

1. PURPOSE

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) describes transportation and use of animals outside the animal facility.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

Principal investigator (PI) and their research staff, animal care staff.

3. MATERIALS

- 3.1. Species-appropriate animal transport enclosure
- 3.2. Climate-controlled transport vehicle, where applicable
- 3.3. Opaque drape or bag to cover the transport enclosure, where applicable
- 3.4. Disinfectant
- 3.5. Personal protective equipment (PPE) such as mask, gloves, laboratory gown
- 3.6. Bags for dead animal disposal

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. Housing:
 - 4.1.1. Refers to the housing of an animal, in a cage, for an extended period of time (more than 12 hours) in an area that meets the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) requirements for animal facilities in terms of infrastructure and environmental conditions.
- 4.2. Holding:
 - 4.2.1. Refers to the holding of an animal for a short period of time, less than 12 hours, in a given area.
- 4.3. Procedure room:
 - 4.3.1. Refers to an area where animals are used for experimental purposes.

5. PROCEDURES

- 5.1. Transport and use of animals outside an animal facility must be described in the Facility Animal Care Committee (FACC) approved Animal Use Protocol (AUP). Work with animals outside the animal facility is not allowed, unless adequate scientific justification is provided. Exemptions can be granted by the FACC.
- 5.2. All housing or procedure areas outside an animal facility must be listed in the AUP and inspected yearly by the FACC. If the area is found to be suitable, an ALPHA (Alternate Laboratory for Procedures and Housing of Animals) certificate will be issued. The ALPHA certificate must be posted in these areas.
- 5.3. The maximum allowable time outside an animal facility is of 12 hours, including transport.
- 5.4. Public access areas include roadway and areas outside the animal facilities.
- 5.5. The animal facility staff must be immediately notified in the event that an animal escapes during transport.
- 5.6. Animal transport through public areas should:
 - 5.6.1. Minimize transit time
 - 5.6.2. Reduce the risk of zoonoses and allergies
 - 5.6.3. Prevent public exposure
 - 5.6.4. Prevent escape

- 5.6.5. Protect the animals against contaminants and aversive conditions (extreme environmental conditions, physical injuries, etc)
- 5.7. If animals will not be used in terminal procedures immediately after transport (i.e. need to be housed in a different facility), transfer should be approved by the receiving facility.
- 5.8. Transport rodents in filter top caging or closed transport containers, such as shipping boxes, to prevent the dispersal of allergens, fomites, and other particles and debris.
- 5.9. The use of caging equipment for transport purposes must be approved by the supervisors of both the sending and receiving facilities.
- 5.10. When using caging equipment to transport rodents, lids must be secured to the cage (e.g., using low tack masking tape or painter's tape).
- 5.11. Caging equipment must not be used to transport animals to non-McGill facilities. Shipping containers can be ordered through the animal facility.
- 5.12. All clear cages must be covered with an opaque cloth or placed in an opaque bag or container to prevent public viewing.
- 5.13. When using a cart to transport cages, a measure needs to be applied to secure cages to the cart to prevent them from tipping over accidentally (e.g., using a strap to secure the cages to the cart or placing the cages in a large bin).
- 5.14. Other small animals, such as rabbits, cats and dogs, should be transported in covered carriers.
- 5.15. Food and a source of water (i.e., Transgel) should be provided if animals will remain in the cage for over 4 hours.
- 5.16. Avoid overcrowding cages:
 - 5.16.1. Use the same density requirement as for general housing.
 - 5.16.2. Males from different cages should not be transported in the same transport container or compartment.
- 5.17. Ensure that the transport cage or container is:
 - 5.17.1. An appropriate size for the animals being transported
 - 5.17.2. Will not cause injury to the animals
 - 5.17.3. Able to contain the animals securely to prevent escape even if the cage is accidentally dropped or tipped over (for example, filter tops should be taped in place)
- 5.18. Service elevators and corridors should be used when available.
- 5.19. Transport can be coordinated by the animal facility staff.
- 5.20. Outdoor transportation by foot is acceptable only on short distances, under 1km. An insulated secondary container (i.e. cooler) must be used when temperature is below 10°C or above 25°C.
- 5.21. Transporting animals in vehicles not specifically designated for animal transportation (e.g., personal or rented vehicles, including taxis) is strongly discouraged.
- 5.22. Requirements for transport vehicles:
 - 5.22.1. Maintain the vehicle's ambient temperature between 10 and 25°C.
 - 5.22.2. Keep the vehicle clean and in good condition.
 - 5.22.3. Sanitize the transport vehicle between transportation of animals of a different health status.
 - 5.22.4. If a passenger vehicle is used, place plastic or a similar material on the floor or under the transport cage to minimize contamination and facilitate sanitization.
- 5.23. When animal procedures must be performed outside the animal facility:
 - 5.23.1. Animals must be handled the same way they would be in the animal facility (e.g. appropriate PPE and containment devices).
 - 5.23.2. Procedures are preferably performed in an area dedicated for animal use.
 - 5.23.3. Non-essential employees must not be present.

