



**Animal Facility SOP 36.2**  
**Health Checks and Veterinary Clinical Calls**

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**Routine Health Checks and Veterinary Clinical Calls**

**I. Purpose**

To describe how animal health checks are performed and recorded, and the procedure for placing veterinary clinical calls.

**II. Responsibility**

Researcher and animal facility staff contribute to the oversight and reporting of animal health

**III. Vivarium Surveillance Procedures**

Daily observations are recorded on the Daily care sheet in the white Rodent Care Log Binder.

1. Surveillance of animals by staff will occur twice per day every weekday and at least once daily weekends and holidays. The initial surveillance will be accomplished no later than 10:00 AM and the evening observation will occur at no later than 3:00 p.m. . These observations and communications must be noted on the Daily care sheet, and when the concerns require veterinary attention, **the incident Log.**
2. Weekdays, after the second pm health and environmental check, a subsequent “Final Food/Water” check is performed and if there are deviations from prescribed environmental conditions, the facility manager is called and a record made on the **incident log** prior to staff leaving.

**IV. Performance of health surveillance:**

Each animal/enclosure is to be given a cursory examination that will include the following, as appropriate:

1. Food and water intake/supply
2. Urine and fecal output
3. Assurance of water supply patency
4. General appearance
  - a. Presence of lesions or injuries

- b. Physical condition
- c. Disposition/behavior
- d. Overcrowding- If this occurs, the Animal technician must address the problem according to the overcrowding SOP.

#### V. Performance of environmental surveillance:

Each room will be examined for the following, as appropriate:

1. Temperature
2. Humidity
  
3. General room condition
  - a. Lighting
  - b. Plumbing
  - c. Cleanliness
4. Aquatic environments will be examined for the following
  - a. Water condition/clarity
  - b. Tank condition/function (i.e., aeration, filtration, and/or pumps)

#### VI. Record Keeping

1. If no significant health or environmental concerns are observed, a check mark is placed in the NSC (no significant concerns) A.M. or P.M. column and the technician's initials will be made in the appropriate space on the **Daily care sheet**.
2. If a health concern is observed which has not been previously noted or treated, staff are to:
  - a. Flag the animal's primary enclosure with a red card identifying the animal, the concern, and the date the concern was first noticed.
  - b. Record the IACUC protocol number and animal or cage identification (if applicable) on the **Incident Log** and indicate "HC" for health concern, and initial the entry.
  - c. The Animal facility manager will review the **Incident log**, and based on the findings, direct the research technician to communicate with the PI or the veterinarian prior to initiating treatments or further actions.
  - d. For any animal undergoing obvious pain and distress, action must be taken immediately. In the case of an animal that is in obvious pain or distress that cannot be relieved by treatment and the research technician (or PI) cannot be reached, the Animal husbandry technician must contact the attending veterinarian for advice regarding further treatment or euthanasia.
3. Ensure the primary enclosure remains flagged until the health concern is resolved.
4. If an animal is approaching or has reached an experimental endpoint (e.g., tumor size, ulcerated tumor, paresis, weight loss):

- a. Flag the animal's primary enclosure with a **neon orange card** on the cage card and endpoint criteria label identifying the animal, the concern, the date the concern was first noticed
  - b. Notify the laboratory.
  - c. If no resolution is achieved within 24 hours, email the lab again and request that the veterinarian assist with resolution. Resolution should be recorded in the **Incident Log**.
  - d. It is within the purview of the veterinarian to recommend or perform euthanasia for animal welfare concerns. If the animal is in pain or distress not specifically authorized in the IACUC protocol and the lab cannot be contacted, the veterinarian is authorized to euthanize the animal for humane reasons.
5. Procedures for the handling/reporting of animals found dead are described in the document entitled *Dead Animal Procedures and Carcass disposal*.

The Clinical Veterinary Notes are maintained by the veterinary staff and retained by the Facility Manager.

**Colored cage cards are used to indicate the following:**

- a. **Bright Red** – Vet Check for concern (animal number, indicating date, treatment number, treatment or monitoring plan, lab notified and acknowledged)
- b. **Neon Orange** – Approaching or at a clinical endpoint (indicating date, endpoint criteria, lab notified and acknowledged)
- c. **Neon Pink** – Research related special instructions (i.e., special diets, special water, DMSO use, diabetic, clip teeth)
- d. **Light Blue** – Breeding Instructions (breeding, check for plug, separate pregnant female, check for litters, pups in cage)
- e. **Neon Green** – Pup manipulations (identification/genotyping, wean)
- f. **Light Pink** - Cross Foster
- g. **Black** – Euthanize
- h. **Brown** – Containment (i.e., animal biosafety)
- i. **White** – Caretaker status (i.e., label flag with “caretaker” PI & IACUC approval)

**Appendix A**

**Animal Incident Log.**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Q9c8KZEBE-wVPVvcyPlilagFvpbuh7dfR\\_YBmop4szc/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Q9c8KZEBE-wVPVvcyPlilagFvpbuh7dfR_YBmop4szc/edit?usp=sharing)

**Appendix B.**

**Dead Animal Card Information:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oleRdt38Y2BreAKI6vzjPkpdw6seaFcxJiSClue-ip0/edit?usp=sharing>