

## Wofford College IACUC Standard Operating Procedure for Transport of Laboratory Animals

The transport of laboratory animals has a direct impact on the animal welfare. Of primary concern are minimizing route distance and duration, transport container design, nature of food and water supplies, vehicle design, the competency of the driver. Animal transportation may be intrainstitutional, interinstitutional, or between a commercial or noncommercial source and a research facility. For wildlife, transportation may occur between the capture site and field holding facilities or the research facility. 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 (Maher and Schub 2004). Per the [NIH Guidelines for the Transportation of Animals](#), the following standard operating procedures must be followed for transport of Wofford College laboratory animals under all approved IACUC protocols.

### General

- Transportation of animals shall be done in a direct and timely manner minimizing the distance and duration of the route.
- Animals must never be left unattended during transport.
- A non-permeable barrier such as plastic sheeting or rubber mats must be placed between the animal transport containers and the vehicle's interior.
- Use of a seat belt, bungee cord, cargo strap, etc. to secure cages within the vehicle.
- Animals must be transported in a climate controlled environment and should not be transported in the trunk, truck bed or other non-climate-controlled areas of the vehicle.
- Transport should be coordinated to arrive during normal business hours or if necessary specific personnel must be designated to receive the animals outside of this time.
- Drivers must be competent and properly trained to monitor and care for the animals in their charge.

### Animal Biosecurity

- Approved transport cages/boxes/containers must be used. These vary depending on the distance and/or purpose of the transportation. The enclosure must be resistant to escape, provide adequate ventilation, and as needed, provide protection from the elements.
- Minimum label requirements for all transport boxes/containers should include the words "Live Animals" and an arrow indicating the up position. Appropriate labeling for infectious substances, chemicals and/or radiation may also be required. Infectious agents are defined as substances which are known or are reasonably expected to contain pathogens.
- Appropriate health certificates and veterinary contact information must be documented prior to transport.
- Species shall be isolated and shall not be transported with any other animal, substance and/or device that may be expected to be injurious to their health or welfare.
- Care shall be exercised in handling enclosures (i.e., approved transport boxes, containers, cages, etc.) used to transport rodents. During transport, containers or cages should not be carried in any way that may cause physical trauma or stress to the animal(s) or limit proper cage ventilation.

### References

Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition National Research Council (US) Committee for the Update of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2011. ISBN-13: 978-0-309-15400-0

Maher JA, Schub T. Laboratory rodent transportation supplies. *Lab Anim (NY)*. 2004 Sep;33(8):29-32. doi: 10.1038/labani0904-29. PMID: 15334108.

Swallow J, Anderson D, Buckwell AC, Harris T, Hawkins P, Kirkwood J, Lomas M, Meacham S, Peters A, Prescott M, Owen S, Quest R, Sutcliffe R, Thompson K; Transport Working Group, Laboratory Animal Science Association (LASA). Guidance on the transport of laboratory animals. *Lab Anim*. 2005 Jan;39(1):1-39. doi: 10.1258/0023677052886493. PMID: 15703122; PMCID: PMC7610432.