

William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital
VA IACUC Policy #21-13

Animal User Training & Other Training

Policy: In accordance with the VHA Handbook 1200.07, each VA medical center must ensure that all personnel involved with animal research receive training to competently and humanely perform their duties related to animal research.

New Personnel:

The ACORP form and change of personnel form both indicate names of personnel being deleted or added to the protocol. Both forms include a certification by the PI of the new employee's responsibilities (i.e., specific protocol procedures being performed); relevant education, training, and/or experience; how personnel without prior training and experience will be trained and by whom; and certification of training completion, as well as completion of WOC (without compensation) paperwork if the new employee is not employed by the VA. Required training includes: the Online User Orientation Seminar certification, Biomethodology of the Rat or Mouse course, Lab Animal Surgery course (if applicable), the UW Occupational Health and Safety course, and VA BSL-2 training (if applicable).

Short-term staff changes may be requested on a different form, which is called "Notice of Change in Animal Research Personnel (for Temporary Employees – 3 months or less)." This form requires the same certifications by the PI and the IACUC Coordinator as for the change in project staff form described above. In addition, the form requests the time period for employment to be stated.

Both personnel change forms are approved by the Administrative Officer and are presented at the next IACUC meeting, at which time they may be ratified, or Committee members may request full review. Administrative approval requires new personnel to complete the RARC online certification, BSL-2 certification, VA Safety Training, and WOC paperwork. New personnel must also sign up for Biomethodology of lab mouse/rat course, UW OH&S course and Lab Animal Surgery course (if relevant) prior to approval.

How to Complete Citiprogram Biennial Animal User Training:

Biennial Animal User Training is required for all personnel listed on protocols, Principal Investigators, and all Animal Research Facility staff. Protocols will not be approved until the IACUC has received assurance that all personnel have completed the biennial training. This training must be successfully completed **biennially** in order to demonstrate compliance with Federal VA ORD animal research training mandates. The training is completed through the Citiprogram.org website and includes "Working with the VA IACUC" and "Working with Rats [and/or] Mice in Research Setting." Personnel must complete the quizzes and then notify the IACUC Coordinator once training is complete. Training is required before new personnel is approved to work on the protocol and also must be renewed prior to the second anniversary of the original training date.

IACUC Member Training

All IACUC Members must take the "Essentials for IACUC Members" course on the Citiprogram.org website biennially.

Responsibilities:

1. Role of the Investigator

Principal Investigators are also required to complete the Biennial Animal User Training. The Principal Investigators must ensure that ALL personnel working with animals under the PIs' animal protocols complete the Animal User Training according to the information listed above.

In addition, the investigator, when adding new persons to a protocol acknowledges the following:

“No personnel will perform any animal procedures until they have been approved by the IACUC. When new or additional personnel become involved in these studies, I will submit their qualifications, training, and experience to the IACUC and seek IACUC approval before they are involved in animal studies;

I will ensure that all personnel are enrolled in an institutional Occupational Health and Safety Program prior to their contact with animals, or have declined in writing to participate, if allowed by local policy;

I will provide my after-hours telephone numbers to the animal care staff in case of emergency.”

2. Role of the Veterinary Medical Consultant (VMC) and Animal Research Facility (ARF) Staff

The VMC and ARF Supervisor monitor new personnel when they are performing procedures or surgeries for the first time.

3. IACUC Oversight

The VA IACUC has the authority to deny annual renewal of protocols if animal users are not up to date on their animal training. The IACUC also has the authority to require additional one-on-one training with either the VMC or a RARC trainer for any animal users who they feel are not qualified to complete particular procedures.

Questions: Any questions on this policy should be directed to the A.O. (280-7222).

References:

- VHA Handbook 1200.07; *Use of Animals in Research*
- Citiprogram.org website (includes VA-specific animal research training courses)

Effective date: A draft was created on 12/05/06; Revision and approval on 03/10/08, 11/09/2009, 9/13/2010 7/11/2011, 11/07/12, 11/06/13.