USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONICS IN ANIMAL CARE & USE AREAS

PERFORMANCE STANDARD: All animals are protected from distress associated with noise, flash bulbs, or contamination which is associated with use of hand-held electronic devices in an animal care & use area.

BACKGROUND: Cell phones, iPods, iPads, tablets or laptop computers, and other personal electronics are becoming commonplace. In certain circumstances, the transport and use of such devices present risk to animal wellbeing and to the integrity of the outcomes of research activities. The 8th edition of the Guide for Care and Use of Laboratory Animals requires that animals be protected from sources of noise and that personnel be protected from exposure to animal antigens and/or pathogens. This policy provides a description of what is / is not permitted in Duke-owned or Duke-managed animal care & use spaces.

ROLES: All individuals entering animal care or use spaces shall abide by the provisions of this policy.

PROTECTION POSTURES REQUIRED: Protective equipment will be worn as required for work with the animals in this housing space.

DEFINITIONS: For the purpose of this policy, devices are categorized based upon ‘risk potential’ for having an impact to the animals under study or care.

- **Acceptable Personal Electronics:** Devices such as an iPod, MP3 player, or cell phone which is worn on the interior clothes and covered by the facility protection garments (PPE). No such devices shall be on the exterior PPE garments while in an animal facility.
- **Conditional Personal Electronics:** Devices such as a laptop computer, iPad, or tablet PC which would be used for research project data collection, medical record assessment, colony management, or research files access.
- **Unacceptable Personnel Electronics:** Devices such as cell phones, ear buds, or bluetooth devices which must be touched or handled while within the animal facility envelope. Over-the-ear headphones are unacceptable for use within animal facilities due to their difficulty to effectively sanitize.
POLICY:

1. **Provisions for using Acceptable Personal Electronics:** The routine duties of regular work within animal care facilities may be made more tolerable when individuals can listen to music or recorded books of their choosing. The use of ear buds plugged into an iPod (or iPod-like) device is acceptable within a Duke animal care and use facility under the following conditions: The ear buds must be placed in the ears prior to donning the gloves or mask. The ear buds may not be removed until after the mask and gloves have been removed. The device must be worn inside of the PPE garment. It can be operated through the PPE but should not be taken out from under the PPE or manipulated with gloved hands. **Ear buds can only be worn in one ear to ensure that a fire alarm can be recognized.** The volume must be low enough to prevent sound from being heard by others present in the room.

2. **Provisions for using Conditional Personal Electronics:** Computers or other data collection devices must be sanitized (to the extent possible) prior to entry into the animal facility. While in the facility, the device must be covered and placed only on non-animal surfaces (sanitized tables which may at a later time hold animals is acceptable). The sound component of these devices must be de-energized such that they make no discernible noise while in use. Only devices having LCD or LED screens are permissible, since CRT screens create ultrasonic noise which may impact animal wellbeing. Users should not touch the device and animals using the same gloves used for animal handling, since fomite transmission of disease and contamination has a very real potential negative impact upon research outcomes. Upon departure from the animal facility, the exterior of the device must be sanitized (to the extent possible) to prevent carriage or transfer of animal antigens and/or pathogens.

3. **Unacceptable Personal Electronics:** Individuals carrying cell phones do not have to remove the phone from their belt or pocket prior to entering the animal facility. However, the cell phone must be under the facility PPE and must be covered by the PPE while inside of an animal room where in a room where animals are present. Under no circumstances – even if it rings notifying of an incoming call – may the phone be removed from under the facility PPE while in an animal space. The potential risk of contamination to the animals and the potential risk to you or others who may use your cell phone at a later date are too great to allow the risk. To use the cell phone (answer or return a call), individuals must exit all animal holding or use spaces and go to a common corridor where you can remove your gloves and use the cell phone. After use, replace your device under the PPE and don new gloves before entering the animal room or animal use space.

Failure to follow the policy measures described in this document will serve as ground for suspending facility access and/or association with a Duke IACUC-approved protocol.