

## Policies and Procedures

SECTION: Research and Compliance	NUMBER: R&C-ARF-5.0			
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### 1. 3BACKGROUND

The Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and *The Guide* identify the need for an occupational health and safety program for all personnel who work in laboratory animal facilities or have regular animal contact at work. The emphasis of the ARF training program is preventing workplace illness and injury, including providing for early diagnosis and treatment when an injury or illness occurs in ARF Personnel, which supplements the university's Animal Occupational Health and Safety Program for all individuals working with or around animals.

### 2. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

- 2.1. **Animal Rooms and Animal Handling** – To maintain the best quality environment for animals and individuals working with animals, the ARF requires that protective clothing be worn any time in animal rooms (see Policy R&C-ARF-8.0) or when handling animals in the ARF. This applies to all animals, both in and out of Quarantine Areas.
- 2.2. **Personal Protective Equipment/Work Clothing Provided** – Protective clothing, including gloves, gowns, shoe covers, masks, and head covers, are provided to all personnel (research and animal care) who enter animal rooms within the ARF. All animal care personnel are also issued uniforms or scrubs for use while working within the ARF. This clothing is washed within the ARF and does not leave the premises. Animal care personnel while working in the ARF should not wear street clothes. The ARF also provides animal care personnel with shoes for wear in the ARF. These shoes are to be worn **only** in the ARF.
- 2.3. **Small-Animal Rooms** – At a minimum, protective clothing must include a gown, mask, shoe covers, head cover, and latex or vinyl gloves. Shoe covers must be put on as a person enters the room to minimize the spread of contaminants into and out of each room. Plastic sleeves should be worn when opening an animal cage. Additional protective clothing may be required by the Attending Veterinarian or per the protocol. If so, this information shall be posted on the animal room door.
- 2.4. **Large-Animal Rooms** – At a minimum, protective clothing must include a laboratory coat, mask, and latex or vinyl gloves. Each large animal room has several pairs of rubber boots that are to be worn when entering the room. All personnel entering rooms housing swine are required to wear ear protection. Additional protective clothing may be required by the Attending Veterinarian or per the protocol. If so, this information shall be posted on the animal-room door.

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2.5. **De-gowning/Clean Rooms** – All gowning materials must be removed when you exit an animal room. Shoe covers must be removed *immediately after* stepping out of the room and *before* walking down the hallway. All other gowning materials must be removed at the nearest hallway trash receptacle. Personnel shall not enter any other room, including the clean cage storage room, wearing dirty gowning materials. Personnel shall not re-enter any animal room, for any reason, without first donning fresh gowning materials.

2.6. **De-gowning/Quarantine or Housing Areas with Biohazards** – Under special housing conditions, including Quarantine Areas and rooms where hazardous materials and/or pathogens are being administered, slightly different de-gowning procedures are required in order to ensure that potential pathogens are not brought out into the common hallway. All gowning materials must be removed *prior to* exiting, immediately inside the door to the room.

## 3. PHYSICALS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

### 3.1. Physicals

All ARF Personnel must have a complete physical examination prior to working with animals. The ARF Manager arranges for physical examinations with a Creighton University physician for ARF Personnel, as required.

### 3.2. Tetanus Shot

All ARF Personnel working with animals must have a current tetanus shot. The date of immunization must be confirmed by the Animal Occupational Health and Safety Nurse. Tetanus immunizations must be updated every 10 years or following known injury or upon advice of a physician.

### 3.3. Immunizations for Zoonoses

Zoonoses are animal diseases that can be transmitted to humans through regular contact, animal bites, or scratches. The Animal Occupational Health and Safety Nurse is responsible for ensuring that appropriate immunizations are obtained based on ARF Personnel interaction and contact with certain animals housed in the ARF. The ARF Manager and/or the Attending Veterinarian will advise the Animal Occupational Health and Safety Nurse of potential zoonoses if new species are introduced into the ARF. Titers for rabies, Q-fever, and other infectious agents are obtained as necessary.

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### 3.4. Other Requirements

ARF Personnel shall also meet any additional physical examination or immunization requirements set forth under Creighton University's Animal Occupational Health and Safety Program for individuals working with animals.

### 3.5. Costs Covered

The ARF shall pay for the cost of required physical examinations and any medical laboratory work required for ARF Personnel. Immunizations for tetanus are covered under Creighton University's health insurance plan. If an employee does not have health insurance through Creighton University, the ARF will pay for the immunizations.

## 4. MEDICAL CONDITIONS

### 4.1. Allergies

ARF Personnel may develop allergies to some animals while working in the ARF. Depending on the severity of the allergy, ARF Personnel will be provided appropriate protective clothing, reassigned to work with other species, or otherwise accommodated. Non-latex gloves are provided should a worker be sensitive to latex.

### 4.2. Pregnancy

Because cats can transmit toxoplasmosis to humans, a disease that may cause complications during pregnancy, any technician who becomes pregnant is encouraged to notify the ARF Manager or ARF Director in a timely manner to minimize exposure to cats during the pregnancy. The ARF Manager and ARF Director shall treat such information as confidential and institute appropriate safety precautions.

## 5. PROTECTION

### 5.1. Uniforms

For health and safety reasons, uniforms are provided to ARF Personnel for wear during working hours. These uniforms are kept in the ARF (including footwear). All uniforms are laundered in the ARF washer and dryer. ARF Personnel share the responsibility of laundering uniforms.

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### 5.2. Safety Equipment

5.2.1. **Protective Clothing** – See Section 2.2 of this policy.

