



**Duke University & Duke University Medical Center
Animal Care & Use Program
Policy**

USE OF TELECOMMUNICATION FOR PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

PERFORMANCE STANDARD: To maximize the involvement of all of the Committee's membership in the business of the IACUC, regardless of geographic location.

BACKGROUND: The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Animal Care, which is responsible for the USDA Animal Welfare Regulations that contain identical provisions regarding convened IACUC meetings, concurs with this Notice and will publish consistent guidance in its Research Facility Inspection Guide. Sections IV.C.2 and 6 of the PHS Policy require, respectively, that full committee approval of a proposed research project or suspension of an activity by the IACUC occur only after review of the matter at a convened meeting of a quorum of the IACUC and with the approval or suspension vote of a majority of the quorum present. In a 1992 article published in the ILAR Journal (Vol.37 (4)) OLAW advised that alternate electronic methods meeting certain criteria may be considered functionally equivalent to physically-convened meetings under exceptional circumstances. With the OLAW guidance, and with regard to the use of telecommunications when a convened quorum is required, the traditional convened meeting, physically attended by IACUC members, provides the optimal forum in which to conduct full committee review of proposals and consider potential suspensions. Introduction and integration of new members to the Committee is also most effectively accomplished during physically-convened meetings. However, OLAW recognizes that some forms of telecommunications facilitate the conduct of business, reduce regulatory burden, are standard practice in many forums, and enhance flexibility without compromising the quality of deliberation and interaction. The IACUC chairperson, as the appointed leader of the committee, bears some responsibility for holding committee meetings in a manner that encourages participation and facilitates interaction among members.

PROTECTIVE POSTURES REQUIRED: N/A

POLICY: videoconferencing allows for real time verbal interaction equivalent to that occurring in a physically-convened meeting (i.e., members can actively and equally participate and there is simultaneous communication). Video conferencing (not telephone only) is acceptable for the conduct of official Duke IACUC business requiring a quorum, provided the following criteria are met:

- Only Duke Marine Laboratory IACUC members may participate in this methodology at present (The policy may be modified as necessary and under proper regulatory authority in the future).
- All members are given notice of the meeting.
- Documents normally provided to members during a physically-convened meeting are provided to all members in advance of the meeting.
- All members have access to the documents and the technology necessary to fully participate in real time IACUC deliberations.
- A quorum of voting members is convened when required by PHS Policy. A quorum includes members on the videoconference.
- Written minutes of the meeting are maintained in accord with the PHS Policy, IV.E.1.b.

SPECIAL NOTE: Deliberations of the IACUC meetings are not open to the public nor to non-IACUC members or their alternates. Thus, remote meeting sites must be private and only those authorized to participate on an IACUC may be in attendance at the remote site. Taping or recording of the proceeding is forbidden.

REFERENCES:

Title: Guidance on Use of Telecommunications for IACUC Meetings under the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals; Notice Number: NOT-OD-06-052; Release Date: March 24, 2006; Issued by: Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), Office of Extramural Research (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>)