

Purpose / Scope

The objective(s) of this policy is to outline procedures that are permitted within animal holding rooms. This policy relates to all areas within Western's Research Community where animals are housed beyond 24 hours.

Rationale

Guideline 7 from its Guidelines on: Laboratory Animal Facilities – characteristics, design, and development (2003) states that invasive procedures that may cause distress to other animals should be conducted in a procedure room rather than in an animal holding room. According to CCAC, “a distressed animal may convey alarm to conspecifics and induce unnecessary stress in other animals in the room. This may include relatively minor procedures involving transient restraint, such as injection or collection of small blood samples, especially where wild animals are involved, and includes all invasive procedures.”¹

Policy Statements

Procedures that May be Performed within Animal Holding Rooms

- Monitoring, including video/telemetry
- Handling – cage to cage transfer and health examination
- Weighing
- Cage changing
- Breeding pair set-up, weaning
- Tumour measurement
- Topical medication application
- ACC-approved food/water restriction
- Running wheels within the cage (rodents)
- Behaviour Studies – Minimal stress-inducing, non-invasive sampling, and behaviour testing (object introduction, puzzle boards, food)
- Aquatic Species – Non-invasive procedures such as capture for weighing, tagging, or behavioural testing. Invasive procedures involving anaesthetic agents may be done if separate water is used and there is a visual barrier between those undergoing procedures and those being held
- Farm Animals & Macaques – Injections, e.g., chemical restraint, pain medications for injured animals (based on human and animal safety best practices)

¹ Canadian Council on Animal Care. Guidelines on: Laboratory Animal Facilities – characteristics, design and development (2003). Guideline 7 (P.18). Retrieved on 24February, 2020, from <https://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Guidelines/Facilities.pdf>

Other than those listed above, experimental procedures that cause distress to other animals within the room must be undertaken within adjacent procedure rooms, unless required and described by experimental design or containment needs and approved by the Animal Care Committee.

To receive an exemption to this policy, the PI must disclose and justify this within the Animal Use Protocol.

References

- Canadian Council on Animal Care – CCAC Guidelines on: Laboratory Animal Facilities – characteristics, design, and development, 2003.
- Animal Care Committee policies and procedures.

Revision History

Version	Date <i>mm-dd-yyyy</i>	Description of Changes	Author
00	09-04-2020	New Policy	LT / KB / SG
01	10-19-2023	Refine & add to policy statements; specify exemption.	LT, AB, YM, LC, MB, TAC, JM, JSN, KK, GC