



# The University of Georgia

## Reporting and Investigating Animal Welfare Concerns Policy

*Approved by UGA IACUC October 1997*

*Revised August 2014*

The University of Georgia is committed to the humane care of the animals used in its research and instructional activities. The USDA Animal Welfare Act Regulations, the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and the NRC *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* outline institutional responsibilities for investigating, reviewing and reporting concerns related to animal care and use. Although some administrative methods may vary among colleges or facilities, this policy serves as the basic guide in resolving problems that may be encountered.

**Deficiencies in basic animal needs, extremes in environmental temperature, and animal illnesses must be promptly reported** to the animal care supervisor or other responsible individuals. While the animal care supervisor should be informed about facility problems, the Attending Veterinarian, animal health technician, or person in a similar role should be promptly informed about sick or injured animals. Persons observing situations that need corrective action should take the initiative to locate the person responsible any time an animal's well being is involved. Do not be satisfied to leave a note and assume that someone will take care of it.

Painful or stressful research procedures must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before the study is initiated. If you are concerned that an animal may be experiencing unnecessary or excessive distress or pain during or following an experimental procedure, first discuss it with the principal investigator. **If the response is not satisfactory or if the response is delayed, then the situation should be reported to the Attending Veterinarian, the IACUC Chair, the Office of Animal Care and Use, or to the University Director of Animal Care and Use;** methods for contacting these persons is posted in every UGA animal facility, are listed below, and can be found at <http://ovpr.uga.edu/oacu/>.

**Uncaring or cruel behavior toward animals cannot be tolerated in any research or teaching facilities at UGA.** If these types of problems occur, the incident or situation should be reported immediately to the offender's supervisor, the Attending Veterinarian, or the Chairperson of the IACUC. If you see anyone who is endangering or stressing an animal because of inexperience, offer to help if you are competent in the procedure. If you are also inexperienced, find someone else who can assist. Report the incident to your supervisor.

**You will not be reprimanded or discriminated against for reporting or expressing your concerns and you will be protected by applicable whistleblower policies. Your anonymity will be protected to the greatest extent possible, should your request it.**

You, as an employee, should first express your concern and attempt to solve the problem at the most immediate administrative level. It is most likely that the problem will be solved by and between persons most directly involved in the situation. If there is no solution or explanation offered, then move to the

next level of responsibility within your department or college. **However, if you are in doubt about how to proceed with your concerns, questions and problems can be taken directly and at any time to the UGA officials noted above.**

If an employee reports a situation to you as a supervisor, an Attending Veterinarian, or an administrator, acknowledge the report and promise to follow up with more details as soon as possible and contact the UGA IACUC. After you complete your initial assessment of the problem, be sure to let the employee know the outcome.

The UGA IACUC is responsible for investigating, reviewing, and resolving any animal welfare concerns reported to it. The regional USDA veterinarian responsible for animal welfare, upon request, can investigate any concerns not appropriately addressed by the UGA IACUC.

**Humane Animal Care Confidential Contacts**

IACUC@uga.edu

IACUC Coordinator: 706-542-4426

IACUC Chair: 706-542-5933

University Director of Animal Care and Use: 706-542-5938

24 Hour Emergency Attending Veterinarian Contact: 706-542-7204