Institutional Animal Care & Use Program - UTEP	
Title: Holding Protocol Usage and Requirements	
Policy Number: 044	**Date in Effect**: 3/23/2026
Version: B	**Rev Date**: 4/20/2026
In Effect ☒ **Rescinded** ☐	**Date Rescinded**:

A) Background

The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (the Guide, NRC 2011), Public Health Service (PHS) Policy, and USDA Animal Welfare Act Regulations require that all animals used in research, testing, or education must be covered under a protocol approved by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The IACUC cannot permit any activities on live vertebrate animals without an approved IACUC protocol. In the event that animals are not on an active protocol (e.g., expiration, suspension, pending approval) the IACUC has developed the following policy and procedure to establish a Holding Protocol to temporarily ensure the appropriate handling of animal care and disposition.

B) Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the conditions and requirements governing the use of The University of Texas at El Paso's Animal Holding Protocol. This protocol is intended solely for temporary housing of animals and is not permitted for long-term use or for the conduct of any experimental procedures. Its use is limited to maintenance of animals under standard colony care practices.

C) Policy

1. Instances where the Holding Protocol can be utilized:

a. Animals ordered without an approved protocol in place*. (e.g. new investigators starting up at UTEP)*
b. Animals originating from an inactive, expired (or terminated) protocol.
c. Animals on a protocol under investigation for potential or documented non-compliance or where welfare or wellbeing of the animals is in question.
d. New investigators transferring to UTEP from another institution without an IACUC approved protocol at UTEP that require a temporary accommodation.
e. Investigators that are leaving UTEP and do not have approval for transfer to a new institution.

2. Process for transfer of animals to the Holding Protocol

Voluntary Transfer:

a. The Principal Investigator (PI), or a designee, requesting the use of the Holding Protocol, must complete the Holding Protocol Form available on the UTEP IACUC website.
b. Upon approval, animals will be transferred to the UTEP Holding Protocol by LARC personnel including the placement of Holding Protocol signage and updated cage cards identifying animals as being under Holding Protocol management.
c. Animal facility access will be restricted for investigative staff once animals are placed under Holding protocol management.
d. Note: If an animal transfer is initiated by the Attending Veterinarian or the IACUC, the PI must allow the transfer to take place without any further manipulation of the animals being transferred.
e. **All transfers to the Holding Protocol must follow the guidelines set forth in section 2 of this policy.**

Transfer due to protocol expiration:

a. Automated email notifications from eProtocol will be sent to the Principal Investigator at 90, 60, and 30 days prior to protocol expiration.
b. 30 days prior to the protocol expiration date, the IACUC Office will notify the PI of potential transfer of animals to the UTEP Holding Protocol with the following parties copied on the correspondence:
    i. IACUC Chair
    ii. Attending Veterinarian (AV)
    iii. LARC Manager
    iv. PI's Department Chair
    v. LARC Director

    At that time the PI will be required to fill out and sign the attached Holding Protocol form and return it to the IACUC Office. If PI decides to complete all experiments prior to expiration date, they will communicate with the IACUC Office that no animals will remain under the expired protocol.
c. The form will be routed to the appropriate parties for signature.
d. Upon signed approval, email notification will be sent to the PI again with the aforementioned parties copied. The email will contain the signed copy of the Holding Protocol form in which the PI may retain for their records.

f. If the protocol lapses, animals will be transferred to the UTEP Holding Protocol by LARC personnel on the expiration date.
g. To align with OLAW and PHS policy, if the expiration date falls on a weekend, federal, institutional holiday, or other university closing, the transfer process will take place the business day prior to expiration.
h. The placement of Holding Protocol signage and updated cage cards will be placed on the cages identifying animals as being under Holding Protocol management.
i. Animal facility access will be restricted for investigative staff once animals are placed under Holding Protocol management.
j. Note: If an animal transfer is initiated by the Attending Veterinarian or the IACUC, the PI must allow the transfer to take place without any further manipulation of the animals being transferred.
k. All transfers to the Holding Protocol must follow the guidelines set forth in section 2 of this policy.

2. Management of Animals on the Holding Protocol:

a. No experimental or teaching procedures are to be conducted on animals registered under the UTEP Holding Protocol under any circumstances. Any use as such will be deemed non-compliance and appropriate reporting processes will be initiated.
b. Breeding to maintain viability of specific lines that are not commercially available may occur under this protocol only with prior approval by the Attending Veterinarian and the IACUC Office. Expansion of colony breeding is strictly prohibited.
c. If required to maintain genetically altered lines, genotyping sample collection may be performed under the Holding Protocol only by trained and authorized personnel listed on the UTEP animal Holding Protocol. Samples for genotyping will be provided to the PI for analysis. Personnel service fees may apply.
d. Selected procedures or specialized husbandry conditions may continue at the discretion of the Attending Veterinarian to ensure animal health (e.g., quarantine and related diagnostic testing, maintenance on a special diet, care of chronically implanted catheters or enhanced monitoring).
e. Any associated safety procedures, including use of personal protective equipment, will be maintained as appropriate and in accordance with Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) approvals, as necessary.
f. Feeding, sanitation, and environmental enrichment will be maintained as appropriate for the species and conditions and in accordance with Animal Welfare Regulations and *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*.

g. If euthanasia is required for animals under the Holding Protocol, members of LARC may perform euthanasia using appropriate methods as described in UTEP IACUC Policy #008 - Guidelines for Euthanasia.

3. Time Limit:

a. Animals must be removed from the UTEP Holding Protocol as soon as possible. Upon approval, animals must be transferred to the PI's active protocol immediately.
b. There is a maximum holding time of 60 days for animals under the Holding Protocol. Extension requests may be allowed but requests must be justified, submitted, and approved by the IACUC Office no later than 20 days of expiration of the 60-day time limit.
h. If a resolution as to the disposition of the animals placed on the Holding Protocol cannot be reached, the animals will be euthanized using appropriate methods as described in UTEP IACUC Policy #008 - Guidelines for Euthanasia.

4. Fees and per-diem:

a. The PI assumes all responsibility for costs accrued under the UTEP Holding Protocol. Per diems, veterinary care, personnel services, and any other applicable costs are the sole responsibility of the PI.
b. Animal related costs cannot be charged to federal funding sources while under Holding Protocol management.

Review History	
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A - Initial Version	3/23/2026
B	4/20/2026