

UBC ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE

POLICY 007

TRANSPORT OF RESEARCH ANIMALS THROUGH COMMON SPACES

Date Approved: November 21, 2007

PURPOSE: This document covers the guidelines on the movement and transport of research animals between rooms in a UBC animal facility (i.e. from an animal unit to a laboratory). The transport of animals through public spaces should be minimized for the protection of animal and human health.

POLICY: All animals that are being transported between rooms must fall under a current and approved Animal Care Committee Protocol. All efforts to minimize stress to the animal must be taken. Awareness of public sensitivity concerning the use of research animals must be considered at all times during the transport of animals. The possible consequences of the transport of these animals to animals and staff in the receiving facility must also be considered (see Procedures below).

RESPONSIBILITY: It is the responsibility of the investigators (sender and receiver) to ensure that animals are being transported in a way that follows this Policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ANIMAL SHIPPING PERSONNEL:

Take all measures to maintain health status and minimize stress to the animals during transport. This includes:

- Minimize transit time
- Protect against environmental extremes
- Provide adequate ventilation during shipment
- Avoid overcrowding or inappropriate mixing of animals
- Protect animals from physical trauma and undue stress
- Minimize the duration of time that animals are left sitting in transport cages before and after shipment.
- Ensure animal transfer is done in a secure fashion
- Provide adequate food and water source

TRANSPORT CONTAINERS:

- Animals must be shielded from public view either by using opaque containers or an opaque covering over the container.
- Transport containers should always be covered to aid containment of potential allergens, pathogens, waste products and odours, while providing adequate ventilation (stacking rodent cages or using enclosed impermeable containers or trash bags without air holes do not provide adequate ventilation).
- Food and water must be provided if animals are to be held in transport cages for > 2 hours (this includes the holding time as well as transport time).
- Overcrowding must be avoided, i.e. the accepted housing density for the species must not be exceeded.

- Social groups should be maintained during transit.
- Animals prone to fighting, such as male mice normally housed separately, should always be shipped in separate compartments.
- Cages must be escape proof and protected from unintended openings – i.e. they should have a latch or locking mechanism, rubber band, bungee straps, etc.
- All cages must be properly labeled.

PRACTICAL PROCEDURES:

- a. Ensure animals need to be transported out of facility as most facilities do not allow animals to be brought back.
- b. If animals are to be kept in a lab for more than 12 hours, refer to the Alternative Housing of Experimental Animals Policy.
- c. Choose a route that is direct and of shortest duration avoiding traveling through major public areas