

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Animal Care and Use Program Guidelines

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES is committed to maintaining a high-quality animal care program in support of biomedical research at the University of South Alabama (USA). The College of Medicine adheres to all applicable federal, state, local, and institutional laws, regulations, and guidelines governing the care and use of laboratory animals. All policies are enforced by the **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)**.

This document provides general guidance for investigators who plan to use animals in research or demonstrations. For more detailed information or consultation, investigators are encouraged to contact the **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES office** at 251-460-6239 or email the relevant personnel listed below.

General Information

- **Vivarium Hours:** 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday–Friday
- **Animal Care Coverage:** 365 days/year, including after-hours as needed
- **Facility Access:** Restricted to personnel listed on an IACUC-approved protocol
 - A coded **FOB** is required for facility entry and access to specific animal rooms.
 - FOBs are not to be shared; each associate must obtain their own.

All animal procurement, including purchases or transfers to USA, must be coordinated through **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**.

Support Services Provided:

- Veterinary care
 - Selection of animal models
 - Guidance on anesthetics, analgesics, and therapeutic agents
 - Consultation on animal-related procedures
 - Cost estimates for procurement and care
- Note: Early consultation is highly recommended to ensure proper budgeting.*
- Assistance with VAS documents
 - Consultation on IACUC protocol submission

Training Requirements:

- **Mandatory IACUC training** prior to initiating any animal study
 - **Supplementary training** is available (free of charge) upon request from **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES** faculty and staff
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Animal Use Protocols

All animal use must be pre-approved by the **IACUC**. Support is available from the **Attending Veterinarian (AV)** for protocol preparation. Online submissions are processed via **IRBNet**; contact the **IACUC/IBC Administrator** for assistance.

- **Protocol Number:** Must be referenced in all related correspondence
- **Amendments:** Required for any **minor changes** to an approved protocol and must receive IACUC approval before implementation
- **Significant Changes:** Require submission of a **new Animal Use Protocol**

For IACUC policies and documents, visit:

 [IACUC Policies & Guidelines](#)

Reporting Animal Illness or Injury

- Animals are observed **twice daily, 365 days/year**.
- Technicians complete a “Sick Animal Report” if illness/injury is observed.
- Veterinary care is provided **at no charge** for vivarium-housed animals.

If an investigator observes illness or injury:

- Notify a supervisor or animal technician immediately.
 - After hours/weekends: Refer to the **on-call contact numbers** posted on the whiteboard at the entry of the vivarium, near the staff break room.
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Reporting Animal Wellness Concerns

The **Animal Wellness Policy Statement** is posted throughout the vivarium and available online:

 [Animal Welfare Policy Statement \(PDF\)](#)

The University encourages reporting any suspected inhumane or improper treatment of animals. Reports can be made anonymously and will be investigated. **Whistleblowers are protected** from retaliation.

Animal Procurement

- Submit the **Animal Requisition Form** via IRBNet under “forms for researchers.”
- **Telephone orders are not accepted.**

- Animals must be sourced from **approved vendors only**.
 - To transfer animals from another institution, contact the **AV or vivarium manager**.
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Animal Disposal

- If found deceased by BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES personnel:
 - The carcass is bagged, labeled with the PI's name and date, and stored in the holding freezer.
 - If discovered by research personnel:
 - Notify the supervisor.
 - Place the labeled carcass/tissue in a plastic bag in the walk-in freezer.
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Ancillary Services

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES staff are trained in:

- Animal handling and restraint
- Medication administration (oral/injectable)
- Sample collection (blood, tissue, etc.)
- Necropsy

Fee-for-Service Procedures:

- Technical assistance (e.g., administration, sample collection)
- Surgery, necropsy, pathology, radiography
- Clinical procedures

Note:

- Instruction and initial procedural oversight are **not billed**.
- Late requests are honored on an “as-available” basis.

Free consultations are available for:

- Veterinary care
 - Anesthesia and euthanasia planning
 - Budget and protocol development
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Billing

Investigators are billed monthly for:

- Animal orders
- Per diem charges
- Anesthesia machine rental
- Supplies and technical assistance

For billing inquiries, contact the **Coordinator of Business Operations**.

Contact Information

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