ADOPION PROGRAM POLICY

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of this Animal Care and Use Procedure (ACUP) is to describe Cornell’s Adoption Program for research and/or teaching animals at Cornell University. 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 implementation.

2. SCOPE

2.1. This ACUP is intended for use by any individual involved in the adoption process.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. Cornell’s animal adoption program functions to find suitable homes for retired research/teaching animals. This policy outlines the steps that must be taken to ensure that all of the University, State, and Federal requirements are met. Contact the Center for Animal Resources and Education (CARE) at Cornell University, by emailing care@cornell.edu, for more information or for assistance.

4. MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

4.1. Cornell Adoption Release form
4.2. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Record of Disposition form (for USDA covered species, e.g. cats, dogs)
4.3. Approved protocol or amendment listing adoption as means of disposition

5. PROCEDURE

5.1. IACUC Approval

5.1.1. Adoption must be listed as an animal disposition option on the IACUC protocol, with a method of non-adoption disposition listed as a backup (e.g. euthanasia). In the event that a home cannot be found, non-adoption disposition must be followed as cited in the IACUC approved protocol.

5.1.2. Adoption can also be requested as an amendment to an approved protocol.
5.1.3. The IACUC reviews all proposed methods of animal disposition during the protocol review and approves adoption for the animals based on the experimental work.

5.2. Planning (Non-equid Species)

5.2.1. The Principal Investigator (PI) or representative must contact the CARE to initiate the adoption program procedure. CARE requests at least four weeks’ notice prior to the expected animal release date, so as to allow animal health and ownership screening. If shorter notice is given, every effort will still be made to place the animal in an adoptive home.

5.2.2. The PI must cover costs for animal care (e.g. per diems) up to the time of ownership transfer.

5.3. Adopting Owner Screening Process

5.3.1. The Cornell animal use program’s Attending Veterinarian, or designee, must approve all adoptions prior to transfer of ownership.

5.3.2. All potential owners must communicate directly with CARE personnel or a designee.

5.3.3. Informal interviews with potential owners may be conducted by phone, e-mail, or in person. CARE reserves the right to decline a potential owner based upon this interview.

5.3.4. Any person that would like to adopt a particular animal based on direct contact with the animal (e.g., students or staff) must follow the same procedures outlined above.

5.3.5. All adoption advertising must be approved by the CARE Director or designee prior to use.

5.4. Animal Screening

5.4.1. A CARE veterinarian will conduct a physical exam on each animal being considered for adoption to determine suitability.

5.4.2. CARE reserves the right to declare an individual animal unsuitable for adoption based on:

   5.4.2.1. Physical and/or behavioral evaluation.
   5.4.2.2. Consequences of previous experimental work unanticipated during protocol review.
   5.4.2.3. “Extra-label” or “Off-label” drug use in food animals.

5.4.3. All dogs and cats will be spayed/neutered prior to adoption. CARE will perform the procedure at no charge to the investigator. In all species, CARE may waive the sterilization on a case by case basis.

5.4.4. Equid adoptions often require trial housing by a prospective owner to assure animal compatibility prior to transfer of ownership. This trial period must be confined to no more than 6 weeks.
5.5.  Required Ownership Transfer Paperwork (available from CARE)

5.5.1.  Cornell Adoption Release form: requires the signatures of the PI, the Animal Facility Manager, a CARE Veterinarian, the individual adopting the animal, and one witness prior to the release of the animal. Please contact CARE for copies of the form.

5.5.2.  USDA Record of Disposition form will also be required for any USDA covered species, and must be completed by the Cornell staff member facilitating the adoption process.

5.6.  The IACUC may have additional requirements for adoption of animals that are not traditional pets or farm animals (e.g., song birds can only be adopted to licensed wildlife rehabilitators).

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.  NA

8.  REFERENCES


9.  APPENDIX

9.1.  NA

10.  HISTORY

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