

**ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
SAFETY POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Occupational Health Program – Animal Laboratories**

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## 1 PURPOSE

For their protection, staff, faculty and students who work in laboratory animal facilities or have sustained animal contact are required to participate in an occupational health program (“Program”). The Program employs safeguards and mechanisms to assess and reduce the risk of disease transmission between human and animal, to reduce occupational hazards and to comply with Public Health Service (“PHS”) rules.

## 2 APPLICABILITY

This Program applies to all personnel who work in laboratory animal facilities or have frequent contact with animals. The Program requires that each principal investigator be responsible for ensuring that all persons involved in projects under his or her direction comply with the provision of this Program. Any principal investigator who fails to carry out this responsibility will be denied the use of animals until full compliance has been established. Because the risk involved in animal contact varies with the species of animals, the degree of participation of each individual in the Program will be determined by the species of animal handled.

Violations of this Program or approved safety procedures will be forwarded to the appropriate principal investigator, department chair and/or IIT’s Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (“IACUC”) for action as necessary.

## 3 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

This Program seeks to establish and enforce sound occupational health and safety practices to prevent or minimize the occurrence of injury or illness to personnel. Occupational health and safety concerns are addressed at the project level in order to address each project’s unique risks, circumstances and conditions. Supervisory personnel, such as laboratory managers, research team leaders, husbandry and custodial managers, and principal investigators, are responsible for the implementation of occupational health and safety protocols and procedures. Each investigative, technical and animal care staff member is also responsible for his or her own well-being. Personnel must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including IIT’s Animal Welfare Assurance with the PHS, regarding sound occupational health and safety practices.

Each new project involving animal research will be evaluated for known and potential hazards at the protocol level by the principal investigator. This process will identify the project’s engineering and administrative controls, work practices, personal protective equipment and/or clothing (PPE), air monitoring, emergency response procedures, required vaccinations, target organ(s) identification, medical surveillance, exposure protocols, potential for zoonoses, and employee training and recordkeeping needs specific to the project. Hazards must be communicated consistent with IIT’s Hazard Communication Program. Once the principal

investigator has identified all known and foreseeable hazards and compiled them within the protocol, the entire application is submitted to the IACUC for review. After receipt of the application, the IACUC verifies that the identified hazards have been reviewed and approved by the appropriate oversight committees based on the risks assessed. The verification process also encompasses any applicable Standard Operating Procedure for specific hazards and laboratory conditions.

Inspections of all laboratory areas will be performed by IIT's Director of Environmental Health and Safety (DEHS) in collaboration with the IACUC. As a part of the semi-annual program review, the IACUC conducts laboratory inspections of all areas where animal work is conducted. Operations should be observed, obvious signs of exposure, if any, noted and the use of equipment and performance of procedures inspected during an inspection. The DEHS will then prepare a report and distribute it to the principal investigator (or designee), department chair or department head and IIT Animal Users Advisory Committee for review of this inspection and for follow-up for corrective actions, if any.

Risk assessment will be aided by taking into account the injury and illness experience among animal care people, including, but not limited to, animal bites, back problems, animal allergies, skin reactions and latex allergies. Data will be analyzed from workers' compensation records and internal first aid logs. Particular care will be given to assess the risk of allergies in workers who will be in contact with rodents and rodent facilities, rabbits and rabbit facilities, and felines and feline housing to monitor these workers for compliance with proper protective protocols as well as for signs of allergic reactions.

#### 4 PERSONNEL TRAINING IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Personnel will receive training that corresponds with the protocols submitted to the IACUC to ensure that they can properly and safely accomplish an assigned task. Records of such training will be maintained by providers and must be made available upon request of the DEHS or the IACUC for inspection. Appropriate training will be assigned based on the proposed animal work and in alignment with IACUC policy. The Office of Research Compliance will offer training modules through CITI ([www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org)).

The DEHS will provide annual training programs on personal protective equipment (PPE) and hazard communication as it pertains to animal care and use. All laboratory personnel will be encouraged to participate in professional organizations and conferences for current trends and information. Information from NIOSH, OSHA, CDC and NIH will be made regularly available to the research staff and incorporated into ongoing employee training and educational programs.

A library of Standard Operating Procedures ("SOPs") for animal experimentation involving hazardous or potentially hazardous materials will be maintained by and available for review from the DEHS. SOPs will be distributed as needed to animal care workers, laboratory managers and



## **APPENDIX A**

### **PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ON-THE-JOB INJURIES**

1. Depending upon the nature of the illness or injury, Main Campus employees injured on the job may be referred to MercyWorks Occupational Medicine Network or to an emergency room for further treatment. The employee may instead choose to see his/her own physician. The supervisor should contact Public Safety at 8-6300 to transport the injured employee to MercyWorks for treatment. MercyWorks' hours are 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. It is located at 2525 South Michigan, telephone 312.567.2000.

Other campuses refer injuries to other locations, to a private physician or, as necessary, to an emergency room.

2. The supervisor must contact Human Resources immediately to report the injury. Both the supervisor and the employee must complete, within the next two working days a report of injury provided by Human Resources. Upon receipt of this, Human Resources will complete the documentation required by the state and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and will coordinate follow up.

3. The supervisor will communicate with Human Resources on the disposition of each case including whether the employee received first aid, was sent home for one or more days, or was referred for further treatment.

4. The injured employee is responsible to immediately contact his/her supervisor to report the outcome of treatment and to report the necessity of any further absence from work.

5. Please contact IIT Human Resources for appropriate time sheet entry for any absence extending beyond three (3) days should be coded as unpaid absence.

6. If the employee has been treated by an outside physician, he/she must bring a release from the attending physician and present it to IIT Human Resources before beginning work.

7. An employee released for work with restrictions must have his/her case reviewed by Human Resources prior to being scheduled to return to work.