

Standard Operating Procedures for Temporary Suspension of
Activities Using Animals or Animal Use Privileges by Attending Veterinarians
(adopted December 7, 2012; amended October 2018; amended December 16, 2020)

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has authorized Attending Veterinarians (AVs) to intercede in any activity involving the use of animals for research or teaching purposes which in their judgment jeopardizes animal welfare or compliance with federal or University policies. This includes AV authority to temporarily suspend activities using animals or animal use privileges (see definition below) of individuals when deemed necessary by the AVs to preserve animal welfare.

Temporary suspension of activities using animals or animal use privileges

Suspension of activities using animals or animal use privileges by the AVs is an infrequent and significant event. It is the expectation of the Institutional Official (IO) that AVs use sound judgement to employ this authority when necessary. The following are guidelines for AV following a veterinary suspension of activities using animals or animal use privileges. This document is designed to complement the “Standard Operating Procedures for Suspension or Termination and Reinstatement of Activities Using Animals or Animal Use Privileges by-ACUCs” for the Animal Program Policy on Protocol Non-Compliance, [UW-4113](#). Documentation of the source of authority for these activities is found in Appendix 1.

Definitions:

1. **Activities using animals** are understood to mean any circumstance in which an animal is handled, manipulated, maintained, or observed directly or indirectly within the UW-Madison animal program as described in an ACUC-approved protocol, ACAPAC- or ACUC-approved policy, Standard Operating Procedure, or veterinary standard for the purposes of research, teaching, or outreach. These activities can be a specific manipulation(s) in a protocol, or all manipulations in a protocol (the entire protocol).
2. **Animal Use Privileges:** The privilege to use living, vertebrate animals for research, teaching, or outreach is the eligibility of an individual to work, or direct work, with animals in any capacity. Suspension of this privilege may be enacted in conjunction with suspension of animal activities or independently.
3. **Attending Veterinarian (AV):** The Chief Campus Veterinarian (CCV) or a Senior Program Veterinarian (SPV) employed by the Research Animal Resources and Compliance (RARC) or Wisconsin National Primate Research Center (WNPRC).
4. **Suspension of activities using animals:** An action to stop temporarily specified activities using animals. Such action may be taken by the ACUC, AV, or IO.
5. **Suspension of animal use privileges:** An action to stop temporarily the overall eligibility of an individual to work, or supervise work, with animals in any capacity. Such action may be taken by the ACUC, AV, or IO.
6. **Termination of activities using animals:** An action to stop permanently specified **activities using animals** based on a review of the facts and majority vote by the ACUC. The IO may take independent action to terminate activities using animals, please refer to the IO SOP in this situation. The AV cannot independently take action to terminate activities using animals.
7. **Termination of animal use privileges:** An action to stop permanently the overall eligibility of an individual to work, or supervise work with animals in any capacity based

on a review of the facts and majority vote by the ACUC, or by the IO. This action is not equivalent to termination of employment.

8. References to **communications made in writing** are understood to include email correspondence.

SOP

1. The AV observes or is made aware of activities that may or will lead to harm of animals if not immediately stopped. Information may come from direct observation, reports from coworkers/care staff/other research animal veterinarians, or anonymously (e.g. whistleblower).
2. The AV should attempt to verify a reported situation if not observed first-hand before suspending activities using animals or animal use privileges, however, this is not required and the AV may use professional judgement to temporarily suspend activities using animals or animal use privileges.
3. The AV must take action or direct action to immediately alleviate animal pain and/or suffering resulting from the observed or reported activities.
4. The AV informs the animal user that activities using animals or animal use privileges are immediately suspended.
 - a. Notification may be made verbally, but must be followed up in writing within 24 hours of verbal notification.
 - b. Notification must include the time, place, date, nature of the incident leading to suspension, which specific animal activity or activities are suspended and/or if animal use privileges are suspended, and if the suspension includes denial of access to an animal facility.
 - c. If suspension includes denial of access to an animal facility, the AV must direct the facility management to confiscate keys or take other action to deny access.
 - d. Notification must state that reinstatement of activities using animals or animal use privileges is the purview of the ACUC with primary oversight in the area where the activity that prompted suspension occurred.
 - e. The supervisor of the suspended person must be informed immediately. If the suspended person is a principal investigator of an animal protocol, the department chair must be informed immediately.
5. If action is taken by an SPV, the SPV must inform verbally or in writing the Chief Campus Veterinarian (CCV) immediately of the suspension activity described in #2 above.
6. The AV must inform verbally or in writing the Chair of the relevant ACUC immediately of the suspension activity described in #2 above.
7. The AV must inform verbally or in writing the Institutional Official immediately of the suspension activity described in #2 above.
8. The temporary suspension activity by the AV will be reviewed and acted upon by the relevant Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) at a convened meeting as described in the SOP "Suspension or Termination and Reinstatement of Activities Using Animals or Animal Use Privileges by ACUCs" or the SOP "Suspension or Termination and Reinstatement of Activities Using Animals or Animal Use Privileges by the Institutional Official." Prior to the meeting, the Chair of the ACUC and/or the AV may initiate or direct coordinated fact-finding and related efforts in order to prepare for the convened ACUC meeting.
9. In the event that the temporary suspension impacts the oversight of more than one ACUC (e.g. the PI is from one school/college but conducts work in facilities overseen by a different ACUC) the Chairs of the ACUCs will work and communicate collaboratively to

