



## **Policy and Guidance on Reuse of Animals used for Research or Instruction**

The University of Georgia IACUC endorses and promotes the ethical use of animals in research and instruction. Fundamental to the ethical use of animals is the application of the ethical principles of Refinement, Replacement, and Reduction, as described by Russell and Burch. The principle Reduction is defined as utilizing means which reduce the number of animals used. This includes, for example, the use of more robust statistical measures, reducing variability, and the appropriate reuse of animals. Reuse of animals is defined as the sequential use of the same animal(s) for unrelated experiments, either within a single IACUC protocol, or on more than 1 protocol.

The ethical principle of Reduction must be balanced with the principle Refinement, and the reuse of animals should not increase pain or distress. Hence, reuse of animals is subject to IACUC oversight.

This policy clarifies the requirements for reuse of vertebrate animals to ensure their humane care and use, and to ensure compliance with the Animal Welfare Act and Public Health Service Policy.

### **Requirements for reuse within a protocol**

Within a single protocol, the reuse of animals for research related purposes must be described, including a clear outline of what, and how many, experimental procedures an animal will experience.

If reuse of animals is not described in the original AUP, an amendment adding reuse must be reviewed and approved before the reuse can occur.

### **Requirements for reuse on more than 1 protocol/transfer to another, unrelated research project**

The UGA IACUC requires that protocol-to-protocol transfers of animals are documented and approved **prior to transfer**. Approval consists of review and sign-off by the Attending Veterinarian or designee, to ensure that animals are not exposed to excessive potential for pain and distress.

Animals included in the ANOPs system:

Transfer requests are made via ANOPs. The request should provide details about what procedures have already been performed on the animal, and what procedures are planned to be performed on the new protocol. The Attending Veterinarian or designee will review requests in ANOPs. The Attending Veterinarian or designee may refer a request to an IACUC subcommittee at their discretion.

**Guidance on situations in which an animal generally can or cannot be reused**

**Animals generally can be reused in the following situations:**

- The animal has had no procedures or manipulations other than standard identification and/or genotyping procedures.
- The animal has had only procedures that do not cause any pain or distress beyond minimal and/or momentary (UGA Category A)
- The animal has shown no or extremely mild, clinical signs of illness if used for an infectious disease study (e.g., weight loss <10%, sneezing, watery ocular/nasal discharge).
- The planned reuse does not include any pain or distress beyond minimal and/or momentary (UGA Category A)
- The planned reuse consists only of general anesthesia for a terminal procedure.

**Animals generally cannot be reused in the following situations:**

- The animal has had a procedure which has permanently altered its ability to maintain normal physiology or respond to stressors.
- The animal has an ongoing medical abnormality with the potential to cause more than minimal and/or momentary pain and/or discomfort, unless the abnormality is related to the planned reuse.
- The animal has shown more than extremely mild clinical signs of illness if used for an infectious disease study (e.g., weight loss >10%, lethargy).
- The animal has had a research related surgical procedure.
- The animal has been infected with a biohazard or treated with a chemical hazard, and the reuse of the animal could negatively impact human safety.

**Animals absolutely cannot be reused in the following situations:**

- A USDA-covered animal cannot have multiple major survival surgeries for unrelated studies on 1 protocol, or across more than 1 protocol. If an animal has a major survival surgery on 1 protocol, it cannot be transferred to another protocol to have an additional major survival surgery.

**References:**

- Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide), NRC, 2010.
- Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching (Ag Guide), 2020.
- Animal Welfare Regulations, 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter A.