



Animal Users Health and Safety Program

Ensuring Proper Health and Safety in the Use of Animals in Research

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Hazards are associated with exposure to animals used in research and teaching. These may include, allergens, zoonoses, physical and chemical hazards. The ESF Animal Users Health and Safety Program (AUHSP) provides policy and procedures for individuals working in animal care facilities.

The objectives of the program are to minimize the risks of injury and illness by controlling or eliminating recognized hazards associated with laboratory animal care facilities and related facility maintenance and to ensure compliance with the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS Policy).

1.2 Scope

The Animal Users Health and Safety Program is administered by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) office. The policies and procedures reflected in this program apply to all individuals entering an animal care facility or who have frequent contact with animals. Consult all sections of this Program prior to initial entry into an animal care facility.

2. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The Health Research Extension Act of 1985, Public Law 99-158, "Animals In Research" (November 20, 1985), provides the statutory mandate for the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS Policy). The PHS policy requires institutions to use the National Resource Council's (NRC) Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th Edition (Guide) as a basis for developing and implementing an institutional program for activities involving animals. An institutional program must include a "health program for personnel who work in laboratory animal facilities or have frequent contact with animals."

In order to meet compliance with PHS Policy, the ESF IACUC has developed an Animal Users Health and Safety Program based on the recommendations provided by the National Research Councils Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th Edition (2011) and Occupational Health and Safety in the Care and Use of Research Animals (1997).

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

3.1 Animal User Supervisors (PI, instructor, lab manager, etc.)

- Identify staff entering animal care facilities or handling animals and enroll them in this Program.
- Ensure known and potential animal use hazards are properly identified and communicated to workers and to IACUC.
- Ensure all workers use safe work practices and required personal protective equipment to minimize exposures to hazards.
- Maintain a copy and post any health and safety information provided by the IACUC and EH&S for all active protocols.
- Report all known work-related injuries or illness to their supervisor and an injury report form (<http://www.esf.edu/hr/Injury-illness%20Report.pdf>) is to be submitted to the EH&S office. For serious injuries requiring immediate medical attention, on campus contact campus police, off campus contact 911.

3.2 Environmental Health & Safety Office

- Review protocols with IACUC and require satisfactory training, procedures, and equipment for each listed hazard.
- Provide job hazard analysis and risk assessments at the request of PI.
- Conduct semiannual inspections with IACUC and report on identified hazards.
- Review and maintain records of Health Care Providers Medical Evaluation Recommendation (page 1 of the AUH&S questionnaire).
- Maintain a current list of Program Participants in conjunction with the IACUC.

3.3 Medical Evaluation Reviewers

Industrial Medical Associates-Review of university faculty/staff/student questionnaires

- Review Animal Users Medical Questionnaire and provide associated written recommendation to IACUC or EH&S.
- First page of questionnaire (including name, department, animal species, etc) is signed by the medical evaluation reviewer and returned to the Animal Facilities Manager with a notation of “Risk assessment satisfactory”, “Personal Protective Equipment recommended”, or “The reviewer will contact the individual to schedule a follow-up visit”. The medical professional will provide additional information as necessary. The animal user will be informed of the results of the questionnaire review if they are being advised to see a medical professional for a follow-up visit or if there are any added recommendations by the medical professional. The IACUC or EH&S office will notify the animal user when the individual is authorized for entry into the animal facilities.
- Maintain all associated medical records.

3.4 Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

- Review the animal care facilities and animal care program semiannually to ensure the Animal Users Health and Safety Program is implemented.
- Review this Program at least semi-annually and revise as necessary.
- Review protocols and approve procedures with health and safety information provided by the EH&S committee member and approval of medical review official.

- Advise the Vice Provost for Research and President (IO) in cases where a PI has failed to comply with the AUHSP and has not adequately responded to IACUC's attempts to gain compliance.

4. PARTICIPANTS IN THE ANIMAL USERS HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM

The extent and level of participation of individuals in the AUHSP will be based on the hazard exposure of each individual each individual engaging in animal research. Program participants will fall into one of three categories, Risk Level 1, Risk Level 2 or Risk Level 3. Risk Level 1 participants are considered to have moderate to high levels of exposure to animals based on their frequency and duration of tasks conducted with animals. Risk Levels 2 and 3 participants are considered to have a low exposure. Examples of each are listed below.

4.1 Risk Level 1 Participants

- Animal care technicians.
- Faculty, staff and students involved in animal protocols.
- University employees who provide custodial or facility support services in areas where animals are housed **and** are subject to direct aerosol exposure to animal based allergens for greater than 5% of their total work time (i.e. greater than 2 hours/week for full-time 40 hour/week employees)

4.2 Risk Level 2 Participants (Other ESF employees and affiliates)

- Principal Investigators who do not have direct contact with animals
- Undergraduate students enrolled in classes that use vertebrate animals and animal by products
- University employees who provide custodial or facility support services in areas where animals are housed and spend less than 5% of their time directly exposed to animal based allergens.
- IACUC members (including non-affiliated member, non-scientist) spending less than 5% of their time directly exposed to animal based allergens.

4.3 Risk Level 3 Participants (non-ESF employees)

- Casual visitors
- Outside contractors who will be working in the animal facilities for greater than 5% of their total work time (i.e., greater than 2 hours/week for full-time 40 hour/week employees).

