

Office of Laboratory Animal Research

Animal Safety Awareness For Animal Care Facility Visitors

The laboratory animal facility environment introduces several unique safety considerations for anyone accessing the facility. Not only does the presence of live animals pose a potential hazard in the form of animal bites and scratches, but also allergic reactions and disease transmission are additional animal associated hazards that should be considered. What's more, the very nature of facility operation requires that potentially hazardous chemicals, gases, radioactive and controlled substances are being used.

For these reasons, your access to FIU's Animal Care Facilities requires that you become familiar with a few basic safety practices and procedures. Therefore, the purpose of this document is to increase your awareness of personal safety and provide you with a few basic procedures to be followed when visiting or working in the Animal Care Facility.

CATEGORY "B and C" VISITORS SAFETY PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

You Must be Approved

Individuals requiring access to the laboratory animal facility are assigned a Facility Access Category, A to C, as defined at the end of this document, based on the nature of their business in the Animal Facility. Category B and C individuals must have approved access as an FIU employee or Persons of Interest (POI). Individuals must enroll in the Occupational Health and Safety Program (OHSP) by submitting the initial risk assessment form to ohsp@fiu.edu and receiving clearance from EH&S prior to entering the facility.

You Must Log-in

Your presence in the Animal Care Facility must be documented. You must have swipe card access to enter the facility. When you swipe your card to access the facility, your access will be automatically recorded for you.

Food, Drink or the Use of Tobacco Products is Restricted in the Animal Facility

The consumption of food, drink or tobacco products is prohibited anywhere within the animal-occupied areas of the facility. FIU campus is identified as Tobacco-Free Areas.

What Are the Risks?

Working with or around research animals and animal wastes can expose workers to health and safety risks. The most common risk of working with or around research animals is development of or worsening of allergies. If you have a history of allergies, you are potentially at greater risk when working around research animals. In addition, although humans usually are not susceptible to animal diseases, there are some important exceptions where transmission of an infection from an animal to a human can cause serious illness.

You Must Wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Where Required

Depending on the area you will be visiting and the work you will be doing, PPE may be required. General PPE for category B individuals includes a hair cover, shoe covers, and disposable gown. If you are completing HVAC work (Category C), you may require the use of a respirator. Hair covers, shoe covers, and disposable gowns are supplied by the facility and are located at the main office entrance and in the locker room areas.

You Must Report All Injuries

In the event that you sustain an injury of any kind while in the Animal Facility, you must report the incident to facility manager and your supervisor as soon as possible. Examples of injuries that may occur in the Animal Facility include animal bites, scratches, direct contact with animal bodily fluids, injuries from equipment, and a slip or fall. Should an injury occur, the facility manager is knowledgeable of what to do and will advise and assist you as needed.

You Must Obey Fire, Severe Weather or Evacuation Alarms

In the event of a fire, severe weather or other emergencies, an alarm will sound within the Animal Facility. You must immediately stop any activity in progress and proceed as instructed by the alarm voice enunciator or University's Emergency Telephone Alert System. In the event the alarm is for a fire, you are to evacuate the building. Remember, your safety is always first and foremost.

Do Not Leave Your Designated Area to "Have a Look Around"

Stay in the area agreed upon between you and your Category C Sponsor. Although signage is in place for various hazards, this alone cannot guarantee your safety if you walk into an unfamiliar area. Please, for your safety, do not decide to "look around" the facility without an approved facility staff member. Remember that you are not permitted to leave your designated work area without the knowledge of the facility director or staff member.

Use Good Hygiene

You should develop the habit of keeping your hands away from your face, eyes, nose and mouth when visiting or working inside the Animal Facility. Always wash your hands thoroughly when leaving the area and especially before eating or drinking, even if you have been wearing gloves.

Animal Use Ethics

Research utilizing animals is a privilege, not a right. FIU's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) is responsible for assuring that animal research is performed according to the highest standards. Any questions or comments regarding the care and use of laboratory animals should be directed to ACF management, or any IACUC member.

Purpose of the IACUC

The Institutional Official (IO) appoints an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) qualified through the experience and expertise of its members to assess the research facility's animal program, facilities, and procedures. The IACUC is responsible for making sure that all federal and institutional laws, regulations and policies are followed when investigators perform animal research. Federal regulators regard the IACUC as a critical partner in ensuring compliance with animal welfare laws and guidelines. In effect, the IACUC functions as the self-regulating body for animal research on behalf of the institution. Federal inspectors periodically visit the institution to evaluate the overall animal care and use program.

Animal Use Protocols

An animal use protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IACUC prior to initiating any animal study. The protocol is a full description of the use of the animals and covers several core elements required by the regulations.

Animal Welfare Policy

The University is committed to the ethical and compliant care and use of animals in research, teaching, and testing. If anyone is aware of potential violations to existing animal care and use regulations or observes

misuse or mistreatment of animals, they are strongly encouraged to report their concerns without fear of reprisal. FIU will not tolerate any reprisal against these persons who, in good faith, make allegations of animal welfare violations, and will undertake diligent efforts to protect their positions and reputations.

Any individual may confidentially report their concerns to persons with authority over FIU's animal care and use program, which includes:

- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
 - Dr. Robert Lickliter, IACUC Chair 305-348-3441
- The University's Institutional Official
 - Dr. Andres Gil, Institutional Official 305-348-0556
- The Attending Veterinarian and Director of Laboratory Animal Research
 - Dr. Horatiu Vinerean AV and Director OLAR 305-348-8315
- The Director or the Associate Director of the Office of Research Integrity
 - Mr. Christopher Grayson, Director ORI 305-348-8379
 - Ms. Barbara Rodriguez, Associate Director ORI 305-348-8316
- Alternately, employees may anonymously direct their concerns to the University Compliance Office's Ethics Point Hotline
 - <http://www.ethicspoint.com/> or 1-888-286-5154 (24 hours a day, 365 days a year).

The University will provide fair and objective procedures for examining and resolving concerns for animal welfare and will process alleged violations as expeditiously as possible, while maintaining confidentiality to the extent permissible under federal and state laws. The University is committed to protecting the rights and legitimate interests of all parties involved in the investigation. This procedure is in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act Regulations (9CFR, Chapter 1, Subchapter A, §2.32, c, 4).

Animal Care Facility Visitor Access Request



Category	Animal Contact	Example
A	No Direct or One Time	VISITORS: Vendors, interviewees, one time trainee, tour groups (must be sponsored by a Category C Sponsor)
B	Occasional-Indirect	Facilities, IACUC member, EHS, FIU Police
C	Frequent-Direct	ACF staff, research staff with animal contact, Facilities staff assigned to animal facility HVAC duties

I have read the *Visitor Animal Safety Awareness* package and understand the risks involved in working with and around research animals at FIU.

FIU Employee (Category B or C) Name: _____

Dept: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Date(s)/Time(s) Access Needed: _____

Protocol # (if applicable): _____

Purpose of the Visit: _____

Category B or C Supervisor's Name: _____

Category B or C Supervisor's Signature: _____

Date: _____

FIU Employee (Category B or C) Signature: _____

Date: _____

Before escorting non-facility FIU employees into the animal facilities, Category B or C Supervisor must:

1. Return this SIGNED form to AHC4-410, or email to horatiu.vinerean@fiu.edu at least two business days prior to the visit.
2. Receive e-mail confirmation that access is granted from the ACF.