

<b>Institutional Animal Care &amp; Use Program - UTEP</b>	
<b>Title:</b> Recordkeeping Policy	
<b>Policy#:</b> 029	<b>Date in Effect:</b> 16 December 2024
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1. RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all personnel using animals at The University of Texas of El Paso (UTEP) to abide by this policy. Exceptions to these policies must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before implementation.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all faculty animal users engaged in research and teaching at UTEP.

3. INTRODUCTION

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (the *Guide*, NRC 2011) states: Medical records are a key element of the veterinary care program and are considered critical for documenting animal well-being as well as tracking animal care and use at a facility. (p. 115). Identification cards should include the source of the animal, the strain or stock, names and contact information for the responsible investigator(s), pertinent dates (e.g., arrival date, birth date, etc.), and protocol number when applicable. (p. 75) Individual records are required for non-rodent animals; group records may be used for rodents.

4. POLICY

The IACUC requires that Principal Investigators (PIs) keep records on animals and have them readily available for Laboratory Animal Resources Center (LARC) staff, veterinarians, Research & Innovation staff, as well as the IACUC.

4.1 CAGE CARDS/IDENTIFICATION CARDS:

All cage cards must include:

- Strain/Stock (when listed on protocol)
- Pertinent dates (e.g., arrival date, birth date, wean date)
- Protocol number
- PI name

- Hazard sticker(s), when appropriate (identity of hazard administered and date)

PIs must use LARC-approved cards. PIs can add specific study identifiers if needed in an additional card. LARC maintains contact information for the investigators and laboratory staff at each building, thus contact information does not need to be listed on the cage card.

A new cage card must be created for each new cage or tank. In some cases, it may be permissible to have one cage card for a row of tanks (*e.g.*, fish rooms). Cage cards cannot be re-used as the original information on the card will be inaccurate for the new cage/mice.

Multiple cage cards can be used on one cage in some instances (*e.g.*, breeding); however, animals from multiple protocols cannot be housed in the same cage/tank.

Animals cannot be housed on campus without an identification card associated with the cage/tank with the appropriate information listed.

#### 4.2 MEDICAL RECORDKEEPING

Records must be immediately available upon request by the IACUC or veterinary staff. It is highly recommended that the records be kept in immediate proximity to the animals. These should be kept in the animal housing room. Records should be kept for a minimum of three years, per National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) requirements.

Each animal under medical observation or treatment will be identified such that care for individual animals can be documented. LARC is responsible for treatment records of sick/ill animals under veterinary care.

Each entry in the record must include the date, a signature or initials of the person providing treatment and/or observation of the animal(s). Records must include required monitoring and/or scoring systems outlined in protocols to assess animal wellbeing and/or euthanasia criteria.

Food and/or fluid restriction that deviates from normal husbandry care must be described in the IACUC proposal. Records for protocols in which an animal's access to food and/or water is limited should include the following information:

- The protocol-approved restriction schedule.
- The time/date and amount of latest feeding/watering.
- Documentation that approved monitoring was conducted (contact IACUC Office for food/fluid restriction monitoring form)
- Body weight and condition must be documented in cases of long-term food and/or fluid restriction. This is defined as where regular access to food/water is restricted for at least one week or more.

Animals who are expected to develop internal or external neoplasia (i.e., tumors) must be monitored as described in the approved IACUC protocol. Monitoring records should be kept in the animal housing room and should include (contact IACUC Office for food/fluid restriction monitoring form):

- IACUC protocol number
- Animal identification
- Dates of monitoring
- Tumor size, body weights, body condition scoring and/or other parameters used to evaluate the animal's condition

Surgical procedures must be briefly stated/described (e.g., yellow surgical card) and include:

- Date of surgery
- Doses of anesthetics and analgesics used with time and date of administration
- Results of post-operative monitoring
- Notes on any adverse events or other comments on the procedure itself

Daily postoperative medical records (e.g., yellow surgical card) of the animal will be maintained and must include

- An evaluation of overall health
- A description of any complications noted
- The removal of sutures, staples, wound clips, or other such devices.
- As a minimum, daily post-surgery records will cover the postoperative period (7-10 days and/or until wound closure material is removed).

It is best practice, but not required, to document other approved procedures (e.g., injections, genotyping, gavage, blood collection) on the back of the original cage card or on charts in the animal room.