



OP 79.05: LABORATORY ANIMAL WELFARE

PURPOSE

The research focus of Mississippi State University is diverse, ranging from production agriculture to biomedical research interests. Considering this diversity, Mississippi State University is committed to ensuring all animals used in teaching and research receive humane care and use while maintaining the flexibility required to serve the needs of industry partners. The use of animals is essential to several aspects of teaching and research, and must be considered a privilege, not a right, of the academic and scientific communities. This policy is to ensure that animal care and use in research and teaching at Mississippi State University are in compliance with local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and policies regarding animal welfare.

DEFINITIONS

Animal: any live animal in the sub-phylum vertebrata.

Exceptions:

1. neonates prior to weaning unless their purpose is to answer a scientific question;
2. embryos prior to hatching;
3. larval stages of development;
4. as the IACUC deems appropriate (must be documented in writing, signed by the chair).

Research: any use of animals whose purpose is to answer a scientific question.

Teaching: any Mississippi State University sanctioned endeavor in a classroom, laboratory, or field that provides an educational experience.

SCOPE

Client owned animals receiving clinical care are not included in this policy. Additionally, animals involved with judging and demonstrations are exempted from this policy.

INSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

The Institutional Official (IO) is identified as the Vice President for Research and Economic Development and has authority over the use of regulated animals. In accordance with Federal regulations, the IO established an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC – a standing committee reporting to the IO) with authority to ensure the humane care and use of animals in research and teaching. To facilitate the role of the IACUC and research scientists, the IO also established a University Laboratory Animal Veterinarian (ULAV). The ULAV serves as a university-wide resource that provides or oversees veterinary care and technical and scientific

support for Mississippi State University programs using animals in research and teaching. The ULAV is advised by the IACUC and reports to the IO.

POLICY

Investigators using animals for research or teaching must receive approval from the IACUC prior to initiating any animal use. The IACUC is charged with:

1. establishing and reviewing compliance with standards and procedures relating to animal welfare of animals used in research and teaching;
2. advising individuals and agencies dealing with such animals.

PROCEDURES

1. The IACUC will review all proposed use of vertebrate animals (as defined before in this document);
2. Review the animal care and use program and inspect all accredited and regulated animal facilities at least once every 6 months. Other animal facilities will be inspected on a regular basis. Any deficiencies or issues discovered within Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES) facilities during inspections will be communicated to the Director of MAFES, and the Vice President for the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine; and
3. Provide written reports about the animal program to the Institutional Official semi-annually, and report any serious or continuing noncompliance or when a concern regarding compliance arises.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by the Vice President for Research & Economic Development and the Vice President for the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine at least every four years.

REVIEWED BY:

/s/ Julie Jordan
Vice President, Research & Economic Development

03/05/2024
Date

/s/ Keith Coble
Vice President, Agriculture, Forestry & Veterinary Medicine

03/13/2024
Date

/s/ Tracey N. Baham
Associate Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness

03/18/2024
Date

/s/ Joan Lucas
General Counsel

03/20/2024
Date

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Mark E. Keenum
President

04/22/2024
Date