

HKSTP IACUC

02– Policy for Personnel Involved in the Handling of Laboratory Animals

Version History

Version	Effective Date
1	16/06/2023

1. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure personnel involving in handling of animals have received appropriate education and training to have necessary knowledge and expertise to perform the specific animal procedures for the respective species. It is the applicant's/ company's responsibility to make arrangements for providing the required training(s) for all of its personnel working in the animal program.

2. Policy Statements

- 2.1 All personnel working in the animal program shall have undergone professional training and acquired the necessary qualifications and skills.
- 2.2 Personnel handling animals shall be familiar with the regulations and standards of laboratory animal welfare and ethics; that the personnel have a good understanding and knowledge of laboratory animal care; that the personnel have obtained knowledge of the behaviors of the relevant species as well as correct operating procedures.
- 2.3 Guidance and supervision by an experienced professional shall be provided to any new person or trainee involved in experiments until the newcomer is proficient in procedures using live animals.
- 2.4 For education and training purposes, alternative non-animal methods shall be used to reduce or replace the use of living animals when training objectives can still be achieved.

3. Responsibilities of Veterinarians and Veterinary Staffs

- 3.1 The applicant/ company is responsible to arrange for veterinarians and veterinary staffs for overseeing and performing approved procedures involving the use of animals.
- 3.2 Qualifications and training

Laboratory animal veterinarians and veterinary staffs shall have obtained appropriate qualifications and received relevant training. The review, implementation, and inspection of laboratory animal projects shall be carried out with the participation of a laboratory animal veterinarian or other person specialized in the veterinary care of laboratory animals.

- 3.3 Qualified staff(s) shall be responsible for conducting daily inspections, supervising and providing advice on animal welfare and ethics in the institution and the facility.
- 3.4 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for animal disease prevention. The veterinarian shall be familiar with the prevention and control technicalities of diseases for each species in the facility, and shall be responsible for vaccination of animals (if applicable), as well as developing and producing disease control protocols and quarantine programs for microorganisms, parasites, and other diseases.
- 3.5 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for animal disease monitoring. This includes regular monitoring for the presence of parasitic, bacterial, and viral epidemics or infections, as well as subclinical infections.
- 3.6 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for timely diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The veterinarian has the authority to give appropriate treatment to or take containment measures for animals that have been assessed and diagnosed with illness or injury and to perform euthanasia.
- 3.7 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for planning animal-use programs of research. The scientists involved in the experiment shall consult with a laboratory animal veterinarian to agree on a study plan that will achieve the experimental objectives.
- 3.8 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for the management and use of controlled drugs (if applicable).
- 3.9 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for conducting post-mortem examinations and the production of post-mortem reports. In the case of sudden disease or abnormal death, based on the result of the postmortem report, the veterinarian shall advise on appropriate containment measures.
- 3.10 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for taking medical notes and managing medical records and preparing specific care and treatment plans.
- 3.11 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall participate in the ethical review and implementation of laboratory animal projects. The veterinarian shall supervise, inspect and provide professional judgment on the implementation of laboratory animal welfare and ethics.
- 3.12 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for advising on measures to prevent and control zoonoses, identifying the source of disease in order to minimize risks. The veterinarian shall undertake appropriate preventative measures in the facility, such as ensuring personnel wear personal protective equipment, executing appropriate disinfection procedures, or using isolation or segregation to prevent disease outbreaks when needed. This is to reduce the risk of the disease spreading and to ensure bio-safety.
- 3.13 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall advise on quarantine programs when new animals arrive at the facilities and carry out the appropriate inspections. If any infection is found that has a

legal requirement to be reported, the veterinarian must notify the relevant government authority in a timely manner.

- 3.14 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for advising and overseeing surgery and post-surgical care, and participating in the inspection and oversight of pre-, peri-, and post-surgical procedures, as well as inspecting and managing surgical and post-surgical complications.
- 3.15 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall be responsible for providing professional guidance on, or performing the administration of, anesthesia, analgesia, and euthanasia.
- 3.16 Laboratory animal veterinarian shall advise on humane endpoints. The veterinarian shall be consulted and negotiate with researchers during project planning and before animal experiments. During experiments, when it has become clear that the experimental objectives have been met or cannot be met, the veterinarian shall identify and implement humane endpoints in a timely manner. In accordance with the ethical review plan, the veterinarian shall, when necessary, have the authority to reduce pain and stop unnecessary harm by performing euthanasia or through other means.

4. Responsibilities of Primary Investigator (PI)

- 4.1 The PI has the overall responsibility to ensure that the Project complies with the highest standards of integrity, respect, and ethics for humane treatment of animals in research as governed by the International Guiding Principles for Biomedical Research Involving Animals, HK Code of Practice for Care & Use of Animals for Experimental Purposes, EU Directive 2010/63/EU on the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific Purposes and the HKSTP IACUC Handbook.
- 4.2 The PI shall be responsible for all aspects of an approved animal use application/ Project.
- 4.3 The PI has the overall responsibility, including the safety, of all laboratory personnel involved in his/her research Project.
- 4.4 The PI shall establish 24 hours, 7 days a week contact number where animal health related questions can be answered by lab personnel.
- 4.5 The PI has the responsibility to ensure all laboratory personnel require working with animals for the Project to have attended adequate appropriate training and is competent to perform the required procedures in a proper and safe manner.
- 4.6 The PI shall provide appropriate and adequate personal protective equipment and instruction for laboratory personnel working for the Project.
- 4.7 The PI has the responsibility to establish a culture of compliance to ensure laboratory personnel adhere to the highest ethical standards.

5. Responsibilities of Laboratory Personnel Handling Animals

5.1 Laboratory personnel handling animals shall have completed the training on 3R principles.

5.2 Laboratory personnel handling animals shall have received training in the following areas and have been considered competent to handle the work by their direct supervisor(s);

- the biology, handling and care of the species to be used in this proposal;
- applying aseptic surgical methods and techniques (if necessary);
- the concept, availability and use of research or testing methods that limit the use of animals or minimize distress;
- the proper use of anesthetics, analgesics and tranquilizers (if necessary); and
- the procedures for reporting animal welfare concerns.

3.17 Laboratory personnel shall obtain a valid license/permit/endorsement under Animals (Control of Experiments) Ordinance, Chapter 340, before participating in any animal-related activities in the laboratory.

3.18 Laboratory personnel must not bring the following items to animal housing facilities;

- Animals from unknown/unauthorized source (dead or alive)
- Animal organs, tissues or body fluids from outside;
- Unauthorized equipment and inappropriate clothing; or
- Other items that might have been contaminated (e.g. by animal contact from outside the animal housing facilities)