



# INDIANA UNIVERSITY

## Office of Research Compliance (ORC)

### Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)

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## Guidelines for Food and/or Fluid Restriction in Animals

This guidance details requirements pertaining to the use of food or fluid restriction in animals, as well as the monitoring of food/fluid restricted animals used in research, teaching or testing at the Indiana University campuses.

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### Background

Regulation of food and fluid intake is addressed in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (p. 30-31, 8<sup>th</sup> edition). The regulatory expectation states:

*The animals should be closely monitored to ensure that food and fluid intake meets their nutritional needs (Toth and Gardiner 2000). Body weights should be recorded at least weekly and more often for animals requiring greater restrictions (NRC 2003b). Written records should be maintained for each animal to document daily food and fluid consumption, hydration status, and any behavioral and clinical changes used as criteria for temporary or permanent removal of an animal from a protocol (Morton 2000; NRC 2003b).*

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### Scope

This guidance applies to all personnel involved with food/fluid restricted animals.

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### Procedures

For protocols using food or fluid restriction, it should be specifically stated in the protocol that (1) body weight will be measured at a minimum of once per week and (2) the weight will be written in a permanent log. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator (PI) to maintain accurate records regarding body weight during food/fluid restriction, for as long as animals are maintained on food or fluid restriction. Records of body weights must be readily available to personnel involved with food/fluid restricted animals, the veterinary staff, the IACUC, and federal regulatory officials.

Investigators will post a description of the food/fluid restriction regimen that is applied to individual animals in the housing area. Records documenting the implementation of the regimen will be retained. If the animals are housed in a LAR/LARC-managed facility, the health of restricted individuals is considered to be documented as part of the daily animal health checks performed by the staff. The LAR/LARC staff will create a written record for any animal that appears to be in ill-health, then alert the PI and veterinary staff. If animal weights fail to meet the criterion specified in the applicable protocol, then the PI will contact the veterinary staff. If animals are maintained in non-LAR/LARC managed facilities, the PI is responsible for the daily health check documentation for restricted animals, as well as developing a reporting mechanism to the veterinary staff.

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### Contact

Please contact the School of Medicine IACUC office if you have any questions about this guidance.

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