



POLICY ON HEALTH SURVEILLANCE FOR ALL PERSONNEL HANDLING AND WORKING NEAR LABORATORY ANIMALS

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to protect all personnel who handle or have contact with laboratory animals or persons who work near laboratory animals (not in direct contact with animals). This policy is **MANDATORY**.

These include:

- Principal Investigators on IACUC protocols
- Personnel handling animals listed on IACUC protocols
- Animal Care Staff (animal care technicians, veterinarians, veterinary technicians and veterinary technologist)
- Students using and caring for animals
- Personnel working near laboratory animals with no direct contact with animals
- Maintenance personnel
- Short term visitors, volunteers or minors who decide to participate in the Program.

The requirements for an occupational health program for personnel working with laboratory animals are found in a variety of sources such as The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals 2011 (The Guide) and the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS Policy).

The PHS Policy (IV, A, 1, f) requires a "health program for personnel who work in laboratory animal facilities or have frequent contact with animals." The same PHS Policy (IV, A, 1) requires institutions receiving PHS financial support to use The Guide in developing its various animal care and use programs.

The Guide itself (pp.17- 23) discusses many aspects of an occupational health and safety program. Our accreditation agency (AAALAC) also uses the Guide as a basis for its review of our program of animal care and use, including our occupational health and safety program. Other appropriate documents (e.g., those of OSHA) also apply to aspects of the animal care and use program.

Animal research protocols will not be approved by the Medical Sciences Campus IACUC until the following steps are met:

1. Enrollment in AESP (Animal Exposure Surveillance Program)

All new and current individuals covered by this policy are required to participate in baseline health screening procedures by completing the following:

[Medical Health Screening \(MHS\) Questionnaire](#)

All individuals covered by this policy are required to provide all health information requested in the MHS Questionnaire.

The medical information collected is for the protection of the employee, their co-workers and the students. The Occupational Health Clinic (OHC) and the Students Medical Services (SMS) treats this information as confidential and abides by the University policy, which follows HIPAA guidelines. Health and medical

information cannot be distributed or shared with any third party without the written and informed formal consent of the individual.

The MHS questionnaire is reviewed by the OHC or SMS to determine the potential risks of working with laboratory animals. The OHC or the SMS will issue a written assurance that the individual may work with laboratory animals or request further assessment.

The individual written assurance issued by the OHC or SMS must be submitted to the IACUC as part of the documentation at the time of an initial submission of an animal protocol, when new personnel are added to an approved protocol, when an individual's health status changes or when indicated by the medical reviewer.

2. Annual Follow-Up Health Screening

Annual follow-up health screening in the AESP is also required for all individuals covered by this policy

All individuals are required to update health information annually by completing the following:

[Follow-Up Health History Form \(FUHH\)](#)

The MSC's Occupational Health Clinic (OHC) and the Students Medical Services (SMS) treat this information as confidential and abide by the University policy, which follows HIPAA guidelines. Health and medical information cannot be distributed or shared with any third party without the written and informed formal consent of the individual.

The FUHH is revised by the OHC or the SMS. The OHC or SMS will issue a written assurance that the individual may continue working with laboratory animals.

The individual written assurance issued by the OHC or SMS must be submitted to the IACUC as part of the documentation at the time of the renewal of an expiring protocol. The written assurance will be good for one (1) year.

3. Exclusion

This Policy does not apply to short term visitors, independent contractors and minors not wishing to participate in the AESP.

Short term visitors are individuals that will be present in MSC animal facilities or laboratories where animals are manipulated for the purpose of observing an animal procedure or educational activities that have been approved by the IACUC or to visit the animal facility. The activities will not involve work with non-human primates, work in a BSL-2 or BSL-3 research facility or other high risk activity as determined by the facility manager or the facility veterinarian.

Independent contractors are non-MSU personnel that are contracted to perform a duty in an animal facility or laboratory where animals are manipulated or housed.

Short term visitors, independent contractors and minors not wishing to participate in the AESP must sign a [Waiver of Participation in the Medical Sciences Campus Animal Exposure Surveillance Program](#).

Approved by IACUC on April 12, 2013

Approved by Dr. Rafael Rodríguez-Mercado, MSC Chancellor/IO on April 12, 2013