



Satellite Animal Housing – Standard Operating Procedures			
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1. Overview

Purpose

While the IACUC recommends the use of animal housing within the dedicated animal facility whenever possible, there are circumstances that require the use of satellite animal housing. These procedures provide standardized requirements for authorizing and maintaining satellite animal housing.

2. Definitions

Animal Facility - specialized facility designed to house and care for animals used in research, also known as a vivarium.

Satellite Housing – Drexel University has adopted the Animal Welfare Act definition of satellite housing which is a location outside of the animal facility where animals are housed or held for more than 12 continuous hours.

3. Satellite Housing General Considerations

3.1 Drexel University’s Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) highly recommends the use of the University Laboratory Animal Resources (ULAR) animal facilities. The use of dedicated ULAR facilities allows many advantages such as:

- Provide a controlled environment (i.e. temperature, humidity, lighting, air quality) to reduce stress and ensure reproducible results.
- Comprehensive enrichment programs promote natural behaviors.
- Clear communication and defined responsibilities.
- Consistent, high-quality animal care and biosecurity measures.
- Reduced personnel exposure to allergens.

3.2 Satellite housing is permitted only when scientifically justified and when appropriate environmental controls, care, and oversight are ensured. Approval will not be granted for convenience or cost savings.

3.3 All satellite housing must comply with federal regulations, accreditation standards (AWA, PHS Policy, Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals), and IACUC oversight requirements.

3.4 All satellite housing must be approved by the Drexel University IACUC before used.

4. Satellite Housing Approval Process

4.1 Planning and evaluation must involve the Attending Veterinarian, ULAR Executive Director, and IACUC.

4.2 Requests should be submitted via protocol or amendment and include:

- Campus location and room number
- Duration of housing
- Scientific justification



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- Environmental control and monitoring plans (temperature, humidity, light cycle)
- List of animal-related activities (e.g., surgery, euthanasia, behavioral studies)
- Satellite Housing SOPs (ULAR SOPs may be used as a guide)

4.3 The IACUC will appoint a subcommittee, including the Attending Veterinarian and/or ULAR representative, to inspect and approve the space.

5. Satellite Housing Post-Approval Maintenance

All IACUC policies and requirements must be followed including but not limited to the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, Animal Welfare Act, and the items listed below.

5.1 Daily Care

Laboratory staff must check animals and provide care every day, including weekends, holidays, and university closures. If daily care cannot be provided, contact the ULAR Director and veterinary staff immediately to arrange alternative care.

Veterinary staff and IACUC must have unrestricted access.

Enrichment should be provided in accordance with *ACU-203: Animal Enrichment* unless scientific justification to withhold enrichment is approved by the IACUC.

5.2 Environmental Conditions

Temperature, humidity, and light cycles must meet Guide standards. Report any deviations to ULAR immediately.

5.3 Recordkeeping

Maintain daily records for husbandry (cage changes), food and water checks, health checks, lighting and verification of light cycles, and temperature/humidity (minimum and maximum) when animals are housed. Records must be kept daily while animals are housed, including holidays, weekends, and closures. Use ULAR's standard room log when possible. Records must be available to IACUC, ULAR, veterinary staff, and post-approval monitors upon request. When cages are deactivated, cage cards should be dated and returned to ULAR.

5.4 Animal Identification

Cage cards must remain on cages and be updated as needed. Use cage flags to indicate special conditions (e.g., biohazards, food/fluid restrictions, and single housing).

5.5 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Develop and maintain lab-specific satellite housing SOP based on ULAR guidelines. Ensure all personnel are trained and have access to the SOP. SOPs must be available to IACUC, ULAR, veterinary staff, and post-approval monitors upon request.

5.6 Storage and Biosafety

Store bedding, food, enrichment, and water appropriately in vermin proof containers; label food with expiration dates.

Follow biosafety protocols and list the room on the biosafety protocol. Use appropriate signage and cage flags for hazards. Inform all personnel of associated risks.



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Gloves must be worn when handling animals. Wearing proper personal protective equipment is also recommended.

5.7 Signage and Security

Post animal welfare reporting signage. Implement security measures to prevent unauthorized access.

5.8 Sanitation and Pest Control

Follow *ACU-217: Sanitizing Equipment for Use with Research Animals*.

Pest control may be required; ULAR will determine the type. Maintain records for pest control; avoid sticky traps.

5.9 Emergency Procedures

Report escaped animals to ULAR immediately for live traps and notify the Attending Veterinarian/IACUC.

The satellite housing area will be included in ULAR's Disaster/Contingency Plan.

5.10 Inspections

IACUC will conduct semiannual inspections; post-approval monitoring will occur annually.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Office for Research & Innovation Responsibilities

The Office for Research & Innovation is responsible for maintaining this guidance document, applicable tools, training, granting exceptions, and monitoring. For inquiries regarding these procedures, please contact the Director of Animal Welfare, as part of the Office for Research & Innovation (ORI).

6.2 Principal Investigator (PI) Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that all federal regulations, as well as all IACUC and ULAR Procedures for care and use of the animals, are followed while animals are housed in the satellite housing room.

7. Resources

- [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition. National Academies Press Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition. National Academies Press](#)
- [Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals Office](#)
- [Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations](#)

8. Revision

Version 001/Effective Date: 05/14/2026 - Original Document: Satellite Animal Housing