MAINTAINING HEALTH AND PROCEDURE RECORDS FOR RESEARCH AND TEACHING ANIMALS

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of this Animal Care and Use Procedure (ACUP) is to describe the need for medical records for animal research models and the process for maintaining them. This ACUP is approved by the Cornell Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Any deviation must be approved by the IACUC prior to its application.

2. SCOPE

2.1. This ACUP is intended for use by principal investigators, animal care staff, and the veterinary staff of the Center for Animal Resources and Education (CARE) at Cornell University.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. Background

3.1.1. Maintenance of good animal procedure and health records is an essential component of the animal care program and is a regulatory requirement. Contact CARE veterinary staff by emailing care@cornell.edu if assistance is needed to help set up or evaluate your current medical records program.

3.1.2. General animal husbandry records (e.g., animal facility daily care checklists) are not considered to be animal procedure or health records. As such, retention of these records is not a regulatory requirement for non-GLP (Good Laboratory Practices) activities. However, for facility operation purposes, non-GLP husbandry records should be maintained for a minimum of one year after their completion.

3.2. Definitions

3.2.1. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) covered species:
3.2.1. All non-farm mammals that are not of the genus *Mus* or *Rattus* (common laboratory mouse and rat, respectively).

3.2.1.2. Farm mammals used to teach veterinary procedures.

3.2.2. Non-USDA covered species:

3.2.2.1. All non-mammal species.

3.2.2.2. Mice of the genus *Mus* and rats of the genus *Rattus*.

3.2.2.3. Farm animal species used for the production of food and/or fiber (e.g., agricultural research and teaching) and not used for teaching veterinary procedures.

4. MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT

4.1. Forms (as applicable), found on the CARE Procedures and Forms page on the CARE website.

4.1.1. Animal Form - Physical Examination

4.1.2. Animal Form - Medical Record Part 1 (Summary)

4.1.3. Animal Form - Medical Record Part 2

4.1.4. Animal Form - Treatment Log

4.1.5. Animal Form - Mortality Log

4.1.6. Post-Procedure Care Cage Card for Rodents

4.1.7. Rodent Breeding Card

5. PROCEDURE

5.1. General

**NOTE:** It is best practice to write all records in ink only (not pencil).

5.1.1. Maintain animal procedure and health records in an area that is readily accessible to the research personnel and CARE staff.

5.1.2. Organize the records so information is easy to understand and analyze by all personnel, including those unfamiliar with the protocol.

5.1.3. Enter only concise and factual information that supports assessments of the animal’s condition. Do not use undefined acronyms (see section 9 Appendix for common acronyms).

5.1.4. When recording information, include the date, time (if relevant), and your initials.

5.1.5. Provide all relevant records whenever animals are transferred between protocols or physically relocated, be sure to document such events in the animal’s records.

5.2. USDA Covered Species

5.2.1. Maintain individual records for each animal.

5.2.1.1. Include the following basic information (all personnel):
5.2.1.1.1. Principal investigator (PI).
5.2.1.1.2. Protocol number.
5.2.1.1.3. Species.
5.2.1.1.4. Individual identification number.
5.2.1.1.5. Sex.
5.2.1.1.6. Date of birth or acquisition.
5.2.1.1.7. Source (if relevant).
5.2.1.1.8. Sire and dam identification (if relevant).

5.2.1.2. Record all significant clinical events on the clinical record, examples include (all personnel):

5.2.1.2.1. Health problems and surgery history.
5.2.1.2.2. Any significant changes in environment such as facility transfers, room to room transfers, change in the type of caging or bedding used.
5.2.1.2.3. Preventative medicine measures taken including dates of vaccinations, de-worming and parasite and sentinel screening.
5.2.1.2.4. Details of experimental use or events that may cause pain, distress or discomfort.
5.2.1.2.5. All drugs / test substances administered including medication names, dosages, and routes of administration; include withdrawal times for any substances administered to livestock animals.
5.2.1.2.6. Blood collection (volume, collection site, and date).
5.2.1.2.7. Observations of abnormal behavior or physical problems.
5.2.1.2.8. Physical exams and veterinary checks, clinical signs, diagnoses, laboratory results, prognosis, treatments and resolution of events.
5.2.1.2.9. Follow up on the improvement or deterioration of the animal’s condition, related treatments and interventions.
5.2.1.2.10. Record of euthanasia, including the method and agent used.
5.2.1.2.11. Necropsy observations and pathology results.

5.3. Non-USDA Covered Species

5.3.1. All Staff - Include the following basic information:

5.3.1.1. Principal investigator (PI).
5.3.1.2. Protocol number.
5.3.1.3. Species.
5.3.1.4. Species, strain, and genotype.
5.3.1.5. Individual identification number or batch number.
5.3.1.6. Sex.
5.3.1.7. Date of birth or acquisition date.
5.3.1.8. Source (if relevant).
5.3.1.9. Sire and dam identification (if relevant).

5.3.2. Animal Care and Veterinary Staff – Include the following information:
5.3.2.1. Daily observations of animal groups or individual animals.
5.3.2.2. Adverse health observations, examination findings, and applicable recommendations.
5.3.2.3. Treatment plans and treatments given.

5.3.3. Research Staff: - Include the following information:

5.3.3.1. All animal procedures (e.g., administration of substances, blood collection, surgery, tail snipping, anesthesia, post-operative care, etc.).
5.3.3.2. Adverse phenotype logs (i.e., phenotypes that result in pain, distress, or mortality).
5.3.3.3. Breeding records (i.e., date of breeding, date of litter birth, number of animals nursing).
5.3.3.4. Mortality logs.
5.3.3.5. Treatment logs.

5.3.3.5.1. Document non-detailed procedures and treatments on the general use cage card or a procedure specific cage card (e.g., Post-Procedural Care cage card).
5.3.3.5.2. Document detailed procedures and treatments in a lab notebook or folder. Keep this folder within the animal housing room and include contact information.

6. PERSONNEL SAFETY

6.1. Medical Emergencies: CALL 911.
6.2. When working with animals wear appropriate PPE, observe proper hygiene, and be aware of allergy, zoonosis, and injury risks. Refer to the CARE Occupational Health and Safety webpage for more information.

7. ANIMAL RELATED CONTINGENCIES

7.1. Post contact information for emergency assistance in a conspicuous location within the animal facility.
7.2. Emergency veterinary care is available at all times including after working hours and on weekends and holidays:

7.2.1. Biomedical settings: CARE (pager 1-800-349-2456)
7.2.2. Farm animal settings: Ambulatory and Production Medicine Service at (607) 253-3140.

7.3. Non-emergency veterinary questions and requests for care, email CARE veterinary staff at care@cornell.edu.

8. REFERENCES

8.1. CARE animal records forms:
https://www.research.cornell.edu/care/acups.html
8.2. CARE Occupational Health and Safety webpage:
http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/OHS.html

9. APPENDIX

9.1. None

10. HISTORY

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