



Policy for Animal Welfare and Compliance Concerns - UACC approved Oct 2010 Rev Feb 2018

McGill University regards the use of animals in research, teaching, and testing to be an integral component of continued progress in medicine, science, education, environmental sciences and agriculture that results in enormous benefits for human and animal health.

McGill University is committed to conducting the highest-quality research and to providing animals with the best care. At McGill University, all research, teaching and testing involving animals is guided by the guidelines of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC). A rigorous review by the Facility Animal Care Committee (FACC) ensures that animals are used only when necessary and under humane conditions.

This policy was created in order to clarify the responsibilities of all participants in the Animal Care Program and assist them in the resolution of animal welfare and compliance concerns.

Responsibilities

All participants in the Animal Care and Use Program have a dual role:

1. Collegiality between the different individuals (researchers, instructors, veterinarians, animal care staff, committee members, managers, administrators and anyone involved directly or indirectly)
2. Accountability to the FACC, Faculty, Institute, McGill University, the CCAC and the granting agencies. All participants have the responsibility to report concerns as a moral obligation.

Resolution guidelines

To ensure resolution of animal welfare and/or compliance concerns, individuals are to follow the points below.

- If disagreement, Principal Investigator (PI) / Course Instructor is to be invited to meet the local FACC (or subcommittee of the FACC) to ensure a good dialog benefitting both sides and agreement on the course of action
- The benefit of the doubt must be given while gathering facts, avoiding generalization, assumptions and associations in order to maintain good communication and willingness to resolve the issue
- Communication must be professional and based on mutual respect and trust between individuals. Emails and letters may be reviewed by higher administration if there is no resolution at the local level
- There should be a gradation of intervention:
 - verbal communication → (if no result) verbal communication followed by written communication
 - communication with the individual → (if no result) communication with the individual's supervisor → (if no result) communication with the veterinarian and/or FACC / Animal Compliance Office (ACO) can mediate → (if no result) consultation with Faculty Dean/ Institute Director → (if no result and for major issues, only in exceptional circumstances) appeal to the Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations (VPRIR). Note that in appeal cases, the person will need to demonstrate how it affects research goals, student studies or any other major impact.

- Response and reporting need to be expedient to benefit both people and animals
- If there is animal distress, an institutional Veterinarian or Animal Health Technician (AHT) must see the animals before proceeding to an intervention. Note that veterinary instruction can be given over the phone. The veterinarian/AHT will try to contact the researcher and/or emergency contact person prior to taking action as much as possible
- The Director of Animal Compliance of VPRIR is available for assistance, supplying information and to mediate.

Authority

The Institutional Veterinarian has the authority to relieve pain and distress in the animal.

The FACC has the authority to terminate any procedure as per Terms of Reference.

The Director of Animal Compliance's role is to recommend, advise and mediate.

VPRIR, or delegate, is the highest authority in the Animal Care and Use Program.

University Animal Care Committee (UACC) Policies and Guidelines

- Policy on the Study and Care of Animals
- Training Recertification Policy
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Guidelines on photography in laboratories and animal facilities
- Policy on permission to use animals in laboratories outside of the animal facility
- Theory and practical training is mandatory for all people who intend to work with animals
- Participation into the Occupational Health Program is mandatory for non-human primate researchers

Copies available at: <http://www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/animal/guidelines/> and <http://www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/animal/sop/>

McGill Policies and Regulations

- A person reporting a concern is protected by the Safe Disclosure Policy (<https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/policies-and-regulations/safe-disclosure-whistle-blowing-reporting>)
- If it is determined that there has been misconduct, a Research Integrity Officer (RIO) will be named by the Principal and proceed with the investigation as per the policy on Investigation of Research Misconduct: <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/secretariat/Research-Misconduct-Regulations-Concerning-Investigation-of.pdf>

The term ***Institution*** refers to McGill University as well as affiliated research institutes: Montreal Neurological Institute, McGill University Health Centre's Montreal General Hospital site, Montreal Children Hospital site, Royal Victoria Hospital site, Lady Davis Institute of the SMBD Jewish General Hospital, Douglas Mental Health University Institute and Shriners Hospital for Children.

The flowchart in attachment is meant to help individuals in the reporting and resolutions of concerns.

Process for Reporting and Resolutions of Animal Welfare and Compliance Concerns

