Research Animal Care during COVID-19

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Professor, Population Health
URAR Service Reduction Plan

• Current operations at threat level **YELLOW**
  • Allows decreased frequency of
    • Cage changing
    • Sanitation
  • CAF and VBF have instituted some reductions
  • Check with facility supervisor for changes in the room where your animals are housed

• Documents have been distributed widely:
  • URAR Service Reduction Plan – high level plan
  • URAR Modified Care Plan – animal care details
  • Documents can be requested from M.A. McCrackin at MA.McCrackin@uga.edu.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threat level</th>
<th>Triggers</th>
<th>URAR Plan</th>
<th>Researcher Plan</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Yellow       | UGA declaration of halt on research OR URAR Staffing at approximately 70% | • Cancel all in-person training classes and facility tours (no new vivarium access requests processed)  
• No rodent technical services provided  
• No animal orders, imports, or exports processed, and no animal transports among facilities. *Exceptions may be permitted with written permission from the VP for Research. Please forward when ordering. Research involving the current pandemic will be prioritized.*  
• Current orders, transfers, imports and exports may be reviewed and subject to cancellation. Research personnel requesting the service will be notified of cancellation.  
• Decrease frequency of rodent IVC cage changes (from every 2 to every 3 weeks)  
• All personnel begin conserving Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other critical supplies | • Delay nonessential studies or those requiring intense monitoring (e.g., surgery, infection)  
• Cull animals not needed and begin breeding solely to maintain valuable colonies.  
• Flag most valuable rat and mouse cages (e.g., breeders of unique strains, active experimental) as “VIP”. *See area supervisor to receive URAR “VIP” cards and instructions*  
• Volunteer to URAR Director if PI or her/his lab is able to contribute personnel to husbandry of PI’s colonies and a schedule will be developed prior to collaborative care implementation.  
• Cryopreserve irreplaceable rodent lines (e.g., sperm, embryos), if possible.  
• All personnel begin conserving Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other critical supplies |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threat level</th>
<th>Triggers</th>
<th>Dogs, cats, goats, sheep (kennel / floor housing)</th>
<th>Cats (cages)</th>
<th>Rodents (IVC)</th>
<th>Rodents (static caging)</th>
<th>Ferret (conventional)</th>
<th>Ferret (IVC)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>UGA declaration of halt on research OR URAR</td>
<td>Daily activity per species and spot cleaning will be standard per SOP</td>
<td>Primary enclosure &amp; all accessories: sanitize every 3 weeks</td>
<td>Move any possible animals from static caging to IVCs</td>
<td>Primary enclosure, enrichment: sanitize ≤ 6 weeks</td>
<td>Primary enclosure, enrichment: sanitize ≤ 2 weeks</td>
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<td>OR URAR Staffing at approximately 70%</td>
<td>Primary enclosure, enrichment, and food/water bowl: sanitize ≤ 8 weeks</td>
<td>Cage change, enrichment: spot sanitize every 3 weeks</td>
<td>Supervisors may use discretion in using sanitizable shelters vs disposable paper enrichment</td>
<td>Primary enclosure, enrichment: sanitize weekly</td>
<td>Reduce scraping cages to once weekly and continue paper changes ≥ 2 times weekly</td>
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<td>Primary enclosure, enrichment: sanitize ≤ 6 weeks</td>
<td>Secondary enclosure, procedure room, and food container: sanitize every ≤ 12 weeks</td>
<td>Secondary enclosure, procedure room: sanitize ≤ 12 weeks</td>
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STAFFING

• All who can are working from home
  • Front Office
    • Billing, Animal Orders – Kirsten Gunter, kirsteng@uga.edu
    • AnOps, facility access – Brittney Haynes, bahaynes@uga.edu
    • Back-up for others – Kristy Thrasher, kmthrash@uga.edu
  • Animal Facilities
    • Call facility supervisor posted phone number for help
    • Some facilities have rotating supervisor schedules posted near supervisor office
    • Staff on alternating schedules – fewer in facilities / day
  • Veterinary Staff
    • Vet techs on campus 8-noon each day; ARVET@UGA.EDU
    • Veterinarians available by cell phone during business hours.
    • Emergency hours: Dial 706-542-7204
PPE Reduction / Elimination

• Instituted reduced PPE in Coverdell March 26
  • Eliminated use of shoe covers, hair bonnets, face masks, and observation gowns with the exception of observation gowns in quarantine and ABSL2.
  • Use dedicated scrubs and shoes, along with sleeve covers, gloves, and forceps, for cage changing and animal manipulations inside biosafety cabinets or cage changing stations.

• New PPE guidance under development
  • For other URAR facilities
  • More in coming weeks
SARS-CoV-2 Research

• Several COVID-19 related projects approved or under review

• URAR vets can assist with protocol development before submission to IACUC

• Any animal models requiring live virus challenge will be housed in the AHRC

• Careful coordination with AHRC leadership needed if vaccination phase in URAR & challenge in AHRC