

**Subject:       Transportation of Animals**

### **BACKGROUND**

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (the *Guide*, NRC 2011) states: "Careful planning for all types of transportation should occur to ensure animal safety and well-being. The process of transportation should provide an appropriate level of animal biosecurity while minimizing zoonotic risks, protecting against environmental extremes, avoiding overcrowding, providing for the animals' physical, physiologic, or behavioral needs and comfort, and protecting the animals and personnel from physical trauma." (p. 107)

To ensure humane animal handling and protect against disease spread, IACUC/DLAR requires that special provisions be met regarding the transportation of animals between WSU buildings or off campus locations. Transportation arrangements can be made through DLAR.

### **IACUC Policy**

#### ***Definition***

Movement of animals from a DLAR facility to a laboratory within the same building does not require an IACUC-approved Transportation of Animals Form, but the room to which the animals are transported must be listed in the protocol as a research location.

Transportation of animals between buildings on campus must be included as a part of the IACUC protocol application and outlined in a Transportation of Animals Form. Transporting animals to a human patient-care area requires authorization from the administration of that area.

Transportation of animals to another institution requires coordination between institutions regarding animal health status and IACUC approvals. A health certificate should accompany the animals. Contact DLAR Veterinary Technical Services for information.

### **IACUC Procedure**

#### ***General Transportation Principles***

1. During regular business hours, arrangements can be made with DLAR to transport animals free of charge.
2. Live animals cannot remain outside of approved housing facilities for more than 12 hours unless specifically approved in the IACUC protocol.
3. Water bottles must be removed or inverted during transportation and returned to their original position upon arrival to the destination. Animals must be provided with hydrogel in the cage during transportation (hydrogel can be obtained from DLAR).
4. Rodent cages must have filter tops secured with tape.
5. Cages/crates must be covered entirely with a drape.
6. The container must be sanitizable or disposable, and must be constructed in a way to avoid injury or escape of the animal.
7. Vehicular Transportation:
  - a. The use of personal vehicles is discouraged, as it can result in allergen exposure to the occupant and future occupants of the car, as the car can serve as a potential reservoir of animal pathogens.
  - b. Animals must be transported in the passenger compartment only.

- c. The vehicle must provide adequate heating / cooling to maintain a thermoneutral environment for the animal.
  - d. Cages, in a secondary container, or crates should be placed on a non-porous material (example: blue diaper pads, vinyl sheet, etc.) within the vehicle to allow for ease of cleaning surface especially if vehicle may be used again for animal transport.
  - e. Crates/cages should be placed away from direct sunlight, and ventilation should not blow directly onto the crate/cage.
  - f. The *IACUC Space Recommendations Policy and Management of Fighting and Fight Wounds in Mice SOP* must be followed during transportation.
  - g. Transport crates must be secured in the vehicle in an upright manner and should not be tilted, rolled or laid on their side.
  - h. Vehicle should be clean and uncluttered, other cargo should not be transported in the same area with animal crates.
  - i. Drivers are to remain with or in the vehicle at all times when animals are on board.
  - j. The most direct route of transport must be taken (i.e. door to door).
  - k. The owner of the vehicle used for the transport should be aware of the potential animal allergen exposure and risk to others that may subsequently be passengers in that vehicle.
  - l. Steps should be taken to minimize stress during transportation.
    - i. Handle cages gently, do not shake or drop.
    - ii. Low noise levels, keep windows closed, do not slam doors, and keep radios off or on very low volume.
  - m. Do not smoke in the vehicle or around the crates.
  - n. Ensure that crates or cages are not opened or filters breached during the transport.
8. Pedestrian Transportation:
- a. If an underground connection is available between buildings this should be used instead of going outside.
  - b. Cages/crates cannot be stacked during transport.
  - c. Appropriate precautions should be taken during inclement weather.

***Off-Campus Transportation:***

Contact DLAR Veterinary Technical Services (VTS) to coordinate transfer/transportation.

Figure 1. Transportation crate available from Taconic.

