Policy # SI-02-2012

Policy Title: Animal Transfer Between Protocols for Traditional Laboratory Species

Policy: In the interest of the ethical principle of reduction, the reuse of surplus or control animals is encouraged. However, the use of animals on successive protocols is subject to IACUC oversight. In order to evaluate the overall use of individual animals on successive protocols and to track the transfer of particular animals between protocols, the “Animal Ownership Transfer Form” is used to garner information related to both the previous and intended future use of animals. This form is routed through the IACUC office and reviewed and approved by the Chair, Vice Chair or their designee.

The Animal Ownership Transfer Form is to be completed by the PI(s) to allow assessment of past and future use of the animal(s). PI(s) are responsible for incorporating the use of surplus/control animals into their approved IACUC protocol. The Chair or their designate will evaluate the protocols of all parties to the transfer to ensure that the source/disposition of transfer animals is covered, and will evaluate the procedures used when deciding whether or not to approve an animal transfer. Situations in which transfer may not be appropriate, or in which additional justification and explanation would be required would include:

- Multiple survival surgeries
- Invasive procedures performed in both protocols
- USDA Species

The regulatory guidance on the topic of multiple survival surgery can be found in the Animal Welfare Act Regulations, the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and the Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching:

- No animal will be used in more than one major operative procedure from which it is allowed to recover, unless it is justified for scientific reasons. (9 CFR §2.31(d)(1)(x))
- Multiple surgical procedures, regardless of whether they are classified as major or minor, should be evaluated to determine their impact on the animal’s well-being. (Pg 30, Guide [NRC 2011])
- Multiple major survival surgical procedures on a single animal must be scientifically justified and reviewed and approved by the IACUC. (Pg 30, Guide [NRC 2011]).
- Cost savings alone is not an adequate reason for performing multiple major survival surgeries on a single animal (Pg 30, Guide [NRC 2011]).

Use of the Animal Ownership Transfer Form

1. PIs wishing to obtain animals from another protocol must initiate, complete and submit the “Animal Ownership Transfer Form”. Information including protocol and KFS numbers are required from both parties to the transfer.
2. Once completed, the transfer form is routed to the IACUC office for review.
3. If approved, the IACUC office sends the signed document to the ACS office for final notice. The ACS office makes a determination of space availability; animals cannot be moved until this final determination is made.
4. If not approved, the transfer request will be brought to the next convened meeting of the IACUC to discuss outstanding issues.

Note: Animals may be used on successive protocols provided their health has not been compromised. Examples where health can be compromised include but are not limited to the following:

- Invasive procedure such as major surgery
- Illness resulting from non-invasive procedures (e.g. anemia)
- Health concern unrelated to the protocol (e.g. heart disease, kidney failure)

If the health of the animal has been adversely affected, it should not be released to another research or teaching protocol until the health concern has been resolved.