Policy # BP-21-2013

Policy Title: Suspension of Approved Animal Activities

Under the federal regulations, an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) may suspend a previously approved activity after a review and a formal vote of a majority of a quorum present at a convened IACUC meeting. (Animal Welfare Act (AWA) §2.31. d.6; Public Health Service (PHS) Policy IV. C.6). The Institutional Official is also authorized to suspend animal activities (Animal Welfare Act Regulations (AWAR)§2.31 d. 7-8; PHS Policy IV C. 7-8). In order to provide adequate veterinary care, the Attending Veterinarian (AV) may also suspend animal activities for one of more animals to protect them from of immediate harm (AWAR §1.1; §2.33 a.2; PHS Policy IV A. 3.b.1). A suspension of activity by the AV must be brought for Full Committee Review (FCR) at the next scheduled meeting.

The IACUC may suspend an activity if it determines that the activity is being performed in violation of the AWA, the Guide, PHS Assurance or Policy (IV. C, 1 a-g), the approved IACUC protocol, or Institutional Policies. The suspension may be temporary or permanent. The suspension may be of a single activity or several activities described in one or more protocols. In discussing a proposed suspension, the IACUC may consider:

- The severity of the noncompliance
- Prior acts of noncompliance by the PI or his/her lab and prior sanctions
- Alternative sanctions
- Prior skill evaluations and retraining efforts
- Written warnings from the IACUC or Institutional Official (IO)
- Effect of denied access to animal facilities and other potential consequences of the suspension
- For multiple protocols, whether animal activities are active under all protocols

If there is a vote to suspend, the IACUC will:

- Set a date or list of conditions which, when met, will end the suspension(s);
- Designate who will determine when the conditions are met (Chair, Designated Reviewers, Full Committee);
- Notify the PI of suspension by a formal letter;
- Send a copy of this letter to the IO and the Department Head;
- Require that animals on a suspended protocol(s) be placed on an approved Holding Protocol;
- Determine if the PI and members of the research team will lose access to the animal facilities;
- Will confer w/SPS to determine which grants have been affected and which Funding Agencies need to be notified of the suspension (DOD, VA, NIH, etc.);
- Notify OLAW and USDA/APHIS, if appropriate (i.e., if non-compliance has occurred in federally funded research).

As with any action of the IACUC, the PI may submit a written rebuttal or response to the Chair or to the IO, who will address the PI’s response in a timely fashion.