

Guidelines for Occupational Health and Safety Program

I. Background:

New York University School of Medicine Division of Laboratory Animal Resources (NYUSM-DLAR) is committed to compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and standards that are concerned with the use and care of animals in biomedical research. Requirements for an occupational health program for personnel working with laboratory animals are found in Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories (published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes for Health); Code for Federal Regulations, Title 10, Part 20 and Title 29, Part 1910; the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals that codifies the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (published by the National Research Council); and, Occupational Health and Safety in the Care and Use of Research Animals (published by the National Academy of Sciences). In addition, a description of the occupational health program must be included in the Assurance of Compliance that is required by the National Institutes of Health's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare. Finally, triennial site visits are conducted by the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, International (AAALAC) to assure compliance with all applicable occupational health and safety standards.

Under standards outlined in Occupational Health and Safety in the Care and Use of Research Animals, the occupational health and safety program components must include: hazard identification and risk assessment; personnel training; personal hygiene; facilities, procedures, and monitoring; personal protection; and medical evaluation and preventive medicine. All employees who work with animals will receive information about allergies/asthma, species-specific zoonotic disease, and physical injury. The goal of this occupational health and safety program is to identify the hazards, assess the risk(s) associated with those hazards, and eliminate or manage those assessed risks. The Program is the responsibility of the Division of Laboratory Animal Resources, Employee Health Services and the Department of Environmental Services.

II. New York University School of Medicine Division of Laboratory Animal Resources Occupational Health Program in the Care and Use of Research Animals:

A. Who should participate in the program?

All faculty, staff, and students who have direct contact with animals; direct contact with non-sanitized animal caging or enclosures; direct contact with non-fixed or non-sterilized animal tissues, fluids, or wastes; and/or who provide service support to animal equipment, devices, or facilities MUST be enrolled in this Program. The type of animals and associated hazards that will be encountered in the workplace determine what type of health assessment and safety training each employee will receive. Any NYUSM employee who needs access to a DLAR Animal Facility must complete a medical questionnaire and submit it to the DLAR Training Coordinator at the time of DLAR General Orientation. The medical questionnaire will be forwarded to the Clinical Director of Employee Health Services. In addition, when the DLAR reviews an Animal Protocol Form, it will gather a list of all personnel involved with the project. Any employee who received access to a DLAR Animal Facility prior to August 1, 2003 will be required to

complete the medical questionnaire and forward it to the DLAR Training Coordinator in a sealed envelope. A note will be made in the DLAR records that a medical questionnaire was completed and the date of completion. The medical questionnaire will then be forwarded to the Clinical Director of Employee Health Services. All new employees will be required to attend new employee orientation (which requires that they complete the medical questionnaire in order to gain DLAR facility access. Because the majority of employees will be enrolled at the time of animal use application review, which only occurs every three years, Principal Investigators will be reminded on their annual review forms to identify any new personnel

to be enrolled in the program. Employees not working for a Principal Investigator (i.e., animal care staff, maintenance personnel, etc.) will be enrolled upon hire. Alternatively, any eligible employee can be enrolled in the Program by simply having his/her supervisor and/or departmental administrator contact Employee Health Services (Alison Brehm; Clinical Director of Employee Health Services) at any time (e.g., change of job duties, new hire, etc.).

Outside trade's people, plant maintenance workers, security workers, housekeeping staff, tour groups and visitors are required to participate in training on the risks associated with working in an animal facility. The training will assess if a medical questionnaire needs to be completed based on the work assignment in the animal facility.

B. What occurs once personnel are enrolled in the Program?

Employee Health Services will review all completed medical questionnaires and assess the risks related to the work environment. Employee Health Services may, if deemed necessary, schedule a clinic visit. The need for a clinic visit will be based on the functional requirements of the position, the type of animal contact, and the individual's medical history. Generally, employees having more than just incidental contact with animals or animal hazards will have an initial physical exam. Additional medical exams will be determined based on the yearly follow-up questionnaire.

Once enrolled, employees will be periodically re-evaluated. The following is recommended for surveillance of enrolled personnel:

1. Annual questionnaire to update
2. A tuberculin skin test every 6 months for personnel working with non-human primates
3. The occupational health professionals will determine the need and frequency of the following:
 - Tetanus booster
 - Rabies booster
 - Hearing test
 - Respiratory function
 - Allergy/asthma tests

In addition, personnel training will also occur through general orientation, lectures and seminars given by the DLAR staff regarding various zoonotic diseases associated with specific species, the correct way to handle needles and syringes, and other safety topics relevant to work with laboratory animals.

C. What is the Supervisor's responsibility?

- Ensure that their eligible employees are enrolled in, and are in compliance with, the Program
- Be aware of the mandatory training and ensure that employees comply. Mandatory training includes:
 - General Orientation
 - Tour of the animal facility within which the employee will be working which includes hand-on restraint and handling of the particular species with which the researcher will be working.

- Web-based training modules applicable to the type of research being conducted by the individual which includes at the least, modules on the Laws and Regulations that govern Animal Research, occupational health and safety and species specific modules. Investigators conducting survival surgery on rodents must complete 2 additional modules on anesthesia and survival surgery on rodents.

- Inform employees about occupational hazards (e.g., the use of toxic chemicals in animal studies), and the necessary precautions to be taken to protect against these hazards

- Notify employees of any possible exposure to hazardous biological, chemical, or physical agents in the workplace
- Ensure that all employees are trained and have an acceptable level of proficiency when new equipment is to be used or new procedures are to be implemented
- Provide adequate training and opportunity for hands-on practice if employees will be handling unfamiliar species
- Report all animal bites or injuries received by an employee to Employee Health Services and the DLAR.

D. What is the employee's responsibility?

- Inform the supervisor of any animal bites, scratches, or injuries received or illnesses that may be related to working with animals
- Inform the supervisor of any work situation that might be hazardous
- Use personal protective equipment and clothing, proper animal restraining devices, and other applicable safety devices that are available
- Maintain good personal hygiene practices
- Notify the supervisor of equipment or facilities that are in need of repair
- Be familiar with all standard operating procedures for safety concerns and emergency situations
- Inform their Primary Care Physician that job responsibilities involve working with animals (Provide the species, type of work, length of employment)

Check out this Link: <http://ehs.ucdavis.edu/animal/health/> (this will take you to the University of California-Davis web site). This is a Risk Assessment Tool. You enter in the species you work with and you will then get a summary of the health concerns you may encounter following contact with those species.

Note: Thanks to the University of California-Davis for the use of their web site.