



# Animal Occupational Health & Safety Newsletter

April 2023  
Volume 1  
Issue 1

Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC)  
[acuc@berkeley.edu](mailto:acuc@berkeley.edu)

(510) 642 - 8855  
[www.acuc.berkeley.edu](http://www.acuc.berkeley.edu)

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1 [Attention PIs/Lab Supervisors](#)

2 [ACUC Policy Update](#)

3 [OHSS Tips for Supervisors](#)

4 [OHSS Tips for Participants](#)

5 [N95 masks](#)

6 [Sharps disposal](#)

## Attention PIs/Lab Supervisors:

In an effort to better protect the health and safety of individuals working with animals, the ACUC has revised the Animal Occupational Health and Safety Program Policy to better reflect the risks associated with animal work. We've implemented changes to improve the protection of human health while minimizing the administrative burden for PIs/Supervisors when adding personnel to AUPs. Please take a moment to read our policy update.

Regards,

Karsten Gronert  
ACUC Chair

Erika Schwilk  
Chief, Occupational and Environmental Health Program

## ACUC Policy Update

The Animal Occupational Health and Safety Program (AOHSP) Policy was updated on 2/10/2023.

## RESOURCES

1 Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC)

2 Office for Animal Care and Use (OACU)

<https://www.acuc.berkeley.edu/>

3 Occupational Health Services

<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/Facstaff/OccHealth/>

4 Office for Laboratory Animal Care (OLAC)

<https://www.olac.berkeley.edu/>

The revised policy now specifies the minimum participation and time period of approval for participants and includes the following key changes:

- All personnel (except fish, amphibians, and reptile users) must be current in the Occupational Health Surveillance System (OHSS) at the time of the AUP's de Novo/ continuing review *prior* to the AUP being reapproved by the ACUC. If personnel are pending OHSS clearance, they will not be approved for work on the AUP.
- Minimum participation and time period of approval in the OHSS is risk based and dependent on both the animal species and hazards that your research is conducted under.
- Visitors (e.g., sponsored guests, non-UC collaborators, visiting researchers, affiliates) can obtain occupational health clearance by submitting a Visitor Form.

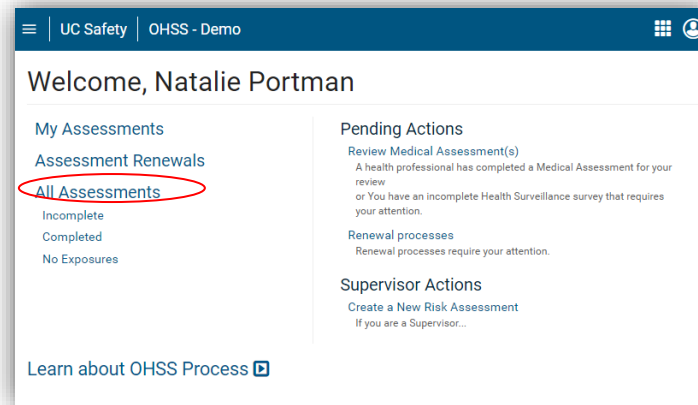
See the [AOHSP Policy](#) for more details

## OHSS Tips for Supervisors

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 [Attention PIs/Lab Supervisors](#)
- 2 [ACUC Policy Update](#)
- 3 [OHSS Tips for Supervisors](#)
- 4 [OHSS Tips for Participants](#)
- 5 [N95 masks](#)
- 6 [Sharps disposal](#)

1. Check the status of personnel in the OHSS *prior* to submitting your deNovo/continuing review. If personnel have an overdue renewal status, then you will need to renew their risk assessment. To check the status of personnel:
  - From the home screen go to All Assessments



### RESOURCES

- 1 Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC)
- 2 Office for Animal Care and Use (OACU)  
<https://www.acuc.berkeley.edu/>
- 3 Occupational Health Services  
<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/Facstaff/OccHealth/>
- 4 Office for Laboratory Animal Care (OLAC)  
<https://www.olac.berkeley.edu/>

- Find the person in question and then check the Renewal Status column.
  - Personnel with “Overdue” status, need to have their Risk Assessment renewed.
  - Start the renewal process by clicking the Renew button on the far right.
2. If you want to get new personnel added to the AUP quickly-ensure that the personnel have OHSS clearance. You can get personnel started in the OHSS by creating their Risk Assessment *before* you submit the amendment. See Appendix 1 of the [AOHSP Policy](#) for an overview of the OHSS process.
  3. Keep the personnel section of your AUP up to date. If personnel are no longer working on the AUP, submit an amendment to delete them from the AUP. You should also archive personnel in OHSS that are no longer working on your protocol.

## OHSS Tips for Participants

- If you need to act in the OHSS, you will receive an automated email from the OHSS. Read all emails from the OHSS as they will instruct on how to proceed with occupational health clearance directly through the OHSS.

