper may only contain several pieces of food or might be empty at times) should be included on the feeding/care log.
- F. If animals are found without food or water and the feeding/care log of animals on regulated diet/water has not been initialed in 24 hours, OLAC will make every reasonable effort to contact the responsible parties as noted on the feeding/care log. However, if arrangements to feed/water the animals have not been made as of 3 PM that day, OLAC will feed/water the animals. The animals will be fed conventional chow appropriate for the species involved.
- G. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the OLAC veterinary staff at 642-9232.

VI. References

Institute of Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR). National Research Council (2011). *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (8th edition). Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.

APPENDIX 1: MONTHLY ANIMAL FEEDING/CARE LOG FOR INVESTIGATOR MAINTAINED ANIMALS

Investigator: _____ Campus Phone: _____ Emergency Phone: _____
 A.U.P. #: _____
 Responsible Personnel: _____ Campus Phone: _____ Emergency Phone: _____
 Additional Contact: _____ Campus Phone: _____ Emergency Phone: _____
 Additional Contact: _____ Campus Phone: _____ Emergency Phone: _____

Facility: _____ Room: _____ Description of Procedure: _____
 Rack: _____
 Starting Date: _____ Ending Date: _____

All animals on regulated diets and/or receiving special water must be initialed every 24-hours including weekends and holidays. All animals on special diets must be checked at least three times per week. Who should OLAC contact if the animals have no food or water? _____
Note: OLAC will contact the designated individual if animals are found without food or water and the log has not been checked in 24 hours. If there is no response by the end of the working day, OLAC will provide the animals with standard rodent diet and/or water.

Month: _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
Year: _____																																		
Animal/Cage #:																																		

Responsible person must **initial each date for each animal checked.**