5 PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The following provides procedures and program requirements for individuals assigned Risk Level 1, 2 and 3.

5.1 Risk Level 1

5.1.1 Medical Requirements

Individuals assigned to Risk Level 1 must:

1. Have documented proof of all immunizations required by IACUC to handle the laboratory/wild animal(s) in use.

2. Be offered access to a medical risk assessment free of charge. Participants must complete and submit an Animal Users Health and Safety Questionnaire according to the procedures listed below.

5.1.2 Animal Users Health and Safety Questionnaire

Personnel who have moderate to high levels of exposure to animals (Risk Level 1) must complete an Animal Users Health and Safety Questionnaire.

The questionnaire can be submitted one of two ways:

- 1) Send the completed form via hard copy through the mail to the Industrial Medical Associates (IMA) representative for evaluation.
- 2) Seal the completed questionnaire and deliver it to the EH&S office. The sealed questionnaire will be sent to IMA.

Individuals who require additional follow-up will be scheduled to meet with the designated IMA medical professional. IMA will notify ESF's EH&S office when the employee is authorized to work with animals. Completed AUHS Questionnaires and evaluation information will be filed with IMA.

The IMA representative will inform the personnel and the EH&S office when evaluation of the risk assessment form is complete and if any work restrictions or personal protective equipment is recommended. Initiation of lab or field work will be on hold until the EH&S office confirms unrestricted access is allowed and recommended PPE is provided.

When a new Animal Care and Use protocol is submitted to the IACUC, personnel are given a copy of this program and the Questionnaire. The principal investigator will discuss with graduate assistants, employees, etc., the hazards associated with animal care facilities and fieldwork, the importance of proper personal hygiene and protective clothing, and the necessity for completing the risk assessment process. Personnel are notified that they may not begin lab or field work involving animals until the Animal Users Health and Safety Questionnaire has been received and evaluated Industrial Medical Associates (IMA).

Personnel involved in ongoing animal work will be required to complete a health questionnaire at least once every 3 years (the maximum duration of an animal care protocol).

For personnel already enrolled in the AUHSP, but involved in more than one animal care protocol, or submitting a new protocol, the IACUC will determine if it is significantly different (different species, location, etc.) and would require that person to complete a new questionnaire.

5.1.3 Training

1. The PI, or other qualified personnel as indicated in the animal care protocol, must provide training on all hazards associated with the tasks being performed.
2. PI's and Supervisors must ensure individuals working with specific hazards such as, chemicals, controlled substances, infectious material, or radiation meet the training requirements as recommended by the EH&S.

5.1.4 Personal Protective Equipment

1. Individuals assigned to Risk Level 1 will be provided appropriate PPE if required by the PI, IACUC or a physician.

5.2 Risk Level 2

5.2.1 Information and Training

1. Students, employees, and IACUC members who spend less than 5% of their time directly exposed to animal based allergens will be provided with Lab Animal Safety Sheets that include potential risks associated with exposure to each animal species.
2. Lab Animal Safety Sheets will also include information on mechanisms to report concerns on the care and use of animals.
3. The PI/instructor will provide any additional safety instruction to students.
4. PI's will provide any additional safety information to those who provide custodial and facility support services.

5.2.2 Personal Protective Equipment

1. Individuals assigned to Risk Level 2 will be provided appropriate PPE if required by EH&S, the IACUC or the PI.

5.3 Risk Level 3

The PI, or designee, must meet with visitors and outside contractors. Individuals will be advised that, if they have any medical conditions that may increase their risk (being immuno-compromised, pregnant, or having allergies, etc.) they should contact their personal health care provider prior to entering an animal facility.

Lab Animal Safety Sheets will be provided on potential risks associated with access to each animal facility and will include a signature line to certify that the safety sheets have been read.

Visitors are permitted only indirect contact with the animals and will be accompanied by the animal facility manager or designee at all times while in the animal facility.

6. ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS OF THE ANIMAL USERS HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM

6.1 Program Costs

Charges for health evaluation are borne by ESF.

Principal Investigators are accountable for the cost of providing the personal protective equipment required to reduce occupational exposure of workers in their lab or during fieldwork.

Outside contractors are responsible for providing any necessary personal protective equipment required to reduce occupational exposure for contractors' employees.

6.2 Animal Protocol Health and Safety Review

The EH&S office has a representative on the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and reviews every protocol. This representative provides recommendations regarding hazards for each protocol with the intent of meeting the objectives of the Animal Users Health and Safety Program. The review lists hazards that are identified based on a review of the written animal protocol.

The Principal Investigator is responsible for reading any Health and Safety recommendations and ensuring the statements accurately describe the tasks and processes being conducted. The Principal Investigator must keep a copy of these recommendations and provide it to their personnel. The PI will make this document available to IACUC and EH&S upon request.

6.3 Program Review

The IACUC approves changes made to the Animal Users Care Health and Safety Program and reviews the program during each semi-annual program review.

6.4 Documentation

The EH&S staff will track and document those enrolled in the program including those who have completed the medical evaluation (Level 1) and those in other categories (Levels 2 and 3).

6.5 Additional Information

If there are questions regarding the Animal Users Health and Safety Program, contact ESF's EH&S office (<http://www.esf.edu/ehs/>) or the IACUC (<http://www.esf.edu/animalcare/>).