

January 3, 2019

**RESEARCH STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)
ANIMAL CARE AND USE PROGRAM**

Infection Control Policy

1. **PURPOSE:** To provide policy and procedures for infection control and safety in research laboratories.
2. **POLICY:** Research Service operates in accordance with South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS) HIV-Standard precautions/Bloodborne Pathogens protocols and policies, as well as other local, state, and federal regulations.
3. **ACTION:**
 - a. **Principle Investigators** are responsible for insuring all employees adhere to guidelines.
 - b. **FOOD, DRINKS, AND SMOKING:** No food or drinks are permitted in laboratories. Food/drinks are permitted in break areas and in rooms in which no chemicals or microbiologic agents are used, handled, or stored. Only refrigerators specifically designated "For Food Only" are to be used for food storage. Users are responsible for temperature monitoring and cleanliness. Smoking is not permitted within the facility.
 - c. **PROTECTIVE WEAR:** Personal Protective Equipment shall be worn in accordance with hospital policy.
 - (1) **GLOVES:** Gloves must be removed prior to leaving the lab. Procedural gloves will not be worn in hallways, corridors, bathrooms, offices, etc., or when going from room-to-room through doorways where doorknobs are handled. Gloves used in a procedure to protect the individual can transfer contaminant (infectious, chemical, or radioactive) to other places. Dispose of gloves in appropriate waste bins.
 - (2) **SHOES:** Opened-toed sandals or shoes are not permitted in any laboratory while chemical or micro-biologicals are in use.
 - (3) **LAB COATS/APRONS/SMOCKS:** Laboratory coats worn while working with radioactive materials, hazardous chemicals, or other hazardous agents must not be worn outside of the immediate work area.
 - d. **WASTE DISPOSAL:**
 - (1) **GLASS:** Laboratories should use red biohazard containers to discard disposable pipettes, Pasteur pipettes, glass slides, cover slips, and broken glassware, etc. Dispose of glassware containing human body fluids and/or infectious agents in the same container.
 - (2) **SHARPS:** Sharps containers should not be overfilled. All full sharps containers should be sealed as soon as they become $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Notify the Administrative Officer/Research to schedule a container pickup and replacement in a laboratory. Recapping of needles is not preferred. Take sharps containers to V203 for centralized pick-up/exchange.

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- (3) **BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE:** All materials used for collection of animal or human blood or serum, human and animal tissue culture cell lines, and related materials (i.e., pipettes, dishes, and other plastic ware) must be discarded in appropriate closable red leak-proof biohazard waste containers. Use refrigerator (CTR-2) to hold infectious materials or waste if a wait in excess of 48 hours (over a weekend or holiday) is anticipated for removal by waste contractor. Neutralize biohazardous liquid (e.g. used cell culture media) waste with bleach before disposal down the drain. Preventive maintenance and service records for the autoclave are maintained in room S20 I contract folder.

WARNING: The sterilizer/autoclave in room V203 is NOT to be used to sterilize biohazardous waste (trash) of any type. Red or orange trash bags are NOT to be placed in the autoclave. The contractor will be called to remove all biohazardous waste containers. Place red or orange trash bags in the red leak-proof containers.

e. LAB PROCESS:

- (1) All reagents must be properly contained, labeled (including hazard warnings), and dated.
- (2) All areas will be kept clean and orderly. Avoid general clutter in laboratories. Users will keep common use areas clean (e.g., cold rooms, wash rooms, autoclave room, etc.)
- (3) Leave ceiling shower rings and chains hanging down for safety (e.g., if a person gets acid in the eye and is unable to see).
- (4) The Research Administrative Office will conduct weekly eyewash station checks and document results by initialing eyewash log above the station in the corridors. Laboratory personnel are responsible for conducting weekly eyewash station checks in their laboratory and initialing eyewash log above the station.
- (5) Warning signs (i.e., radioactive, biohazard) should be placed on the room door and appropriate places within the room (i.e., refrigerator, sink, counter, disposal containers). Post current emergency contact numbers on the door.
- (6) Mouth pipetting is strictly forbidden.
- (7) Employees will report the presence of pests to the Research Administrative Office immediately. Environmental Management Service will contact the current contractor.

f. INJURIES/INCIDENTS:

- (1) **INJURIES:** Must be reported promptly to the employee's supervisor. The employee is then referred to the Occupational Health office for evaluation and or treatment during normal business hours or to the STVHCS Emergency Department during non-business hours. The injured employee creates an incident report through the Employees' Compensation & Management Portal (ECOMP) which is reviewed by the Supervisor. <http://www.ecomp.dol.gov/>. Texas Poison Control Network telephone number (1-800-222-1222) should be posted in the hallways.
 - a. VA employees should be escorted to Occupational Health for non-life-threatening injuries. Injuries involving life, limb, or eyesight should be escorted directly to the VA Emergency Department.

