

The University Office of Research Compliance and Assurance is positioned to continue to function across its areas. The preparation, review, and submission of applications to the IRB, IACUC and IBC can happen entirely electronically. The IRB, IACUC, and IBC have the capability to meet by teleconference. Provided that Research Compliance staff are not severely impacted by COVID-19, these activities should occur on time and without interruption.

Update on COVID-19: IACUC

The University of South Alabama adheres to provisions of PHS Policy, the *Guide*, The Animal Welfare Act and Regulations, and the commitments detailed in our Animal Welfare Assurance with OLAW. This includes advance planning for conditions that could arise as a result of a human pandemic (e.g., influenza) or outbreaks of novel infections (e.g., COVID-19) that could jeopardize the health and safety of animals because of a lack of personnel to care for the animals and/or to conduct IACUC official business.

Animal Facilities:

- Animal facilities must be maintained at a level to ensure animal welfare. The Animal Care and Use Program will continue to operate as normal. If there is a reduction in staffing, arrangements will be made as necessary to continue providing husbandry services.
- The Animal Care and Use Program has a disaster plan, implemented by the Department of Comparative Medicine (DCM), provides an overall plan of action for responding to emergencies, including restricted access to facilities, that may affect the care and use of laboratory animals. Individual animal labs that require additional assistance implementing contingency plans should contact Dr. Michele Schuler, mschuler@southalabama.edu
- The Animal Care and Use Program will continue to keep researchers informed and will also communicate, as needed, via e-mail with investigators who use their facilities.

Investigator labs must keep the Department of Comparative Medicine informed if their personnel are not able to care for their animals on study.

For animal housing sites not managed by Department of Comparative Medicine, Principal Investigators/designee are responsible for continued post-procedure care.

DCM will continue to provide husbandry and veterinary care to animals housed in the vivarium. If DCM experiences staffing-shortages, they may reach out to research staff with animals housed in the vivarium to ask for assistance. Please email mschuler@southalabama.edu or lawiggins@southalabama.edu if you or your IACUC-trained (and OHP-enrolled) research personnel are willing to assist, if needed.

IACUC Operations:

- In the event of an emergency, the USA IACUC will continue to conduct official business, including but not limited to: meeting regularly to review the Program of Animal Care and Use, conducting protocol review and approval, accepting reports of and investigating animal welfare concerns, reporting to federal agencies and AAALAC, completing grant congruency reviews, conducting Semi-annual inspections.
- IACUC Office will be available to answer questions, assist in protocol preparation and provide training and consultation as needed.
- If campus operations are interrupted, the IACUC Office will arrange for alternatives to face-to-face meetings such as teleconference.