DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
South Texas Veterans Health Care System
San Antonio, Texas 78229-4404

Research Service Policy Memorandum 13-74

February 1, 2016

ANIMAL CARE AND USE PROGRAM

Whistleblower

1. **PURPOSE**: The following policy documents the principles for addressing concerns related to the ethical and humane care and use of animals in research.

2. **POLICY:** It is the policy of the Research Service at South Texas Veterans Health Care System to ensure procedures are in place to prevent reprisals against whistle blowers who report potential deficiencies in the animal care and research use program, and to protect anonymity to the extent required by law.

3. **ACTION:** If anyone notices or witnesses abuse or misuse of laboratory animals, please report the incident to one of the following: VMU Supervisor, extension 14687; Attending Veterinarian, 567-6166; IACUC Administrator, extension 15938; Administrative Officer, extension 15538; ACOS for Research Service, extension 15969, or VA's Chief Veterinary Medical Officer, (404) 728-7099. Contact information for reporting is also posted on the animal facility information board and outer doors of IACUC-approved research laboratories outside the animal facility as contained in Attachment 1.

a. Requests for anonymity will be honored to the extent permissible by Federal laws. This includes protecting the confidentiality of those who report concerns as well as anyone against whom allegations are directed, while allegations are under investigation.

b. Federal policy prohibits unlawful retaliation against employees as a consequence of good faith actions in the reporting of, or the participation in an investigation pertaining to allegations or wrongdoing.

4. **REFERENCES**: PHS Assurance A3720-01
VHA Handbook 1058.01
VHA Handbook 1200.07

5. **RESPONSIBILITY:** ACOS FOR RESEARCH (151)

6. **RECESSION:** Research Service Policy Memorandum 13-74, April 23, 2013

7. **RECERTIFICATION:** January 2021

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Attachment (1)