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they have VA network access. Otherwise, report to the VMU supervisor or Administrative Officer for Research.

- (2) **CHEMICAL EXPOSURE/SPILL:** Contact Green Environmental Management System Coordinator (ext. 1-4041) for chemical exposure or spill and follow procedures defined in the Research Service Chemical Hygiene Plan.

g. **VETERINARY MEDICAL UNIT (VMU):**

- (1) No smoking, drinking, or eating is permitted within the VMU animal or procedure rooms. Eating or drinking is limited to the VMU U235 office and U236 - employee break room.
- (2) No tours of the VMU will be conducted unless approved by the AO/Research and conducted by VMU Supervisor or his/her designee.
- (3) Identify/label infected animal rooms and cages with infective agents. All protocols using infectious agents require approval of the Subcommittee for Research Safety.
- (4) Put discarded scalpel blades, syringes, needles, and, other sharp items in rigid, puncture resistant sharps containers. Seal full sharps containers, labeled seal, and placed in V203 for pick up.
- (5) Personnel receiving any animal bites will wash the bite area with soap and water and report to the VMU Supervisor who will then escort the bitten employee to Occupational Health Physician during normal duty hours (or to University Health Care System during off hours) and file an accident report using the ASISTS link on the previous page.
- (6) Handling of all contaminated material such as feed, bedding, and, caging equipment will be accomplished by Veterinary Medical Unit (VMU) personnel or appropriate laboratory personnel. Precautionary measures such as face masks, hair nets, gloves, and, protective clothing will be worn as required or necessary. The hospital Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing Policy will be adhered to. Place contaminated feed and bedding in autoclave bags and autoclaved before disposal. Contaminated clothing may be autoclaved and then washed. ("Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories (BMBL), 5th Edition). The sterilizer located in R226 will be used to sterilize all infective materials at the discretion of the VMU Supervisor.
- (7) Daily housekeeping duties, within the VMU, will be accomplished by VMU personnel using quaternary ammonium compounds and phenolics appropriate for areas being cleaned. Phenolics and any other listed EPA hazardous chemicals will be used in drip-type bottles and not spray bottles. Other Research Personnel are responsible for cleaning up after themselves, when using VMU facilities. Failure to accomplish this could result in revocation of VMU privileges a citation of violation will be placed in the investigator's 6-part folder.
- (8) The VMU will house animals purchased from an approved vendor or designated by the Department of Laboratory Animal Resources, UT HEALTH. Primates, sheep, goats, pigs, dogs, and cats will not be housed in the VMU.
- (9) The VMU uses elevator S9 for delivery of live animals and supplies.
- (10) All Laboratory animals arriving at the VMU must be shipped in filtered boxes. All rodents shipped to the VA will be delivered by warehouse personnel to VMU personnel for approval.

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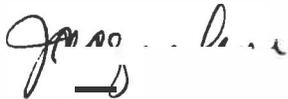
- (9) All Laboratory animals must be shipped in filtered boxes. All rodents shipped to the VA will be delivered by warehouse personnel to the VMU. Rodents will not be removed from filtered boxes until a VMU Technician accepts the shipment. All newly assigned laboratory animals will undergo a 72-hour acclimation period. Diseased or dead animals will be reported to the contracted Veterinary Medical Officer immediately. All animal carcasses will be disposed of by University of Texas Health San Antonio (UTHSA) as per contract.
- (10) Patient diagnostic equipment and treatment/monitoring areas may be used for nonhuman (animal) studies only when such use is of potential value to human patients. A *Request to Use Patient Care Procedural Area for Animal Studies* must be submitted through the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and approved by the VA Facility Director prior to any use of patient areas for animal studies in accordance with VHA Handbook 1200.07.
- (11) Lab coats are required to enter any animal room. Mask and gloves are required in addition to lab coat if working directly with animals. Gowns, gloves, and masks will be worn in designated biohazard rooms. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be removed prior to exiting biohazard rooms. Wear clean PPE before entry into any other animal room.
- (12) TB Fresh and Sani-Wipes will be used to decontaminate walls, floors and surfaces in all animal rooms.

4. REFERENCES: ("Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories (BMBL), 5th Edition; Hospital Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing Policy #007-14-67; VHA Handbook 1200.07

5. RESPONSIBILITY: ACOS for Research and Development (151)

6. RECISSIONS: Research Service Memorandum 12-01, November 25, 2014

7. RECERTIFICATION: January 2024



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