

**University of Tennessee Health Science Center  
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee**

**Animal Transportation Policy**

**BACKGROUND**

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (the *Guide*) states that “all transportation of animals, including intra-institutional transportation, should be planned to minimize transit time and the risk of public exposure to allergens and/or zoonotic agents, protect against environmental extremes, avoid overcrowding, provide food and water when indicate, and protect against physical trauma”.

The Policy outlined below provides guidance to investigators on how to safely and effectively transport animals within or between buildings on the UTHSC campus as well as affiliated institutions (e.g., the VA Medical Center, LeBonheur) These procedures are necessary to ensure the health and well-being not only of the animals, but also of the people in areas through which animals are transported.

Please share this information with any of your staff involved with transporting animals on campus. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the IACUC office at 448-3904, [mbraslow@utmem.edu](mailto:mbraslow@utmem.edu) or the Laboratory Animal Care Unit at 448-5656, [compmedsec@utmem.edu](mailto:compmedsec@utmem.edu)

**GENERAL POLICIES**

1. The performance site(s) for all animal procedures and the methods for transporting animals to and from these performance sites must be described in the animal research protocol, and reviewed and approved by the IACUC.
2. When transporting animals between laboratories and the animal housing areas, the most direct route should be taken in order to minimize the time spent in areas where the public may be present.
3. The hallways in campus buildings are considered public areas. Therefore, when transporting animals within campus buildings, cages and carts must be draped with cloth or other coverings to ensure animals and cages are **completely** shielded from public view. Note that the yellow gowns provided as personal protective equipment (PPE) are not adequate for use as drapes or coverings, and should not leave the animal facility.
4. All animals must be transported in a species-appropriate container. The container must be sanitizable or disposable and must have no floor openings that may injure the animal. It must provide a secure environment that is escape proof, has a solid floor, and be free of sharp edges that could possibly injure the animal.

5. Up to 2 standard rodent cages may be carried by hand. If 3 or more cages are to be transported, a cart is required. In all cases, cage lids must be secured to the cages with a clip, tie, or residue-free tape to prevent escape of the animal. Cages that contain animals must not be stacked.
6. Empty cages should not be placed in the hallways outside of laboratories. This practice may result in spread of disease to the healthy rodent populations and to staff; lost cages also contribute to higher animal care costs. Return all empty cages to the animal facility. Note that empty cages should also be covered when they are being returned to the animal facility.
7. Transport of large animals (dogs, cats, swine, etc) must be done by Department of Comparative Medicine (DCM) personnel unless previously approved by the IACUC and DCM.
8. Please report cage spills and escapees immediately to the IACUC office at 448-3904

## **TRANSPORTING ANIMALS OUTSIDE OF A BUILDING**

The following additional policies apply when transporting animals outside of a building (e.g., between the Coleman building and the VA Medical Center)

1. Only non-mammals and rodents may be transported outside of a building by non-DCM personnel.
2. The shoebox cages must be placed inside of an opaque container with a secured lid to shield the animals from public view. This container must be made of a material that can be cleaned and sanitized between uses. Again, the yellow gowns provided as PPE are not adequate for use as drapes or coverings for shoebox cages transported across campus.
3. When the outside temperature is between 50°F and 85°F, the animals may be transported without climate-controlled vehicles.
4. Animals must be transported within climate-controlled vehicles when the outside temperature is below 50°F or above 85°F. The heating/cooling system of the vehicle must maintain the inside temperature of the vehicle within this range (50° to 85°F).
5. Personal vehicles may be used to transport animals if the following additional conditions are met:
  - The use of personal vehicles for transport of animals must be specified in the protocol and approved by the IACUC.
  - The container used to transport the cages must be secured to the inside of the vehicle to prevent spillage (e.g., using bungee cords or other suitable restraint).

- Animals should be protected from direct sunlight and public view.
- Each transport vehicle must undergo semi-annual inspections by the IACUC.