- 5.23.4. Door and interior window shades must be closed in the procedure room to avoid view and/or intrusion during the conduct of the procedures.
- 5.23.5. Equipment should be cleaned between animals.
- 5.23.6. Clean and sanitize procedure areas as described in Procedure Room Maintenance SOP. Cleaning activities should be recorded on a log sheet.
- 5.23.7. Cages must be promptly returned to the animal facility for processing.
- 5.23.8. Double bags should be used to transport dead small animals and appropriate containers for dead large animals.
- 5.23.9. Dead animals are disposed in the designated area.

6. REFERENCES

- 6.1. McGill University Policy on permission to use animals in laboratories outside of the animal facility: http://www.mcgill.ca/research/files/research/policy_animals_outside_facility_rev_02_2014_0.pdf
- 6.2. Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) Animal Compliance Office, ALPHA certificate: <http://www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/animal/alpha>

SOP REVISION HISTORY

DATE	PREVIOUS VERSION	NEW VERSION
2015.05.01	3.6 (NO TEXT)	3.6. Bags for dead animal disposal
2015.05.01	4. (NO TEXT)	<p>4. DEFINITIONS</p> <p>4.1. Housing:</p> <p>4.1.1. Refers to the housing of an animal, in a cage, for an extended period of time (more than 12 hours) in an area that meets the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) requirements for animal facilities in terms of infrastructure and environmental conditions.</p> <p>4.2. Holding:</p> <p>4.2.1. Refers to the holding of an animal for a short period of time, less than 12 hours, in a given area.</p> <p>4.3. Procedure room:</p> <p>4.3.1. Refers to an area where animals are used for experimental purposes.</p>
2016.02.18	5.5 (NO TEXT)	5.5. The animal facility staff must be immediately notified in the event that an animal escapes during transport.
2016.02.08	5.12 (NO TEXT)	5.12. When using a cart to transport cages, a measure needs to be applied to secure cages to the cart to prevent them from tipping over accidentally (e.g., using a strap to secure the cages to the cart or placing the cages in a large bin).
2016.09.22	5.2 (NO TEXT)	5.2 All housing or procedure areas outside an animal facility must be listed in the AUP and inspected yearly by the FACC. If the area is found to be suitable, an ALPHA (Alternate Laboratory for Procedures and Housing of Animals) certificate will be issued. The ALPHA certificate must be posted in these areas.
2016.09.22	5.10 (NO TEXT)	5.10. When using caging equipment for transport, lids must be secured to the cage (e.g., using low tack masking tape or painter's tape).
2016.09.22	6. (NO TEXT)	<p>6. REFERENCES</p> <p>6.1. McGill University Policy on permission to use animals in laboratories outside of the animal facility: http://www.mcgill.ca/research/files/research/policy_animals_outside_facility_rev_02_2014_0.pdf</p> <p>6.2. Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) Animal Compliance Office, ALPHA certificate: http://www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/animal/alpha</p>