

SOP #: 302.02Title: **SOP -** Animal Health Checks

Approvals:

Attending Veterinarian

Date:

07/11/20191. Purpose

1.1 This SOP outlines the daily health checks, handling of laboratory animals and room monitoring within in The Florida International University Animal Facilities.

2. Responsibility

2.1 The SOP applies to the ACF Husbandry and Veterinary Care staff.

3. Definitions

3.1 ACF - Animal Care Facility

3.2 Observation = factual data, comment, remark, or judgment documented as a result of observing.

4. Guidelines

4.1 All personnel are responsible to adhere to PPE requirements designated to work in the specified species and biosafety level.

4.2 Husbandry Staff performs twice daily checks on all animals located in assigned rooms, at the start of work shift and in the afternoon.

4.3 When performing daily checks, the staff observes for:

4.3.1 Food and water consumption – Provide additional feed if feeders are less than ¼ full for rodents) and replace if water bottles are less than 1/4 full.

4.3.2 Inspect live traps and sticky traps.

4.4 If a rodent is found, the staff reports it to the ACF manager.

4.5 Health assessment. Examples:

- 4.5.1 Presence and appearance of abnormal urine (pale, dark or bloody urine) and feces (loose, dry, mucoid or bloody stools).
- 4.5.2 Evidence of weight loss, dehydration, or obesity.
- 4.5.3 Discharge from the eyes, nose, mouth and other orifices.
- 4.5.4 Injury or damage to the eyes (usually evident by one or both eyes squinting).
- 4.5.5 Abnormal behavior (spinning, head tilt, excessive grooming, depression, lethargy, hyperactivity).
- 4.5.6 Changes in gait (e.g. due to lameness).
- 4.5.7 General signs of pain, distress, illness or moribund condition
 - 4.5.7.1 Hair coat (hair loss, ruffled/scruffy coat, barbering).
 - 4.5.7.2 Abnormal posture (e.g. hunched back).
 - 4.5.7.3 Porphyrin staining (rats only).
 - 4.5.7.4 Unable to move, eat or drink, lethargy.
 - 4.5.7.5 Difficulty breathing or audible respiratory sounds.
- 4.5.8 Evidence of traumatic injuries or skin lesions (wounds, bites, scratches, scabs, ulcers, missing ear tips).
- 4.5.9 Visible tumors (if unexpected or appears to have exceeded 10% of the animal's body weight).
- 4.5.10 Evidence of overgrown nails and teeth (and malocclusion).
- 4.5.11 Dead animals.
- 4.5.12 Post-surgical animals: abnormal surgical site findings.
 - 4.5.12.1 Excessive swelling and/or redness.
 - 4.5.12.2 Pus or bloody discharge.
 - 4.5.12.3 Separating wound margins.
 - 4.5.12.4 Animal licking the surgical incision.

- 4.5.13 Environmentally associated problems (temperature, overcrowding, social pressures, cage size, and dysfunctional sipper tubes, flooding).
- 4.5.14 Any other abnormalities.
- 4.6 Initial the room maintenance form after each health check is completed. If the husbandry staff observes abnormalities as described above, the findings will be documented in Sick Animal Form.
 - 4.6.1 The form should contain the following information:
 - 4.6.1.1 Room number
 - 4.6.1.2 PI name and Protocol number
 - 4.6.1.3 Rack location
 - 4.6.1.4 Cage ID number
 - 4.6.1.5 Species
 - 4.6.1.6 Problem
- 4.7 Daily phone calls or emails, including weekends and holidays, will be placed to the Director or designee, regardless of whether sick animals or facility issues are found or not.
- 4.8 All animal housing rooms must be reflected on the Health Action form, and all health checks will be completed.
- 4.9 If the Director believes that the sick animal requires immediate veterinary care, he immediately calls the corresponding PI's lab and decides the course of action.
- 4.10 The contact information for the on-call and emergency staff is posted throughout the animal facilities.

5. References

- 5.1 Animal Health Checks SOP (LARC - University of Texas at San Antonio)

6. Revision

- 6.1 July 2019 – Rev 02 - Update