5.2.2. **Noisy Environments** – ARF Personnel are provided earplugs when working in noisy environments. All ARF and laboratory personnel must wear ear protection when entering the rooms housing swine.

5.2.3. **Other Safety Items** – Some tasks require safety items such as goggles, rain suits, aprons, and rubber boots. These and other required safety items are provided at no cost to ARF Personnel by the ARF, as needed.

## 6. PERSONAL HYGIENE

### 6.1. Hygiene Materials

The ARF provides soap, shampoo, and towels for required showering. ARF personnel are provided a reasonable selection of soaps and shampoos from which to choose, including hypoallergenic products.

### 6.2. Routine Showers

All ARF Personnel are required to shower after completing the daily change-out schedule, prior to performing clean caging preparation. Other showers may be required, particularly after working in quarantined rooms or the dirty cage area.

### 6.3. Quarantine Areas

ARF Personnel must shower immediately after cleaning or working in any Quarantine Areas and change into a new uniform before working in other areas of the ARF.

## 7. SAFETY

### 7.1. Accidents and Injuries

All accidents and/or injuries must be reported to the ARF Manager, ARF Director, or other departmental official immediately. A Creighton University Incident Report Form (HR-24) must be completed and filed with Creighton University's Risk Management as soon as

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possible after the incident. If an injury is life threatening, contact Public Safety at 402-280-2911. Treatment should be sought at the nearest emergency room. If an injury is non-life-threatening, employees should contact Risk Management to arrange for medical evaluation at the provider of their choice. Failure to report injuries in a timely manner will lead to disciplinary action.

7.1.1. **Animal Bites and Scratches** – Animal bites and scratches should be reported immediately to the ARF Manager and a Creighton University Incident Report Form (HR-24) filed with Risk Management. The affected employee shall be referred to a physician for treatment, with consideration of possible tetanus prophylaxis and antibiotic treatment. Depending on the species, the Attending Veterinarian will be contacted to determine whether the treating physician should consider rabies prophylaxis.

7.1.2. **Records** – The ARF Manager shall maintain copies of all reports of work-related accidents and injuries involving ARF Personnel.

## 7.2. Emergencies

Contact Creighton University Public Safety at 402-280-2911 to report any emergency.

## 7.3. Security

7.3.1. **ARF Keys** - ARF Personnel are issued appropriate keys to access animal rooms in the ARF. These keys must be kept in a secure place at all times. All ARF keys, including card keys, must be returned to the ARF Manager or ARF Director upon termination of employment.

7.3.2. **ARF Access** - In addition to ARF Personnel, only individuals listed on an IACUC-approved protocol are allowed access to the ARF. Access is controlled by card keys that are activated or inactivated by the ARF Manager. Persons without keyed access must obtain permission from the Attending Veterinarian, ARF Director, ARF Manager, or IACUC Chair to enter the ARF. These individuals normally are not allowed to touch or handle animals. Persons not recognized by ARF Personnel will be questioned to ascertain whether they are authorized to access the ARF. Any suspicious person(s) or activity should be immediately reported to Creighton Public Safety at 402-280-2911. ARF Personnel should contact Public Safety if needed.

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7.3.3. **Access of Facilities Personnel to the Animal Rooms** – All Creighton-employed Facilities personnel who may perform work in the ARF participate in the Animal Occupational Health and Safety Program. Facilities personnel must inform the ARF Manager prior to entering an animal room. Facilities personnel are also instructed that if it is necessary to enter a room housing animals, only ARF personnel are permitted to move racks and/or caging housing animals. Protective clothing is required of all individuals entering an animal room.

7.3.4. **Access of Contractors to the Animal Rooms** – In some instances, it may be necessary for non-Creighton employees to enter animal rooms. In these circumstances, ARF personnel will escort the contractor to the room. The contractor will determine whether it is necessary for caging, rack and/or animals to be moved in order to complete the required work. Only ARF personnel are authorized to move animal caging, racks and/or animals. This policy will be explained to the contractor prior to entry into the animal room. Contractors must wear the same protective clothing required of Creighton personnel to enter the animal room.

## 8. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The ARF Manager is responsible for ensuring that all ARF Personnel are fully aware of the application and training procedures set forth in these SOPs and of any potential hazards involved in their work, including how to recognize, prevent, and treat occupational hazards. The ARF Manager may seek input from the Attending Veterinarian and the University's Environmental Health and Safety Officer in meeting this responsibility. The ARF Manager shall maintain written records of such training for each ARF Personnel member.

In addition, Creighton University's Education and Certification Program for the Use of Animals in Research and Teaching includes a component on the Animal Occupational Health and Safety Program that is required for all personnel who work in laboratory animal facilities or have substantial animal contact at Creighton. For additional information, please see the Education and Certification Program section on the IACUC web site.

All ARF Personnel are required to participate in the Animal Occupational Health and Safety Program. Information regarding this program can be found at <http://www.creighton.edu/researchcompliance/iacuc/aohsp/index.php>.

8.1. **Use of Agents Hazardous to Humans** – It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to identify all agents hazardous to humans or the environment that may

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occur because of their research. All animals that may be treated or infected with potentially hazardous agents must be disposed of in an appropriate manner. The Principal Investigator is advised to consult with the ARF, Environmental Health and Safety, and the Attending Veterinarian prior to submitting a protocol to the IACUC. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to provide the ARF with written assessment of the risks and proper handling procedures. This assessment will be reviewed by the Institutional Biosafety Committee and/or Environmental Health and Safety as appropriate prior to the studies commencing.