

SOP #: 316.02Title: **SOP -** Rabbit Care and Husbandry

Approvals:

Attending Veterinarian

Date: 6/03/20191. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to outline the animal care and facility maintenance requirements associated with the daily husbandry of rabbits to ensure consistent and uniform animal care.

2. Responsibility

2.1 It is the responsibility of ACF personnel to follow this procedure.

2.2 It is the responsibility of supervisory personnel to ensure compliance with this procedure and for employee training.

3. Definitions

3.1 ACF - Animal Care Facility

3.2 AV: Attending Veterinarian

4. Guidelines

4.1 All activities outlined in this SOP are performed by animal care staff and recorded on the Rabbits Room Maintenance form unless otherwise noted.

4.2 All personnel must don protective clothing.

4.3 Always enter animal rooms under quarantine last. Observe written instructions if posted on animal room door and if necessary, contact Facility Supervisor for additional instruction.

#### 4.4 Daily Health/Environmental Observations

- 4.4.1 Observe all animals for signs of illness, injury, deaths, or births according to SOP ACF 302 current revision - Animal Health Checks.
- 4.4.2 Urine and fecal material are checked for presence and consistency. Physical signs to assess are discharge from the eyes or nose, excessive salivation, sneezing, anorexia, weight loss, not drinking and changes in behavior or mannerisms.
- 4.4.3 Document daily observations according to SOP ACF 302 current revision - Animal Health Checks.
  - 4.4.3.1 If a rabbit is found needing emergency attention or is found dead contact the AV immediately.
- 4.4.4 Check that animal identification is present on animal or cage.
  - 4.4.4.1 Rabbits should have an ear tattoo or an ear clip that contains a unique identification number.
  - 4.4.4.2 They also receive an assigned ACF number.
  - 4.4.4.3 A cage card also identifies rabbits.
  - 4.4.4.4 When animals arrive, supervisory personnel will hand write ear tattoo number and ACF numbers on cage card and in the animal's record.
  - 4.4.4.5 Report room/facility problems (plumbing, electrical, HVAC, burned out lights, etc.).
    - 4.4.4.5.1 Area supervisor assesses facility problem and follow up accordingly.
    - 4.4.4.5.2 If problem occurs on a weekend or holiday, contact AV by phone.

#### 4.5 Daily Husbandry

- 4.5.1 Feeding
  - 4.5.1.1 Check feeders and discard remaining feed.
  - 4.5.1.2 If more than ½ of previous day's old feed is found, check cage water bottles to ensure water flow and report it to the AV.
  - 4.5.1.3 Feed all rabbits one cup (8 oz) of rabbit diet.
  - 4.5.1.4 Special feed instructions and DO NOT FEED orders should be posted on the cage.

4.5.1.5 Replace can liner when placing new feed bag.

4.5.1.6 Check feed for milling and expiration date.

4.5.1.7 Expired feed must be removed from the room and thrown away.

4.5.1.8 Enrichment will be provided according to SOP ACF 310 current revision – Environmental Enrichment.

#### 4.5.2 Watering

4.5.2.1 Refill water bottles with fresh, potable water.

4.5.2.2 Change water bottle if it appears soiled or damaged.

4.5.2.3 Make sure no leakage is observed when bottle is hung and that sipper tube functions properly.

#### 4.5.3 Daily Sanitation Duties

4.5.3.1 Sweep floors and dispose of refuse in labeled trash can.

4.5.3.2 Check sinks, countertops and walls daily and clean as needed.

4.5.3.3 Restock room supplies (food, paper towels, bedding).

4.5.3.4 Clean floor with approved disinfectant, using designated mop.

4.5.3.5 Make sure there is no standing water.

4.5.3.6 Exit room and initial daily tasks completed– Rabbits Room Maintenance form.

#### 4.5.4 Weekly Sanitation Duties

4.5.4.1 Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, remove soiled pan liner from pan under each cage, and replace with new liner.

4.5.4.2 Once a week

4.5.4.2.1 Wipe down doors and doorjams with sanitizing solution.

4.5.4.2.2 Clean exterior of bedding and trash barrels with approved disinfectant.

4.5.4.2.3 Initial completed tasks on - Rabbits Room Maintenance form.

4.5.4.3 Every Two Weeks Duties

4.5.4.3.1 Remove rabbit from cage and place in clean cage with clean food and clean water bottle.

4.5.4.3.2 Transfer cage card with corresponding rabbit.

4.5.4.3.3 Remove soiled liner from each cage.

4.5.4.3.4 Take soiled cages to cage wash for cleaning.

4.5.4.3.5 Room air filter (when present)

4.5.4.3.5.1 Replace filter,

4.5.4.3.5.2 Confirm airflow arrow.

4.5.4.3.5.3 Date filter on side facing room.

4.5.4.3.5.4 Replace more often, i.e. when filters are covered with rabbit fur and no filter material is visible.

4.5.4.3.5.5 Initial completed tasks on Rabbit Room Maintenance form.

#### 4.5.4.4 Monthly Routine Duties

##### 4.5.4.4.1 Room Sanitation

4.5.4.4.1.1 Remove contents from bedding, food and trashcans and send cans through cage washer.

4.5.4.4.1.2 Clean and sanitize room ceilings, floors, walls, door, counter, and fixtures with sanitizing foamer, hand sprayer, sponge mop, according to SOP ACF 308 current revision - Maintenance of Animal Rooms & Common Areas of the Animal Facility.

4.5.4.4.1.3 Collect environmental samples as per SOP ACF 309 current revision - Monitoring the Effectiveness of Sanitization in the Animal Facility.

4.5.4.4.1.4 Initial completed tasks on Rabbit Room Maintenance form.

4.5.4.4.1.5 Supervisor collects and reviews all animal room door sheets.

4.5.4.4.1.6 Supervisor ensures new door sheet are replaced for the new month.

4.5.4.4.2 ACF weighs all animals monthly and the information is recorded on animal record.

#### 4.5.5 Sanitation of Vacated Animal Rooms

4.5.5.1 Dispose of any left-over food.

4.5.5.2 Clean and sanitize room ceilings, floors, walls, door, counter, and fixtures with sanitizing foamer, hand sprayer, sponge mop according to SOP ACF 308 current

revision - Maintenance of Animal Rooms & Common Areas of the Animal Facility.

4.5.5.3 Collect environmental samples as per SOP ACF 309 current revision - Monitoring the Effectiveness of Sanitization in the Animal Facility.

4.5.5.4 Room air filter (when present)

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4.5.5.4.2 Confirm airflow arrow.

4.5.5.4.3 Date filter on side facing room.

4.5.5.4.4 Replace more often, i.e. when filters are covered with rabbit fur and no filter material is visible.

4.5.5.4.5 Initial completed tasks on Rabbit Room Maintenance form.

4.5.5.5 Rooms must be completely cleaned as outlined above and environmental monitoring samples must be taken and passed the lab test, prior to placing new animals in room.

4.5.5.6 Remove and dispose of any supplies not stored in containers with tight fitting lids. Left over supplies stored openly can be a source of spreading pathogens.

4.5.5.7 Initial completed tasks on Rabbit Room Maintenance form.

## 5. References

5.1 Husbandry Procedures for Rabbits SOP – University of Texas at San Antonio

## 6. Revisions

6.1 Rev 02 – updated October 2019