

**Laboratory Housing and Care of
Animals by Researchers**
IACUP Policy
Effective Date: May, 2016



I. Purpose

This policy provides the exception to the general rule that housing/-holding of research animals must be within the Laboratory Animal Resource Center (LARC) facilities and that daily care of the animals performed by LARC staff. These activities are not permissible if lasting more than 12 hours for USDA regulated species or 24 hours for non-USDA regulated species without specific justification within the protocol and approval by the IACUC. This policy allows an investigator to request housing of research animals in a laboratory space or to provide daily care "Researcher Care" without LARC services within LARC facilities.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all animals cared for at UCSF, both in and outside of centralized LARC care space.

III. IACUC Approval

Housing/holding animals in laboratory space or the lab solely providing care of animals within LARC for more than 12 hours for USDA regulated species or 24 hours for non-USDA regulated species requires specific approval by the IACUC. Approval is contingent on scientific necessity, protocol justification, non-availability of equivalent LARC space, and suitability of the proposed location. Justification must be consistent with the objectives of the approved IACUC protocol and will be reviewed annually. Convenience of the investigator or laboratory staff is not an acceptable justification. Spaces are subject to periodic scheduled or unannounced inspections.

If such approval is granted, this document establishes the standard of care that is acceptable to and required by the IACUC.

Contact the IACUC office prior to planning to construct/reallocate space for animal housing. The location must be inspected and approved prior to use.

The PI is responsible for ensuring that the space is appropriately prepared and maintained for use as a housing location. Approval is only for the specific procedure, project, or protocol; one housing approval for a laboratory does not automatically apply to any other protocols a laboratory may hold.

A. Animal Housing Classifications

LARC space: All Laboratory Animal Resource Center vivaria at UCSF

Non-LARC space: Any location outside of LARC

Researcher Care (within LARC space):

The continuous study and/or housing of animals for more than 12 hours for USDA regulated species or 24 hours for non-USDA regulated species in LARC space but without LARC monitoring or husbandry services. (e.g. behavior study rooms, neurophysiological testing under anesthesia, metabolic caging, etc.).

If the request is approved, your lab becomes solely responsible for providing complete animal care at all times including daily health assessment and husbandry. Signage is required on the door notifying IACUC and LARC staff when animals are present and if entry is restricted (as during conduct of behavior studies).

****Note: Researcher care for up to one week may be mandated due to biosafety requirements. These locations do not need to be listed in the IACUC protocol as 'Researcher Care'.***

Laboratory Housing (non-LARC space):

The housing of conscious animals in a non-LARC space for greater than 12 hours for USDA regulated species or 24 hours for non-USDA regulated species.

Extended Study of Unconscious Animals (non-LARC space):

Any non-LARC location used for greater than 12 hours for USDA regulated species or 24 hours for non-USDA regulated species where the study of unconscious animals is conducted (i.e. neurophysiological testing under anesthesia or non-survival surgeries, etc.).

B. Requirements for Approval

Justification for providing your own animal care within LARC space must be approved in the IACUC protocol in the 'Locations' section. Select the Researcher Care check box and answer all pertinent fields.

The following information is required for the IACUC to evaluate a lab housing request and must be completed before approval:

1. Report of air exchanges per hour provided prior to approval and as requested by the IACUC (contact Facilities Management). Room air exchange information is not required for aquatic housed species.
2. Seven consecutive days of temperature and humidity range readings from a calibrated and re-settable thermometer/hygrometer device. The device(s) need to remain calibrated. Humidity is to be between 30-70%; temperature 68-79 degrees F for rodents. Refer to The Guide for other species requirements.
3. Square footage of the laboratory housing area.
4. 24-hour room access is required (keys or codes must be provided to IACUC office)
5. Timer regulated room light cycle (typically 12:12). Any windows must be blacked out unless IACUC approved.
6. A disinfection protocol is required describing room sanitization.

7. Confirmation that daily care and maintenance will be performed by trained laboratory staff, and will be documented daily when animals are housed. Daily check sheets are to be retained for one year.
8. Location inspection and training is required for all lab members involved in care of these animals, including PI. Contact the IACUC office for scheduling.

C. Approved Animal Housing/ Researcher Care Standard of Care

If the lab housing request is approved, the lab becomes solely responsible for providing animal care at all times unless contracting with LARC to provide husbandry services. When LARC services are contracted, the lab remains responsible for evaluating daily the health and welfare of lab housed animals and all husbandry tasks.

Once approved, animals must be housed and cared for in accord with the Animal Welfare Act and Regulations, the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition, 2011 along with the following requirements:

Training and Monitoring

1. Training is required for the PI and all lab members involved in the care and use of animals housed in laboratories or solely cared for by research staff in LARC space.
2. Animals must be checked every day that the housing space is occupied, including weekends and holidays. LARC veterinary services (502-8687) must be contacted with any animal health concerns.
3. Lab Housing Daily Check sheets must be used to record animal care activities (checking animals, feeding, cleaning etc.) every day the housing space is occupied.

Micro-Environment:

1. Standard sized cages are to be used unless specialized caging is necessary (any non-standard cages must be justified in the approved IACUC protocol); Ventilated racks may be required.
2. Cages, including water bottles, stoppers and feed, must be changed -per IACUC/LARC standards for static and ventilated rack cages.
3. Lab personnel are responsible for room maintenance and husbandry duties which should be outlined in a lab prepared disinfection and sanitization protocol.
4. Dirty cages and equipment must be removed by the end of the day and transported to a cage return area or cage wash facility.

Macro-Environment:

1. Ventilation, temperature and humidity must comply with the standards set in the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and be adequate for the number of animals housed.
2. Temperature and humidity highs and lows must be recorded for every day that animals are present and Hygrometers/thermometers must be reset daily (min/max cleared).
3. Light source must be on a timer, set at a standard 12:12 cycle unless special lighting is justified in the protocol.
4. Feed and supplies must be appropriately stored in dated, lidded, leak-proof, vermin-proof containers and used within its shelf life. The housing area must be kept clean and organized with proper disinfection procedures in place.

5. The space must be available for IACUC inspection at any time. LARC veterinary staff must have 24 hour access to this room and veterinary staff may visit the space at any time.
6. The following must be posted in the lab housing area:
 - a. Approved Protocol number(s)
 - b. LARC veterinary staff emergency number
 - c. Emergency contact information for lab staff
 - d. Sign for reporting Animal Care and Use Concerns
 - e. IACUC Policy on Expired Drugs and Materials Used in Animal Research
 - f. A disinfection protocol for the laboratory housing area

IV. References

- A. 1 *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Eight Edition)*, Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 2011.
- B. 2 *Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, National Institutes of Health, Public Health Service, 2002.
- C. 3 *Animal Welfare Act*, United States Code, Title 7, Chapter 54
- D. 4 *Animal Welfare Regulations*, Code of Federal Regulations, Title 9, Chapter 1, Subchapter A, Parts 1-4.