**Animal Procurement, Shipment, and Transportation**

All commercial vendors are selected based on the good health of their animals and on dependable delivery and services. The quality of vendor animals is assessed through evaluation of vendor provided descriptions of their health maintenance and surveillance programs, surveys of other clients of the vendor, and testing of animals supplied by the vendor the University of Massachusetts Boston. Vendors providing consistently high-quality animals and service are considered “approved” vendors. Animals from production colonies of these approved vendors are without additional screening, isolation, or quarantine.

Animals from other sources (non-approved vendors) are accepted only after approval by the Animal Facility Veterinarian. Non-approved vendors include colonies of other research facilities, nonproduction colonies of some approved vendors, and colonies of vendors not previously approved. All rodent and zebrafish shipments from these sources are received through quarantine. Each source is solicited for information documenting the health status of their animals prior to approval of animal procurement. This allows a risk assessment to be made prior to the arrival of a shipment. If a satisfactory health report is not available, or if the health report provided indicates the potential presence of pathogens, the shipment is designed to include extra animals for immediate sacrifice and testing upon arrival at the Animal Facility. In rare instances, animals ordered from these suppliers may be accepted for immediate non-survival use in specifically designated areas.

UMB breeding colonies are another source of animals. The health status of UMB rodent colonies is monitored through the animal facility health surveillance program. UMB investigators wanting to transfer animals from another UMB investigator must submit a PI to PI transfer form which allows animal facility staff to check the health status of both colonies before animals are moved in order to reduce the possibility of cross contamination.

Investigators who capture animals (snakes, lizards, turtles, fish and some invertebrates) for research or teaching purposes must document that all appropriate licenses and permits have been obtained and they are knowledgeable and experienced in the capture, transport and care of the species being obtained.

Animal Facility Personnel responsible for receiving animals are instructed to contact the veterinarian if animals arrive from unfamiliar or unrecognized source. Such animals are not housed until the veterinarian reviews any accompanying health information and examines the animals. Animals may then be housed in isolated rooms, laminar flow hoods, flexible film isolators, filtered cages, ventilated racks, or cubicles, as the situation demands, or they may be euthanized.

**Transportation of Animals**

Transportation of Animals does not require IACUC approval. The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (the Guide, NRC 2011) states: “Careful planning for all types of transportation should occur to ensure animal safety and well-being. The process of transportation should provide an appropriate level of animal biosecurity while minimizing zoonotic risks, protecting against environmental extremes, avoiding overcrowding, provide food and water when indicated, and protected against physical trauma.” (p. 107)

To ensure humane animal handling and protect against disease spread, IACUC/Animal Facility requires that special provisions be met regarding the transportation of animals. Transportation arrangements must be made through the staff of the Animal Facility.

Movement of animals from the Animal Facility to a laboratory within the same building does not require IACUC approval, but the room to which the animals are transported must be listed in the protocol as a research location. Transportation of animals between buildings on campus must be included and outlined in the IACUC protocol. Animals should be transferred on carts or similar equipment and not hand carried.

Transportation of animals to another institution requires coordination between institutions regarding animal health status and IACUC approvals. A health certificate must accompany the animals.

**General Transportation Principles**

1. During regular business hours, arrangements can be made with the animal facility staff to transport animals.
2. Live animals cannot remain outside of approved housing facilities for more than 12 hours unless specifically approved in the IACUC protocol.
3. Water bottles must be removed or inverted during transpiration and returned to their original position upon arrival to the destination.
4. Rodent cages must have filter tops secured with tape.
5. The container must be constructed in a way to avoid injury or escape of the animal and described in the protocol.
6. Cages/crates must be covered entirely with a drape.
7. Transportation of animals exposed to hazards must be done in accordance with procedures established by EHS and the animal facility.
8. Vehicular transporation:
9. The use of personal vehicles is generally prohibited, as it can result in allergen and animal pathogen exposure to the occupant and future occupants in the car. Requests for exemption should be submitted to the attending veterinarian.
10. The owner of the vehicle used for the transport should be aware of the potential animal allergen exposure and risk to others that may subsequently by passengers in the vehicle.
11. Animals must be transported in the passenger compartment only.
12. The vehicle must provide adequate heating/cooling to maintain a thermoneutral environment for the animal.
13. The use of public transportation is prohibited.
14. Cages, in a secondary container, or crates should be places on a non-porous material (example: blue diaper pads, vinyl sheet, etc.) within the vehicle to allow for a clean environment and ease of cleaning.
15. Vehicle must be clean and uncluttered, and other cargo should not be transported in the same area with the animal crates.
16. Crates/cages must be placed away from direct sunlight, and ventilation should not blow directly onto the cate/cage.
17. Transport crates must be secured in the vehicle in an upright manner.
18. Drivers must always remain with or in the vehicle when animals are on board.
19. The most direct route of transport must be taken (i.e., door to door).
20. Steps must be taken to minimize stress during transportation.
21. Handle cages gently, do not shake or drop.
22. Low noise levels, keep windows closed, do not slam doors, and keep radios off or very low volume.
23. Do not smoke in the vehicle or around the cages/crates.
24. Ensure that crates or cages are not opened, or filters breached during the transport.
25. Pedestrian Transportation:
26. Cages/crates cannot be stacked during transport.
27. Appropriate precautions should be taken during inclement weather.

**Shipment or receipt of animals to or from other institutions.**

The shipment of animals to or from other institutions and research facilities, both in and out of state, requires coordination and communication between not only the investigators, but also the staff of the animal facility. Communication about animal health status, animal housing concerns and information the receiving veterinarian may request are essential to ensure the maintenance of the animal health and well-being.

Arrangements for transporting the laboratory animals must meet requirements of the [Animal Welfare Act](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/animalwelfare?1dmy&urile=wcm%3apath%3a%2Faphis_content_library%2Fsa_our_focus%2Fsa_animal_welfare%2Fsa_awa%2Fct_awa_program_information)and the [PHS Policy](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm). Animal shipments coming in and going out must be coordinated and/or approved by the facility veterinarian prior to movement of the animals.

Shipping is coordinated through the animal facility staff and requires special arrangements to assure that shipments are direct, and that ground transportation is timely.

Health certificate - An Animal Health and Shipping Certificate signed by an examining veterinarian must accompany all out of state shipments of animals.

**IACUC Approved Vendors:** Charles River Laboratories, Jackson Labs, Taconic, Envigo

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