TRANSPORT OF VERTEBRATE ANIMALS

Under no circumstances shall animals be transported by public transportation such as buses or shuttles. All vehicles and trailers used for animal transport need to be inspected by the IACUC semi-annually.

Occupational Health Issues

• Occupational health issues for humans must be addressed when transporting animals in a vehicle. Individuals transporting the animals should be aware of the risks to themselves and others of exposure to allergens. Release of animal dander, airborne animal allergens and animal bedding into the environment should be minimized.
• Cages used for transport should limit exposure to allergens, waste products or odors, while providing sufficient air for normal respiration. During transport, personnel should ensure that filter tops or other effective covers are used on rodent cages. Empty, soiled cages or carriers should be covered during transport.
• Reusable primary or secondary enclosures should be sanitized between use to prevent the spread of pathogenic microorganisms, animal wastes and allergens.

When transporting animals in a University owned vehicle a tag should be attached to the keys indicating its use to transport animals and the potential for allergens to be present. This tag should be used until the vehicle is cleaned out and vacuumed. If you need a tag for this purpose please contact the Animal Handler Safety Officer at 517-432-5262.

Caging used for transport should:

• Provide sufficient air for normal respiration
• Be safe for the animal and species-appropriate
• Ideally be the animal’s home cage to limit stress
• All rodents need to be transported with a filter top and secondary container
• Do not stack cages in a manner in which they can topple over

Pedestrian transportation

• Small animals (e.g., mice, rats, birds, frogs) may be manually transported from the housing facility to a laboratory in secured caging
• Caging must be protected from temperature extremes, sunlight, car lights, or visual observation by use of opaque plastic bags or boxes, opaque fabric, or other opaque covering
• To prevent escape of animals or spillage of contents, cages should be secured with non-residue tape, bungee cords, rubber bands, etc., during transport
• Rodents should be carried using a micro isolator top

Vehicles and Trailers

• Overall cleanliness. All transport vehicles should follow their respective SOP’s for sanitation
• Temperature controls in good working order
• Safety: brakes, lights, etc. in good working order
• Trailers: Frames, tires, floor are in good condition
• Current plates/registration
• All animals need to be secured and not overcrowded
• Exercise care when transporting, avoid extreme temperatures
• Physically separate between species
• Provide food and water when indicated
• Minimize transit time