

15.99.07 Use of Vertebrate Animals

Revised [July 13, 2021](#)

Next Scheduled Review: July 13, 2026

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Regulation Summary

The Texas A&M University System (system) is committed to the humane and ethical treatment of vertebrate animals used in research, teaching and testing in compliance with federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines.

Definitions

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Regulation

1. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1 Each member involved with the use of vertebrate animals in research, teaching or testing must establish a rule for carrying out this regulation.
- 1.2 All animals used in research, teaching or testing regardless of the funding sources, must be provided humane care and treatment.
- 1.3 Each member must obtain United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) registration or license if required by the Animal Welfare Act.
- 1.4 Each member must obtain a Public Health Service (PHS) Animal Welfare Assurance (Assurance) from the National Institutes of Health Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) prior to performing any activity supported by PHS, the National Science Foundation or the National Aeronautics and Space Administration involving animals.
- 1.5 The chief executive officer or designee of each member that conducts research, teaching or testing with animals must establish an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or enter into an agreement with another member with an IACUC.
- 1.6 The Animal Welfare Act (for covered species) and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* must be followed when conducting research, teaching or testing activities involving non-agricultural animals and biomedical research activities in agricultural animals.

- 1.7 The *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* must be followed when conducting research, teaching or testing activities involving agricultural animals intended for improving animal nutrition, breeding, management, or production efficiency or for improving the quality of food and fiber. In addition, Chapter 2 of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, Animal Care and Use Program, must be followed.
- 1.8 The use of vertebrate animals within each member, whether for research, teaching or testing purposes, must be described in an Animal Use Protocol (AUP). The AUP is a form designed to capture relevant information regarding the appropriate use of the vertebrate animals in research, teaching or testing activities.
- 1.9 For each project involving vertebrate animals used in research, teaching or testing, an AUP must be approved by the IACUC.
- 1.10 An approved and current AUP for all vertebrate animal activities must be in place at all times vertebrate animals are housed or used for research, teaching or testing.
- 1.11 All modifications to approved vertebrate animal activities must be approved prior to initiation of the changes by the IACUC directly, or through a formal process established by the IACUC for Veterinary Verification and Consultation or Administrative Review by support staff, as applicable to the individual IACUC, and depending on the nature of the modification.

2. INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE (IACUC)

- 2.1 The IACUC of institutions with a USDA registration will be appointed and structured, and perform duties and functions as described in the Animal Welfare Act.
- 2.2 The IACUC of institutions with a PHS Assurance will be appointed and structured, and perform duties and functions as described in the documents “Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals” and Applied Research Ethics National Association/Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare’s “Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Guidebook.”
- 2.3 The IACUC of institutions conducting research on agricultural animals will be appointed and structured, and perform the duties and functions as described in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching*.
- 2.4 The IACUC of institutions not required to obtain a USDA or a PHS Assurance will be appointed and structured, and perform duties and functions, with the exception of those activities involving reporting to OLAW, as described in the documents “Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals” and Applied Research Ethics National Association/Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare’s “Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Guidebook.”

3. USE OF ANIMALS IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, TEACHING OR TESTING

- 3.1 Use of animals in agricultural research, teaching or testing is overseen by the IACUC. Agricultural research, teaching or testing is defined as research, teaching or testing

activities involving horses, and other farm animals, not limited to livestock or poultry, used or intended for use as food or fiber, or used or intended for use for improving animal nutrition, breeding, management, or production efficiency, or for improving the quality of food or fiber.

- 3.2 The *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* must be followed when conducting research, teaching or testing activities involving food and fiber production in agricultural animals.
- 3.3 When agricultural animals are involved in biomedical research, animal use and compliance must adhere to applicable federal guidelines including the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*.

4. ATTENDING VETERINARIAN

- 4.1 The attending veterinarian(s), or designee(s), provides guidance to the campus animal facility managers, animal users, and administrators on current standards for the care and use of animals in research, teaching and testing programs, and serves as the attending veterinarian of record under the Animal Welfare Act.
- 4.2 The attending veterinarian(s) has direct or delegated authority for activities involving animals at the institution, serves as a voting member of the IACUC and coordinates campus programs for the provision of adequate husbandry and veterinary care of research, teaching and testing animals.

5. CARE AND USE OF NON-MEMBER-OWNED ANIMALS

Non-member-owned vertebrate animals may not be used by a member's faculty, students, or staff in research, teaching, or testing without prior approval of their IACUC. In addition to on-campus activity, this compliance requirement includes, but is not limited to, animal research, teaching and testing conducted:

- (a) in the field by member faculty, students, or staff;
- (b) by member students at other institutions as part of the completion of a degree;
- (c) at another institution as part of a joint contract;
- (d) in off-campus activities involving an undergraduate student as part of the completion of a member's undergraduate course;
- (e) in the teaching of member undergraduate and graduate courses;
- (f) by graduate veterinarians for continuing education; and
- (g) with client-owned animals participating in clinical research studies.

Related Statutes, Policies or Requirements

[The Animal Welfare Act \(7 U.S.C. §§ 2131-2159\) and Amendments and the Animal Welfare Regulations \(9 C.F.R.\)](#)

[Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals \(National Institutes of Health\)](#)

[Health Research Extension Act of 1985](#)

[U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training](#)

[Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#)

[Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching](#)

[United States Department of Agriculture Animal Welfare Inspection Guide](#)

Member Rule Requirements

A rule is required to supplement this regulation. See Section 1.1.

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