

Texas A&M AgriLife Research Rules

15.99.07.A1 | Use of Vertebrate Animals in Research, Teaching, and Testing



Revised: August 5, 2022

Next Scheduled Review: August 5, 2027

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RULE SUMMARY

In accordance with The Texas A&M University System (A&M System) Regulation 15.99.07, *Use of Vertebrate Animals*, Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research) will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, policies, regulations, and guidelines relating to the humane and ethical care and use of animals in research, teaching, and testing. AgriLife Research is committed to providing humane care and treatment for all vertebrate animals used in research, teaching, and testing conducted by the agency—including cooperative research—regardless of the source of funding or whether or not the research is sponsored.

This rule is required by A&M System Regulation 15.99.07 establishes formal procedures and guidelines to ensure humane care and use of vertebrate animals in agency research as well as cooperative research.

Click [here](#) to view **Definitions**.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 In accordance with A&M System Regulation 15.99.07, *Use of Vertebrate Animals*, AgriLife Research will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, policies, regulations, and guidelines including the Animal Welfare Act, *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (The Guide), and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agriculture Animals in Research and Teaching* (The Ag Guide).
- 1.2 The Director appoints the Institutional Official (IO) with administrative authority to commit institutional resources to ensure that the animal care and use program will comply with federal, state, and local laws, policies, regulations, and guidelines. The IO executes USDA registrations and PHS assurances, if needed, and reports to these agencies, as required. In addition, the IO has been delegated authority to appoint members of the AgriLife IACUC .
- 1.3 The use of vertebrate animals within AgriLife Research, whether for research, teaching, or testing purposes – regardless of funding – shall be described in an Animal Use Protocol (AUP). The AUP is a form designed to capture relevant information regarding the appropriate use of the animals in research, teaching, or testing activities.
- 1.4 In accordance with the fully executed Memorandum of Agreement between AgriLife Research and Texas A&M, for each project involving animals used in research, teaching, or testing, an AUP must be approved by the TAMU IACUC if the activities are occurring in Brazos or Burleson County, or through the AgriLife IACUC if the activities are occurring outside Brazos or Burleson County prior to the initiation of work, or approval from another institution's IACUC if an agreement exists.
- 1.5 An approved and current AUP for all animal activities must be in place when animals are housed or used for research, testing, or teaching.
- 1.6 Modifications to an AUP must be approved prior to initiation of the changes.

2.0 INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEES (IACUCs)

- 2.1 For projects involving animals used in research, teaching, or testing in Brazos or Burleson Counties, an AUP must be approved by the TAMU IACUC. The TAMU IACUC is appointed, structured, and performs duties as set forth in TAMU University Rule 15.99.07.M1 – *Use of Vertebrate Animals*.
- 2.2 For projects involving animals used in research, teaching, or testing occurring outside Brazos or Burleson Counties, an AUP must be approved by the AgriLife IACUC. The AgriLife IACUC is appointed, structured, and performs duties as set forth below in section 3.0.

3.0 INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE (IACUC)

- 3.1 The AgriLife IACUC shall be appointed, structured, and perform duties and functions as set forth in the most current version of the documents referenced at the end of this rule or other applicable legal requirements promulgated by relevant government agencies.
- 3.2 The AgriLife IACUC shall be appointed by and report directly to the Institutional Official (IO).
- 3.3 The AgriLife IACUC shall review proposed animal work outlined in the AUP, review amendments to AUPs, review continuing reviews, conduct semi-annual facility inspections, conduct a semi-annual review of the Animal Care and Use Program, and investigate reports of noncompliance and concerns involving the care and use of animals. The AgriLife IACUC may approve, disapprove, or request modifications of AUPs. The AgriLife IACUC may also suspend a previously approved research, teaching or testing activity covered by this rule for noncompliance with protocol description, or if it is otherwise in noncompliance. A decision by the AgriLife IACUC not to approve research, teaching or testing may not be overridden by the IO.
- 3.4 The AgriLife IACUC shall carry out all of those duties specifically assigned to it in government regulations and policies. In addition to duties mandated in government regulations and policies, the AgriLife IACUC shall review all aspects of the program for the humane care and use of animals including short-term and long-term goals, and regulations and procedures pertaining to animal care and use and shall have full authority to enter any areas where animals are used or housed for research, teaching or testing to ensure compliance.
- 3.5 The AgriLife IACUC will maintain standardized procedures consistent with federal requirements.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