facilitate resolution.

Appendix 1

The following summarization is intended to provide the Animal Care and Use Committees (ACUCs) with a synopsis of the sources which provide the committee with the authority to suspend or terminate the animal use related activities covered in this SOP.

Relevant Authorities:

The USDA Animal Welfare Act Regulations (AWARs) and the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS Policy) charge Animal Care and Use Committees (ACUCs) with the responsibility and authority to:

1. Suspend an activity that it previously approved if it determines that the activity is not being conducted in accordance with the approved protocol, the AWARs, the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, the institution's PHS Assurance, or the PHS Policy. The ACUC may suspend an activity only after review of the matter at a convened meeting of a quorum of the ACUC and with the suspension vote of a majority of the quorum present. AWAR ss. 2.31(c)(6) and (d)(6); PHS Policy ss. IV.B.8., IV.C.6.
2. Review and approve, require modifications in (to secure approval), or withhold approval of proposed significant changes in an approved protocol regarding the care and use of animals in ongoing activities. AWAR sec. 2.31(c)(7); PHS Policy sec. IV.B.7.
3. Review, and, if warranted, investigate concerns involving the care and use of animals in teaching, research or outreach resulting from public complaints received and from reports of noncompliance received from laboratory or research facility personnel or employees. AWAR sec. 2.31(c)(4); PHS Policy sec. IV.B.4.

The AWARs and PHS Policy further provide that:

1. An institution's attending veterinarian shall have appropriate authority to ensure the provision of adequate veterinary care and to oversee the adequacy of other aspects of animal care and to suspend an activity utilizing animals immediately based on analysis of the situation. AWAR sec. 2.33(a)(2).
2. If the ACUC suspends an activity involving animals, the Institutional Official, in consultation with the ACUC, shall review the reasons for suspension, take appropriate corrective action, and report that action with a full explanation to APHIS and any Federal agency funding that activity. AWAR sec. 2.31(c)(7); PHS Policy sec. IV.C.7.
3. The ACUC shall notify principal investigators in writing of its decision to approve or withhold approval of those activities related to the care and use of animals, or of modifications required to secure ACUC approval. If the ACUC decides to withhold approval of an activity, it shall include in its written notification a statement of the reasons for its decision and give the principal investigator an opportunity to respond in person or in writing. AWAR sec. 2.31(d)(4); PHS Policy IV.C.4.
4. The ACUC may reconsider its decision, with documentation in Committee minutes, in light of the information provided by the principal investigator. AWAR sec. 2.31(d)(4)
5. Proposed activities and proposed significant changes in ongoing activities that have been approved by the ACUC may be subject to further appropriate review and approval by officials of the research facility. However, those officials may not approve an activity involving the care and use of animals if it has not been approved by the ACUC. AWAR sec. 2.31(c)(8); PHS Policy IV.C.8.

Further amplifying and clarifying the AWARs and PHS Policy are various federal and university guides and policies. These include:

1. The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th Edition, which confirms that using animals in research is a privilege granted by society to the research community. The Guide is formally established as University research policy by Board of Regents Policy Document 4-3 [<http://www.uwsa.edu/bor/policies/rpd/rpd4-3.htm>].
2. A memo from the Chancellor of UW-Madison confirming the authority of attending veterinarians over all aspects of animal care and treatment, including the authority "to intercede in any activity involving the use of animals for research or teaching purposes which in their judgment jeopardizes animal welfare or compliance with federal or university policies."