## OHSS Tips for Participants (continued)

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1 [Attention PIs/Lab Supervisors](#)

2 [ACUC Policy Update](#)

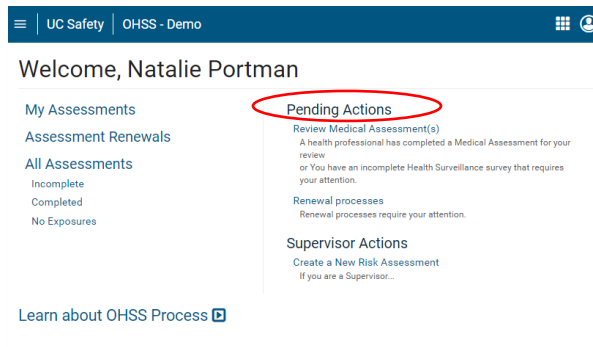
3 [OHSS Tips for Supervisors](#)

4 [OHSS Tips for Participants](#)

5 [N95 masks](#)

6 [Sharps disposal](#)

- If you need to act in the OHSS, you will receive an automated email from the OHSS. Read all emails from the OHSS as they will instruct on how to proceed with occupational health clearance directly through the OHSS.
- OHSS items that require your attention are listed in Pending Actions.
  - From the home screen go to Pending Actions



## Common causes for OHSS processing delays:

### 1. VACCINES

- REVIEW AND UPDATE your vaccines every time to sign off on your health questionnaire, especially ones like tetanus/tdap that are recommended for all animal work.
- TETANUS: Tetanus Vaccine is RECOMMENDED but NOT REQUIRED for those that work with live animals, their tissues, and/or body fluids. All adults should receive at least one dose of Tdap (even if they have received Td or DTap previously), and then a booster every 10 years.

### 2. PPE

- make sure that your health questionnaire personal protective clothing/equipment matches that in your risk assessment!
- There is standard PPE that is needed for all research with animals, so everyone should have SOME protective clothing needs listed.
- If you require an N95 for your work, your supervisor should list this in the risk assessment and you should list it in your health questionnaire. A mis-match will usually mean it is sent back to you. Occ health will provide the medical clearance and then you need to go for fit testing with EH&S. If you do not require an N95 for your work, but want to wear one, there is also a voluntary program (<https://ehs.berkeley.edu/publications/n95-respirator-voluntary-use-training>), but then it should not be listed on your health questionnaire without an explanation.

### 3. Allergies

- For the question about an alternative to latex in the allergy section, many of you write "no" as you answer the questions there. Please note that there IS an alternative to latex gloves in the laboratories and latex is now hard to find since it is a common allergen. There should be access to nitrile gloves in most areas.

4. Please actually review the health questionnaire and read through it each time that it is sent to you. A spot for date of birth and COVID vaccine was added in the last few years, and we are still seeing the questionnaires returned with those left blank.

### RESOURCES

1 Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC)

2 Office for Animal Care and Use (OACU)  
<https://www.acuc.berkeley.edu/>

3 Occupational Health Services  
<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/Facstaff/OccHealth/>

4 Office for Laboratory Animal Care (OLAC)  
<https://www.olac.berkeley.edu/>

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 [Attention PIs/Lab Supervisors](#)
- 2 [ACUC Policy Update](#)
- 3 [OHSS Tips for Supervisors](#)
- 4 [OHSS Tips for Participants](#)
- 5 [N95 masks](#)
- 6 [Sharps disposal](#)

## RESOURCES

- 1 Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC)
- 2 Office for Animal Care and Use (OACU)  
<https://www.acuc.berkeley.edu/>
- 3 Occupational Health Services  
<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/Facstaff/OccHealth/>
- 4 Office for Laboratory Animal Care (OLAC)  
<https://www.olac.berkeley.edu/>

## N95s

- If you are medically cleared to wear an N95, you must be fit tested by EH&S. For more information contact EH&S at [ehs@berkeley.edu](mailto:ehs@berkeley.edu)
- Do not buy, borrow or wear a N95 without contacting EH&S. UNLESS AN N95 IS NOT REQUIRED FOR YOUR WORK AND YOU ARE FOLLOWING VOLUNTARY USE GUIDELINES: <https://ehs.berkeley.edu/publications/n95-respirator-voluntary-use-training>, but then it should not be listed on your health questionnaire without an explanation.
- Supervisors are responsible for providing personnel with the correct N95 and must ensure that those in need of N95s are wearing them.

## DOs and DON'Ts of Proper Sharps Disposal

- DO immediately dispose of the needle and syringe (still connected) into the sharps container after use.
- DON'T try to recap the needle
- DON'T try to separate the needle and syringe before disposal
- DON'T shear or break contaminated needles of other contaminated sharps.
- DON'T bend, recap, or remove contaminated sharps from devices.
- DON'T reuse disposable sharps

### Do you know how to report a needlestick injury?

- Notify your supervisor
- Call EH&S at (510) 642-3073
- Call University Health Services Occupational Health Department at (510) 642-6891

Thank you for working with our team to ensure that your researchers receive the education needed to work with animals and once they go through OHSS, they then should know how to obtain additional information about personal protective equipment, their specific species information, or any recommended vaccines. We appreciate the important work you do and enjoy helping everyone be a bit safer in their UC Berkeley research.