- 4.1 Principal investigators are primarily responsible for compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations involving activities covered by this rule and are responsible for:
 - (a) assuring that animal work is appropriately reviewed and approved prior to initiation of any activities or changes to approved activities. Regardless of funding sources, an AUP involving the use of animals in research, teaching, or testing must be prepared and signed by the principal investigator and must be reviewed and approved by the TAMU IACUC or AgriLife IACUC. If research is collaborative or involves other institutions, appropriate compliance approval must be submitted and approved at each participating institution.
 - (b) assuring that conduct of animal research, teaching or testing activities is restricted to the animal activities described in the approved AUP or approved amendments, and is in congruence with funding grants, if applicable.
 - (c) assuring that all participants in animal activities are appropriately qualified through training and education to perform their responsibilities as listed in the AUP.
 - (d) assuring that all participants in animal activities are enrolled in an Occupational Health and Safety program.

- (e) assuring that all animal activities involving hazardous and biohazardous activities are approved by the appropriate safety committees.
- (f) abiding by all determinations of the TAMU IACUC or AgriLife IACUC, including, but not limited to directives to terminate participation in designated research, teaching or testing activities.
- (g) notifying the TAMU IACUC or AgriLife IACUC as soon as possible after the discovery of any unanticipated or adverse event that impacts the health or safety of animals covered by this rule, including reporting any animal concerns or noncompliance.

5.0 ATTENDING VETERINARIAN

The role and responsibilities of the Attending Veterinarian(s), or designee(s), is as set forth in System Regulation 15.99.07.

6.0 CARE AND USE OF NON-UNIVERSITY OWNED ANIMALS

Care and use of non-university owned animals shall be consistent with A&M System Regulation 15.99.07.

7.0 COMPLIANCE

Reports and allegations of noncompliance with applicable laws, policies, regulations, rules, and procedures may be submitted to the Director for Ethics and Compliance at AgriLife Administrative Services, the Texas A&M Animal Welfare Program at the Texas A&M Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety, or via the A&M System Risk, Fraud, and Misconduct Hotline.

8.0 RECORDKEEPING

Records will be kept in accordance with Texas A&M Procedure 15.03.99.M0.01, *Use of Animals in Teaching, Research, and Testing*; AgriLife Research Procedure 61.99.01.A1.01, *Retention of State Records*; and all applicable federal record retention requirements.

RELATED STATUTES, POLICIES, OR REQUIREMENTS

[The Animal Welfare Act \(7 USC, 2131-2156\) and amendments to the Animal Welfare Regulations \(9 CFR Chapter 1\)](#)
[Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals \(National Institutes of Health\)](#)
[Health Research Extension Act of 1985](#)
[U.S Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals used in Testing, Research, and Training](#)
[The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#)
[Guide for the Care and Use of Agriculture Animals in Research and Testing](#)
[United States Department of Agriculture Animal Care Policies](#)
[A&M System Regulation 15.99.07, Use of Vertebrate Animals](#)
[University Rule 15.99.07.M1, Use of Animals in Teaching, Research, and Testing](#)
[AgriLife Research Procedure 61.99.01.A1.01, Retention of State Records](#)

DEFINITIONS

TAMU Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (TAMU IACUC)—An administrative body appointed by and reporting to the Institutional Official in accordance with 9 CFR Chapter 1, Subchapter C, Part 2.31, P.L. 99-158, and the Health Research Extension Act of 1985. The TAMU IACUC is under the oversight of the TAMU Institutional Official for the purposes of this rule

AgriLife Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (AgriLife IACUC) – An administrative body appointed by and reporting to the AgriLife Institutional Official in accordance with 9 CFR Chapter 1, Subchapter C, Part 2.31, P.L. 99-158, and the Health Research Extension Act of 1985. The AgriLife IACUC is under the oversight of the AgriLife Institutional Official for the purposes of this rule. This committee was established to evaluate, oversee, and authorize use of animals within the Texas A&M University System at locations outside of Brazos and Burleson Counties.

Institutional Official (IO)—The individual who bears ultimate responsibility for the Animal Care and Use Program and is responsible for resource planning and ensuring alignment of program goals with the agency’s mission.

Use of animals—Any activity involving vertebrate animals in which the natural life cycle or movements of the animals is perturbed.

Each of the following terms used in this rule is defined in A&M System Regulation 15.99.07 (Definitions):

- Animal
- Animal Facility
- Animal Welfare Act
- Attending Veterinarian
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
- Institutional Official (IO)
- Public Health Service Policy
- Use of Animals

CONTACT OFFICE

Questions concerning this rule should be referred to AgriLife Ethics and Compliance at 979-845-4789.

REVISION HISTORY

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