TRANSPORT OF VERTEBRATE ANIMALS

Transport of vertebrate animals used for research and teaching is overseen by the Campus Animal Resources veterinary staff, including the Attending Veterinarian and designees. Transport of agricultural animals shall be under the discretion of the Farm Managers and the Farms Veterinarian as described in relevant SOPs. Transportation times should always be kept to the minimum necessary for the comfort and well-being of the animals.

1) Under no circumstances shall animals be transported by public transportation such as buses or shuttles.

2) All vehicles and trailers must be approved by the IACUC or University-owned for animal transport and need to be inspected by the IACUC semiannually (see section below).

3) For non-agricultural animal transportation, vehicles must be temperature controlled.

4) If temperatures extremes are >85°F or <45°F, the exposure period of animals to the elements should be minimized to the shortest time possible.

5) Contact carvets@msu.edu with any questions or concerns about movement of research or teaching animals between buildings, facilities, farms, campuses, around the state, or across state lines.

Caging used for transport should:
- Provide sufficient air for normal respiration.
- Be safe for the animal and species-appropriate.
- To prevent escape of animals or spillage of contents, cages should be secured with non-residue tape, bungee cords, rubber bands, etc., during transport.

Vehicular transportation for biomedical rodent models should:
- Allow for transport in a cage with a cage top and further placed within a secondary container.
- Allow for secure positioning of secondary container to avoid movement during vehicle stops and turns.
- Not be stacked in a manner in which airflow is blocked or caging can topple over.
- If rodents are to return to original housing facility, ensure that rodents are transported within a closed cage.

Pedestrian transportation for biomedical models:
- 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 shielded from temperature extremes, sunlight, car lights, or public observation by use of opaque plastic boxes, opaque fabric, or other opaque covering. Animals must be able to breathe despite being covering.
Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee Guideline

- If rodents are to return to original housing facility, ensure that rodents are transported within a closed cage.
- If rodents are destined for one-way terminal transport, suggest use of provided disposable rodent transport containers.

**Vehicles and Trailers are to be approved by the IACUC and should comply with the following:**

- Overall cleanliness: all transport vehicles should follow their respective SOP’s for sanitation
- Temperature controls: heater, air conditioner in good working order
- Safety: brakes, lights, etc. in good working order
- Trailers: frames, tires, floor are in good condition
- License plates/ driver’s license / vehicle registration: must be current
- Provide secure and uncrowded transportation of species
- Provide physical separation between differing species transported together

**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 waste contaminants and allergens.
  - When transporting animals in a University-owned vehicle, a tag should be attached to the keys indicating that the vehicle is used 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.