ANIMAL TRANSPORT
(Pedestrian and Vehicular Transport in Non-Patient Care Areas)

PERFORMANCE STANDARD: Animals will be transported in a manner that prevents injury, discourages observation by the public, and protects the environment of the caging system.

BACKGROUND: Transporting animals from one location to another can be stressful to laboratory animals and can increase the potential for disease transmission or injury. The Guide for Care and Use of Laboratory Animals states that transportation “should be planned to minimize transit time and the risk of zoonoses, protect against environmental extremes, avoid overcrowding, provide food and water when indicated, and protect against physical trauma.”

DLAR facilities have been classified as either conventional or as restricted entry/barrier facilities, to protect animals from infectious diseases. Access to conventional facilities is not as tightly controlled as that to barrier facilities. Animals that exit barrier facilities may not return to these facilities and will be housed in conventional facilities thereafter. Exceptions for special experimental requirements may be granted by the Director, Division of Laboratory Animal Resources. Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the Director, Office of Animal Welfare Assurance.

ROLES: Any individual transporting animals must provide for the safe and protected transport of animals.

PROTECTION POSTURES REQUIRED: Sufficient Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) to assure health and well-being of personnel and to match the PPE requirements of the most stringent facility being accessed.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES:
1. General Policies:
   a. Cages used for transport should limit exposure to allergens, waste products, or odors, while providing sufficient air for normal respiration. Note: A normal mouse or rat cage (with bedding) can be tightly closed and the animals will have sufficient air for up to 30 minutes.
   b. Live animals should not remain outside of approved housing facilities for more than 12 hours unless specifically approved in the IACUC protocol. Following transportation, animals should have access to food and water unless restriction has been stipulated and approved in the protocol.
c. Caging During Transport: Options differ between species:
   i. **USDA-Covered Species** (e.g. rabbit, dog, primate, cat, ferret, livestock, etc.): DLAR shall be used for transport of these species unless a specific exception has been approved by the IACUC
   ii. Other species (e.g., rodents, reptiles, birds, aquatics): Research staff may transport these species by either arrangement with DLAR or self-transport. When using self-transport, there are two options:
      1. Transportation in an approved privately-owned vehicle: Transportation in non-DLAR vehicles must have prior approval by the IACUC. Contact the Office of Animal Welfare Assurance at [IACUC@duke.edu](mailto:IACUC@duke.edu) to arrange an inspection time and date. Requirements for approval:
         a. The transportation activity is listed on the protocol or an amendment to the protocol.
         b. Adequate heating / cooling is available to maintain general animal comfort.
         c. Protection from direct sun.
         d. Protection from public view.
         e. Method to contain waste (e.g. plastic sheet under the cage, container around animal cage, etc.)
         f. Method to discourage allergens from contaminating the vehicle, since allergens may impact future human riders (container around animal cage, etc.)
         g. Method to secure the cage inside of the vehicle (e.g. bungee cords)
      For more information concerning animal transport, contact the Assistant Director, DLAR; Head of Facilities @ 919.684.3885.
   2. Hand-carry or cart-transport (pedestrian transport) across campus:
      a. While normal space requirements ([The Guide; Table 3.2; Pg 57](#)) are desirable at all times, short-term pedestrian transport may be performed with non-standard caging systems (e.g. 'shopping bags,' 'chicken buckets').
      b. DLAR provides non-standard caging for on-campus animal transport.
      c. Non-standard containers should have the following characteristics:
         i. Small containers (e.g. 'chow-mein' boxes) should carry no more than one or two mice or should not be used for animals of larger species. For short distances (e.g. across the street)
ii. Medium containers (e.g. ‘chicken buckets’) should carry no more than five mice or one rat. Mice must be socially compatible (i.e. from the same cage). Use of non-standard caging is for transport only. It is not intended for keeping animals for more than a short period of time. Do not keep mice in non-standard caging for more than 3 hours.

iii. Larger containers (e.g. housing cages) will abide by the space requirements noted in The Guide.

iv. Any container used to transport mice should be placed in ‘shopping bags’ as a secondary means of protection. The number of containers that can fit into each shopping bag depends on the size of the bag.

d. Animals must be secure during transport and protected from the environment (e.g. sunlight, car lights, or visual observation) during transport by use of opaque plastic bags or boxes, opaque fabric or other opaque covering.

e. Transport caging must not be left unattended in a hallway or out-of-doors.

f. The use of a ‘bungee-cord’ or secure rubber bands is recommended. DO NOT use tape on a polycarbonate housing cage.

g. While use of a cart may be permitted if approved by the IACUC, it is discouraged since vibrations of the wheels are readily transferred to the animal cages. This increases animal stress significantly and may also critically affect research results.¹ Hand carrying animals bags containing animal cages is the best choice for their health and comfort.

NOTE: Non-standard transport caging must not be used for housing, regardless of whether food and water is provided.

h. If a cage or container spills feed, bedding, or animals during transport, the individual carrying the animals will secure the animals, clean the area as best as possible and then continue to their destination. A report of the spill, and or loss of any animal, must be provided on the Adverse Event Report form and submitted to IACUC@DUKE.EDU. Use of a shopping bag as a secondary container can reduce the risk of this type of adverse event.
2. Transportation of research animals through patient care areas is governed by a different set of guidelines. IACUC and medical center authorization is required. For more information on transport of animals through patient care areas, see the policy on transport of animals through patient care areas or contact the Office of Animal Welfare Assurance at IACUC@duke.edu.

3. Animals may NOT be transported in private vehicles unless described in an approved protocol and inspected by the IACUC.

4. Animals are prohibited from being transport by bicycle, motorbike, or via public transportation – either Duke or local buses.

REFERENCES: