

University of Colorado at Boulder
Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
SOP #17
Title: Transport

PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure is intended to provide information on the requirements of animal transportation and to establish procedures to be followed before, during, and after transportation of animals.

BACKGROUND

All transportation of animals, including intra-institutional transportation, should be planned to minimize transit time and risk of zoonoses, protect against environmental extremes, avoid overcrowding, provide food and water when necessary and protect against physical trauma. Some transportation-related stress is inevitable, but it can be minimized by attention to those factors. Coordination of shipping and receiving with animal care personnel is important to ensure that animals are received properly and that appropriate facilities are available for housing.

APPROVAL: Transportation of animals should receive the following approvals:

- You must have prior IACUC approval for transportation needs between animal facilities within the CU Boulder campus and between CU Boulder animal facilities and another institution. The Institutional Veterinarian should be contacted regarding this type of animal transport. Work with the veterinarian to ensure that health reports are in order, and proper quarantine procedures are followed.
- You must have prior IACUC protocol approval to transport animals from a vivarium to a non-vivarium procedure space. Veterinary staff should be aware of the containers used for transporting animals, if they are not what are generally used by a particular animal facility. Use a transport container that is sanitize-able such as an animal cage, or some sort of disposable caging. Talk to your vivarium facility manager about what they recommend for traffic pattern through the facility. Use the least public route possible from the vivarium to your lab or external procedure space.

CRITERIA FOR ANIMAL TRANSPORT BETWEEN CU BOULDER ANIMAL FACILITIES AND LABORATORIES

You may transport small animals (rodents) to your lab under the following conditions:

Cage preparation

- Animals may only be transported out of the animal facility in approved transport containers. Contact facility supervisors or the facility manager for appropriate transport containers.
- Animal density within a transport container should allow for normal postural movements. Density of the animals in the container should never exceed twice that detailed in the 8th Edition of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. For animals not yet weaned, transport only one litter per transport container.
- More than one species is not permitted to occupy the same transport container at the same time. Physically separate the animals by species to prevent interspecies disease transmission and to eliminate anxiety and possible physiological and behavioral changes due to interspecies conflict.
- When transporting multiple cages, place them on carts.

- Cover cages with drapes or otherwise appropriately cover in secondary containment approved by the IACUC.
- Exercise care in handling enclosures used to transport live animals. They must not be dropped, needlessly tilted, or stacked; or handled in any manner which may cause physical trauma or stress to the animals.
- If transporting multiple animals in a single container, those animals should have already been cage-mates prior to transport. Animals should not be mixed together for the purpose of ease of transport.
- If you invert the water bottle to avoid dripping during transport, be sure to place it back correctly so that the animal has access to water. Food and water should be accessible ad libitum unless food or water deprivation is on an approved protocol.

Transport

- Use approved routes through buildings to minimize contact with the public. Freight elevators should be used when moving animals between floors if available.
- **Personal vehicles may not be used for the transport of animals between facilities unless prior approval is received by the IACUC and OAR.**

Other considerations

- Animals that have left any facility may not be returned to transgenic or barrier facilities (IBG, Gold building Transgenics facility, Biofrontiers) without proper quarantine and lab tests. If animals being removed from these barrier facilities will need continued housing, space must be arranged through the Office of Animal Resources.
- Animals may not remain in laboratories for longer than 24 hours (12 hours for USDA-covered species). The only exception is labs that have been pre-approved by the IACUC as study sites or satellites.
- If animals are to undergo procedures in your lab, be sure that the lab room number is listed in your animal protocol. The IACUC is required to inspect these on a semi-annual basis.
- When taking regular cages back to the facilities, adhere to procedures for that facility regarding dirty cages. Dispose of disposable cages in accordance with the OAR procedure for your facility.
- **Adhere to proper traffic patterns for the various facilities. If you have been in conventional facilities, you will not be able to enter the transgenic, barrier, or Biofrontiers facilities on the same day without necessary precautions approved by the facility supervisor or manager.**