

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee**

## **SOPs for Animal Care and Husbandry—ISU Farms and Facilities**

### **Background**

Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are written procedures or a set of practical, specific instructions about how to implement a policy or establish standardized processes without loss of effectiveness. SOPs are important for animal care and husbandry in the animal care program.

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* (4th edition) further expands the recommendation for written operating procedures. “It is important to develop written animal care and husbandry policies and procedures for each unit in the program. Some husbandry practices may cause temporary discomfort or pain. The IACUC must review and approve all operating procedures that have the potential to cause pain or distress in animal care and husbandry.”

### **Guidance**

For consistency and standardization across campus, it is recommended that consideration be given to inclusion of the following information in SOPs:

- Animal handling
- Euthanasia
- Standard agricultural practices performed (if applicable)
- Husbandry
  - Facilities, environment, and space requirements
  - Feed and water
  - Criteria of well-being
  - Signs of pain and distress
- Husbandry practices routinely carried out that may cause discomfort or pain
  - Justification/rationale why the procedure is needed to sustain the long-term welfare of the animals and/or the animals’ caretakers or handlers (e.g., behavioral management, to reduce aggression, avoiding health problems)
  - Precautions taken to reduce pain, stress, and infection
- Emergency plan
- Animal identification procedures
- Documentation and location of research and medical records
- Biosecurity and biocontainment practices
- Zoonotic disease concerns and procedures to avoid transmission
- Transportation
- Emergency contact information including contact information for the Attending Veterinarian

The written procedures should be filed in the appropriate administrative office and in locations accessible to those individuals involved in carrying out the designated procedures and must be monitored regularly

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by the IACUC. The IACUC may utilize the semi-annual program review and a designated sub-committee as a means to monitor SOPs.

The IACUC must review and approve activities on a project-specific basis, taking into account a number of factors, e.g., the aims of the study, consideration of alternatives, minimization of pain and distress. For routine aspects of research (e.g., species specific techniques for immunization and titer determinations during antibody production), IACUCs may approve SOPs that can be cited by investigators in their protocols in order to avoid needless repetition. SOPs should be reviewed by the IACUC at appropriate intervals (at least once every three years) to ensure they are up-to-date and accurate.

## References

- *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, Eighth Edition. Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources, Commission on Life Sciences, National Research Council, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 2011.
- *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching*, Fourth Edition. Federation of Animal Science Societies, Champaign, IL, 2020.
- OLAW FAQs #D14 at <https://olaw.nih.gov/guidance/faqs#14> U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training, 1985.