

## Reporting Animal Welfare Concerns

### IACUC Responsibilities

- Reviews and investigates all concerns about animal care and use and submits reports of its findings and recommendations to the University President.
- Takes action to review, require amendments to or suspend protocols as appropriate.
- Keeps records of the complaint, review and investigation, recommendations, and any action taken.
- Ensures that information on the whistleblower policy is posted throughout the institution.

### The Institutional Official (University President) Responsibilities

- Receives the recommendations of the IACUC and takes appropriate action.
- Reports any protocol suspensions, serious or ongoing deficiencies in animal welfare, or deviations from the Guide (including minority views) to the regulatory agencies.

### Institutional Procedures for Animal Welfare Complaints/Concerns

- Individuals should make every attempt to go through normal reporting channels in addressing their concerns about animal care and use. These include reporting the perceived problem to the attending veterinarian, their supervisor, the facility manager, etc. If these reporting channels are not effective or are inappropriate, the IACUC acts as an independent review body to address concerns, make recommendations to the University President, or suspend protocols, as appropriate.
- The individual may report a perceived problem either in writing or verbally, and the complaint may be anonymous.
- The individual may report directly to any member of the IACUC, or through another person, such as the veterinarian or facility manager. The intermediary then reports the complaint to the IACUC Chair.
- The IACUC Chair contacts involved personnel, evaluates the complaint and where there is suspected departure from the standards of animal care and use in the Guide or PHH Policy, may initiate a review process by calling a convened meeting of the IACUC.
- If the IACUC determines that a potential threat exists to animal health or welfare, the committee may choose to suspend protocols pending the result of the investigation. All suspensions are also reported to OPRR and APHIS via the University President within 24 hours.
- Either the Chair, or the committee as a whole, may determine that the alleged complaint contains aspects that are outside of IACUC jurisdiction (i.e. scholarly misconduct). In those cases, the alleged complaint will be forwarded to the appropriate University official.
- IACUC investigation of the complaint will include, if necessary, visiting the site of the problem, interviewing or writing to personnel, reviewing questioned procedures, etc. The investigation will be performed thoroughly but expeditiously so as to minimize the potential for threats to animal welfare, or interruptions to research. A report of the

findings is discussed at a convened meeting of the committee, a course of action to be taken is determined, and a vote is taken to approve any action recommended. The course of action must be approved by a simple majority of the full committee.

- The written recommendations of the IACUC are communicated to the University President in a timely manner, with any minority opinions attached.
- Action is then taken according to the recommendations of the IACUC in consultation with the University President. All parties involved in the incident, including the whistleblower if known, are informed of the committee's decision. IACUC's decision is final.
- Following the implementation of the committee actions and resolution of the incident, a final report is generated outlining the complaint, result of the investigation, actions taken and outcome. The final report is voted on at a convened meeting of the IACUC and then sent to OPRR through the University President.
- The final report is kept on file with the IACUC records for a minimum of 3 years.
- The Animal Welfare Act provides specific legal protection for those reporting concerns about animal health or welfare. No facility employee, committee member, or laboratory personnel shall be discriminated against or be subject to any reprisals for reporting violations of any regulation or standards under the Animal Welfare Act.