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IG037: IACUC REVIEW OF ANIMAL WELFARE CONCERNS AND NONCOMPLIANCE

PURPOSE: This guideline establishes procedures for review of concerns reported to Michigan State University regarding animals under the University’s ownership or control; or noncompliance in animal used for teaching, research, and outreach. Noncompliance would include, but not be limited to: conducting animal activities without IACUC approval and failure to adhere to the methods, procedures, and conditions of the approved protocol.

A concern or an issue of noncompliance should be reported to any of the following: IACUC Chair, IACUC Administrator, Attending Veterinarian, Research Liaison, IACUC member, IACUC staff, Facility Manager, or any animal caretaker, who in turn will inform the IACUC office. Preliminary assessment of the situation will be made by the Attending Veterinarian, the IACUC Chair or Vice Chair, and/or the IACUC Administrator with possible consultation with the IAUCUC Oversight Committee. [An exception will be made when the concern involves one of the aforementioned and/or they are not available for consultation.] After careful deliberation, these individuals will determine a course of action deemed to be in the best interest of the welfare of the animals. If necessary, the Associate Vice President for Research Regulatory Support (AVPRRS) will be included in such deliberations; otherwise, he/she will be apprised of the situation as expeditiously as possible. The Institutional Official (IO) will be kept informed through the IACUC or the AVPRRS.

If the issue presents a potential immediate animal health or welfare risk, the Attending Veterinarian or designee will assess the situation and take any action determined to be, in his/her professional judgment, appropriate to alleviate unnecessary pain and distress in animals.

The University’s Attending Veterinarian or designee, the Institutional Official, or the IACUC Chair may ask an investigator to cease procedures in process if cessation is determined to be in the best interest of the animals. All reasonable attempts to receive input from the above individuals and the Principal Investigator (PI) should be exhausted before such a decision is made.

The investigative process may be delegated to a subcommittee of the IACUC or other individuals appropriate to conduct the investigation. In cases of delegation, the IACUC retains responsibility to ensure that the investigation is conducted in an appropriate and legal manner. The IACUC will be notified of investigations as soon as possible, but no later than the next regularly scheduled meeting. The IACUC staff will manage the process.

All investigations and actions shall be conducted in accordance with appropriate federal, state, and University legal and policy standards. If necessary, the IACUC will seek expertise (e.g.

Departmental, Human Resources, Legal Services) to ensure that investigations and actions are properly conducted and follow due process.

Every attempt will be made to protect the rights of both the complainant and others involved in investigations. Protections to ensure confidentiality will include, but are not limited to, allowing reports and complaints to be made anonymously as well as withholding names from written and oral reports. PIs may submit written statements requesting reconsideration of the IACUC decision.

The appropriate internal and external regulatory entities will be notified, as necessary.