



Reporting Concerns Involving the Care and Use of Animals

Handling of Complaints

Statement

Principal Investigators, animal caretakers, or anyone else responsible for or concerned with the health and welfare of the animals used in research and teaching at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and any of its facilities who are aware of instances of possible non-compliance with the policies, rules, regulations and laws regarding the humane care and use of animals, should report such concerns to a member of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or to a designated member of University administration.

All allegations of animal mistreatment will be taken seriously and investigated. In accordance with Federal laws¹⁻³ and the Institution's Assurance statement to the Public Health Service (PHS), individuals reporting such concerns may do so without the fear of being discriminated against or subject to reprisal.

Procedures

A. Complaint Requirements

1. Any complaint regarding possible inappropriate care or handling of animals should be made to a member of the IACUC, the Institutional Official, or the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. Contact information is provided herein.
2. A verbal or written complaint is acceptable. Whatever the mode of communication employed, the complaint should include a factual description, time, location, animal species, numbers and identification of animals, specific care or handling concerns, and any other relevant details, to the extent this information is known.
3. Anonymous complaints are acceptable if sufficient detail is provided to allow investigation of the charges.
4. The identity of a complainant will be kept confidential, when so requested by the complainant, to the extent allowed by law or court order.

B. Internal Routing of Complaint and Investigation

1. The person specified in 2a who initially received the complaint shall forward it to the IACUC Chair as soon as possible and in no event more that 24 hours after receiving the complaint.

2. When a verbal complaint is received by a person specified in 2a, that person is responsible for providing a written, summary report to the IACUC Chair.
3. The IACUC Chair shall review the complaint, notify the Institutional Official (IO) that a complaint was made, and schedule a meeting of a subcommittee of the IACUC to review the complaint within ten (10) business days.
4. The IACUC Chair will notify the alleged involved individual(s) and the person(s)' supervisor(s) that a complaint was received and afford them 24 hours to respond.
5. If the preliminary investigation by the subcommittee indicates that the complaint is unsupported, the complaint and all relevant information will be presented at the next meeting of the IACUC and recorded in the minutes. The IACUC Chair will notify the IO, all involved individuals and associated administrators of the IACUC's determination.
6. If the preliminary investigation reveals that further investigation of the incident is warranted, the relevant information will be presented for discussion at the next convened meeting of the IACUC. Involved individuals will be invited to the meeting to respond to the complaint and questions from the IACUC in person. Once the investigation is concluded, the IACUC will make recommendations for any corrective action. The IACUC Chair will notify the IO of the findings of the IACUC and recommended actions. The IO will notify the involved individuals and appropriate institutional administrators or departmental leaders in writing of corrective action to be taken as recommended by the IACUC.
7. In cases where significant problems are identified which are not satisfactorily resolved between the IACUC, IO, and the involved individuals, the IACUC through the IO may make recommendations to the VP for Research and Graduate Studies for immediate action.
8. The IACUC will be responsible for maintaining a file documenting complaints, committee reviews and actions taken or recommended to rectify the problems identified, including any minority views expressed by any committee member.
9. Significant violations will be reported in writing to the appropriate Federal Agencies by the IO and will include a summary of the IACUC's investigation and information about corrective actions taken.

Reporting of Negative Incidents

“Negative incidents” is defined as occurrences that harm, appear to harm, or cause the death of animals under the care of the University or occurrences that are deviations from standard operating procedures or generally accepted animal care practices that could endanger the welfare of the animals under the care of the University.

In instances when negative incidents occur involving animals under the care of the University or any campus facility, center or division; the director, department head or other relevant authoritative administrative personnel shall provide the IACUC Chair a description of the incident along with a description of any actions taken to remedy the situation within twenty-four hours of the time when the incident was first discovered.

The IACUC Chair shall provide the information related to the incident and any steps taken towards its resolution to the Institutional Official within 24 hours of receipt. The IACUC Chair shall review the information provided and present it to the IACUC in a timely manner.. The IACUC shall review the incident and its resolution at the next scheduled meeting or before, if necessary, to be certain the matter is satisfactorily resolved. Should the IACUC have any recommendations for further corrective action, the IACUC Chair will forward a summary to the IO for presentation to the appropriate facility authority.

Contact Information

Concerns about animal care can be reported to the IACUC Coordinator, the IACUC Chairman, the Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs or the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies via

Email - animalconcerns@louisiana.edu

or

Telephone - (337) 482-5811

¹ *U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research and Training*

² *Animal Welfare Act* 9 CFR 2.31(c) (4), 2.32 (c)(4)

³ *Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*