



INDIANA UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH
Office of Research Compliance

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Office of Research Compliance (ORC)

Transportation of Animals - Guidelines

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Guidance Owner: *Bloomington Institutional
Animal Care and Use Committee*

Responsible University Officer:

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Vice President for Research

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Guidance Statement

The IACUC oversees and assures the well-being of research and teaching animals during transportation between study areas on campus or between institutions. The transport of regulated species must comply with the Animal Welfare Regulations enforced by the USDA. General standards for safe transport of research animals are available in *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, 8th edition. The primary principles for safeguarding animals during transport include maintenance of health, avoidance of exposure to potential pathogens, prevention of escape, prevention of injury, and reduction of stressors such as temperature extremes, aversive odors, excessive noises, and confrontations with other animals. Appropriate animal transport must also minimize risks to animal care and research personnel. In addition, when animals must be transported through public areas, the safety of the general public must be considered. IUB personnel must comply with the following guidelines unless specific exemptions are granted by the IACUC or deemed clinically necessary by IUB veterinarians. Any exceptions must be detailed in an approved animal use protocol.

Procedures

General Guidelines

- Animals and animal caging must be secured in a secondary container during transport to protect the animals, minimize risk of escape, and to protect personnel along the transport route from potential exposure to hazards.
- Transportation methods must minimize stress to the animals. Thus, these methods must maintain appropriate ventilation, avoid extremes in temperature and humidity, minimize noise and odors, prevent exposure to pathogens, and minimize interactions with people or other animals.
- The cage, carrier, container, or vehicle must prevent escape of the animals through locking mechanisms or latches that cannot be dislodged by movement. Animal enclosures should be appropriately secured to the transport vehicle or cart, and should not be needlessly jostled, tilted, or unsafely stacked.
- Enclosures must be appropriately cleaned and sanitized to prevent the spread of pathogenic organisms, animal allergens, and animal wastes. Animal cargo areas should be clean and decontaminated as needed to protect the health of humans and other animals.

Guidelines for Transporting Rodents

- When transporting rodents out-of-doors, a secondary enclosure is usually required (e.g., a reusable container, disposable box, etc.). A secondary enclosure should be considered when rodents are transported between connected areas or through public corridors.
- Individuals transporting the animals should be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Those risks include potential exposure to allergens as well as potentially negative reactions by those opposed to animal research. Avoid public areas when possible. When it is necessary to transport rodents through public areas, the animals should be obscured from view by drapes, shrouds, opaque secondary enclosures, a specialized transport cart or carrier, etc.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used to prevent cross-contamination among animals and between humans and animals (e.g. pathogenic organisms and other biological materials, chemicals, fomites, etc.).
- Release of animal dander, airborne animal allergens, and animal bedding into the environment must be minimized. Personnel should ensure that filter tops or other

effective covers are used on rodent cages. Cages/carriers should be covered during transport. Empty, soiled cages or carriers should also be covered during transport.

- Temperature extremes must be avoided. Special precautions must be taken to protect animals from heat or cold stress. Please consult a LAR veterinarian for species-specific temperature recommendations.
- Reusable primary or secondary enclosures must be sanitized between use to prevent the spread of pathogenic microorganisms, animal wastes, and allergens. When any bodily fluids (e.g., blood, urine, saliva, mucus), feces, or dirty bedding comes into contact with a surface area outside a primary enclosure, it should be removed and the area appropriately disinfected as soon as possible.

Guidelines for Use of Personal Vehicles to Transport Animals

- Whenever possible a University-owned vehicle should be used to transport animals. The use of personal vehicles for animal transport is discouraged. Personal vehicles increase concerns about potential biosecurity of animals, as they may create safety, health, and liability risks for the animals, personnel, and Institution.
- If it is necessary to use a personal vehicle, the following conditions must be met:
 1. The use of a personal vehicle for transport of animals must be described in the protocol and approved by the IACUC.
 2. The animal enclosures must be appropriately secured in the vehicle to prevent spillage.
 3. Traditional laboratory animals (rodents, rabbits, etc.) should be protected from direct sunlight.
 4. Closed vehicles used for animal transport must be environmentally controlled (e.g., they must have functional heating, ventilation, and air conditioning).
 5. Plastic or a similarly impermeable material that can be sanitized should be placed under the transport cages or carriers.

Contacts

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<https://research.iu.edu/policies/bloomington-animal-care-and-use.html>