

Title: Veterinary Care and Reporting	Policy No. IACUC-014 Effective Date: 12/12/2016 Updated: 1/12/2026
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1. Reference(s):

National Research Council. *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*: Eighth Edition. Washington, D.C., Academic Press, 2011.

American Dairy Science Association, the American Society of Animal Science, and the Poultry Science Association. *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching*. Fourth Edition. Champaign, IL. 2020.

Animal Welfare Act (Public Law 89-544, 1966, as amended [7 U.S.C. 2131 *et. Seq.*]); and Code of Federal Regulations, Title 9, Chapter 1, Subchapter A, Parts 1-3.

Adequate Veterinary Care: Position Statement from the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine. American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine, 2016.

Medical Records for Animals Used in Research, Teaching and Testing: Position Statement from the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine. American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine, 2020.

2. Policy: Veterinary care is an essential part of OSU's animal care and use program. The University Attending Veterinarian (UAV) is responsible for ensuring the health and well-being of all animals used at Oklahoma State University. The UAV is not required to be the sole provider of veterinary care and can delegate authority to other qualified veterinarians. However, the other veterinarians must communicate with the UAV, and the UAV must govern the veterinary care provided by other veterinarians. This SOP delineates how that communication and oversight is to occur at OSU and the corrective actions to be taken if there is a breakdown in communication or a failure to provide adequate veterinary care.

3. Procedures:

3.1. Animal Resources' (AR) veterinary team consists of the UAV and designees. Functionally, these individuals ensure that adequate veterinary care is provided to all OSU animals.

3.2. Primary veterinary care for each herd, flock, or group of animals may be provided by AR, veterinary faculty and staff from OSU's College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM), or from a private veterinary practitioner.

3.3. Programs of preventative veterinary medicine must be implemented for each herd, flock, or group of animals. This may include vaccinations, periodic deworming, medications to eliminate ectoparasites, testing to detect internal or external parasites, nail or hoof trimming, etc. as appropriate to the species and situation. Managers of animal facilities must have clearly defined preventative medicine programs outlined in a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) or similar document approved and signed by the Manager of the animal facility, the Primary Care Veterinarian for that facility (if applicable), and by the UAV.

3.4. If there is a set of commonly occurring diseases that the animal facility faculty or staff treats without first consulting their Primary Care Veterinarian or AR, the diseases and treatments to be administered should be defined in an SOP prepared by facility's Primary Care Veterinarian together with the Manager of the animal facility. The SOPs should outline the clinical signs expected, the medications to be administered including doses and routes of administration, the expected responses to treatment, and any withdrawal periods needed for food animals. The SOPs should be approved and signed by the Manager of the animal facility, the Primary Care Veterinarian (if applicable), and by the UAV.

3.5. Copies of the SOPs for both preventative care and commonly seen diseases should be maintained both at the animal facility and attached to the associated Animal Care and Use Protocol (ACUP). Employees providing the care should be trained on these SOPs, and their training should be documented.

3.6. When unexpected clinical signs occur, not included in the animal facility's SOP for commonly seen diseases, the facility's Primary Care Veterinarian must be contacted. The facility's Primary Care Veterinarian is responsible for examining the animal, conducting diagnostic testing, and prescribing and/or administering an appropriate treatment plan as needed. AR must be notified when these cases occur. The primary method of notification should be via e-mail to Attending.Vet@okstate.edu. At the resolution of the case, a complete set of veterinary medical records should be submitted to AR to review via email to Attending.Vet@okstate.edu. When electronic record keeping is used to maintain the records, only the case number needs to be submitted as AR can access electronic records.

3.7. If a research animal reaches the humane endpoints defined in an ACUP, it must be euthanized. If the research team and the veterinarian providing care cannot agree on whether the animal has reached the humane endpoints, the veterinarian's opinion is used. AR, acting on behalf of the UAV, has the final authority to determine when an animal needs to be euthanized.

3.8. When unexpected or unusual morbidities or mortalities occur in a herd, flock, or group of animals, necropsies should be conducted to determine the cause of the problem. Necropsies may be conducted by the Primary Care Veterinarian, by AR, or by submitting the animal(s) to the Oklahoma Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory. Necropsy records should be submitted to AR to review via email to Attending.Vet@okstate.edu.

3.9. AR must have access to the animals and to any veterinary medical records or medications stored at each animal facility. Managers of animal facilities should ensure that AR has keys, electronic access cards, or lock codes as needed for each facility. If electronic records are maintained, Managers of Animal Facilities should ensure that AR has usernames and passwords as needed to access the files.

3.10. Managers of animal facilities outside of AR are responsible for the cost of veterinary medical care (including necropsies) provided regardless of whether that care is provided by AR, CVM veterinary faculty or staff, or a private practitioner. If any case should become cost prohibitive to treat effectively, euthanasia must be performed. Under no circumstances may cost be used as a reason to delay care, to avoid diagnostic testing or necropsies, to select a less advantageous treatment regimen, or to allow an animal to endure additional or prolonged pain or distress.

3.11. The consequences to OSU for failing to provide adequate veterinary care are severe and can include regulatory citations, fines, loss of research funding, and loss of accreditation. Hence, the corrective actions to be taken if faculty or staff fail in their duties to ensure animals receive veterinary care are equally as severe. Failures may include, but are not limited to:

- Failures to identify sick or injured animals from within a herd, flock, or group
- Failure to follow SOPs for preventative care and/or common clinical problems
- Failure to notify the facility's Primary Care Veterinarian when animal health issues occur (other than those defined in the SOP)
- Failures to notify and coordinate veterinary medical care with AR
- Failures to maintain adequate veterinary medical records including records of preventative care, examination, diagnosis, treatment, and necropsies
- Failure to submit veterinary medical records to AR at the resolution of a case
- Failure to have animals necropsied (when needed) and to submit necropsy records to AR.

Corrective actions are determined by the IACUC and may include, but are not limited to:

- Mandatory retraining for an instance in which a faculty and/or staff member failed to understand their obligations
- Temporary suspension of individual(s) ability to work with research or teaching animals may be implemented by AR until the IACUC can complete an investigation and determine a formal corrective action plan
- The IACUC may suspend individual(s) ability to work with research and teaching animals at OSU. Such suspension may be temporary or permanent. Note that for individuals whose job responsibilities are tied to animal care, the loss of permission to provide such care may result in the termination of employment.
- The IACUC may suspend previously approved animal care and use protocols, stopping entire projects and/or stopping the use of animals in teaching.

3.12. Adverse Events will be handled by AR Veterinarians in concurrence with the IACUC. Adverse Events (AE) are defined as any occurrence, usually involving pain/distress/death of an animal, which was not described in the approved IACUC protocol or its subsequent modifications and has a negative impact on animal welfare. The IACUC and AR Veterinarians will follow the “Adverse Event Reporting Process” and the “Managing Welfare Concerns, Adverse Events, or Unanticipated Protocol Outcomes Affecting Animal Well-being” flowchart to process any concerns brought forward. OSU IACUC takes all reported concerns seriously and will investigate appropriately. An Adverse Event form is in Oneaegis allowing the PI or reporting individual to fill out the form and have it go through the applicable review or acknowledgment process while simultaneously getting reported to the appropriate authority according to the regulations if needed.

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