

Purpose / Scope

The threefold purpose of this policy is to:

- provide a framework for Western's Animal Care Committee (ACC) to assess concerns effectively and collegially and then respond to Incidents, Non-Compliance and Reportable Animal Welfare Incidents (RAWIs) pertaining to animal-based science;
- re-align animal procedures and related processes with the approved *Animal Use Protocol* (AUP) and/or current regulatory, veterinary, and institutional standards of animal ethics and care; and
- ensure that appropriate project refinement in response to Incidents, and action plans and/or sanctions in response to Non-Compliance and RAWIs, are promptly enacted by accountable parties.

This policy applies to animal-based science activities associated with Western and its affiliates.

Rationale

Western is obliged by its commitment to Tri-Agency's *Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions* to fully comply with Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) standards. According to CCAC, Animal Care Committees are required to establish and enact a post approval monitoring program that ensures that "animal use in practice takes place as approved in principle."¹ Additionally, a framework must be established and maintained for reviewing and correcting elements of a research project that may deviate from an approved AUP and/or from current veterinary and regulatory standards of animal ethics and care.

Within Section 17 of the *Animals for Research Act*, the Animal Care Committee (ACC) is obligated to ensure compliance with Section 16; in the event of non-compliance with the Act, the ACC is required to intervene to prevent and/or alleviate animal suffering and/or unnecessary pain.² In order to fulfill its ARA mandate, the ACC has developed a system for identifying and responding to any Concerns that may impact animal health and welfare.

¹ Canadian Council on Animal Care. Policy statement for: senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs. (2008) Sect 5.8 . ACCs and Post-approval Monitoring. Retrieved from https://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Senior_administrators.pdf

² Government of Ontario. *Animals for Research Act*, R.S.). 1990, c. A.22 Sections 16 and 17 retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90a22#BK14>

Policy Statements

Concern Disclosure

Where reasonable and appropriate, concerned individuals must attempt to work with those responsible for live-animal activities, hereto referred to as Responsible Persons (RPs), to resolve concerns appropriately and promptly regarding a perceived departure from an approved Animal Use Protocol (AUP) or current regulatory standards that negatively impacts animal health, behaviour and/or well-being.

Responsible Persons must act collegially in good faith in order to readily and appropriately resolve concerns that have been brought to their attention.

For sanctions involving 'On Hold' or 'Closure', any live animals must be transferred to a Temporary Holding AUP, as per *POL-002 A Animal Use Protocols*, and must remain under the direct oversight of the University Veterinarian until sanctions are formally lifted.

Appeals of ACC Decisions

Those wishing to appeal an ACC decision must submit their request in writing to the Director of Research Ethics and Compliance (Western Research).

Adjudication will follow Western Research's



Acting in Good Faith –



Upon recommendation of the Institutional Veterinarian and as approved by the ACC Chair, exceptions may be granted for:

- Pilot Studies with unknown mortality rate, and
- other scenarios where the above parameters do not effectively represent the situation.

Non-Compliance A demonstrated disregard for animal-related regulatory, veterinary and/or institutional standards and related policies and procedures and/or a demonstrated lack of empathy for animals used in Animal-Based Science. Requires action plans and sanctions. May begin as an Incident or series of Incidents; if not readily resolved, may be considered to be Non-Compliance (see POL-004)

On Hold As determined by the Animal Care Committee (ACC) Executive on a case by case basis, actions taken to limit Animal-Based Science activities in the short-term until associated Concerns have been resolved (see POL-004). Limited activities may include one or more of the following:

- Limiting Animal-Based Science activities, including but not limited to:
 - No new animal procurement
 - No experimental procedures
 - No breeding transfers out to research
 - No animals leave animal facility for experiments
 - Arms-length animal health professional/husbandry staff directly oversee animals
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