University of Cincinnati
Animal Care and Use Program

Animal Transportation

The Guide 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, providing for the animals’ physical, physiologic, behavioral needs and comfort, and protecting the animals and personnel from physical trauma”.

For animals used in biological, chemical or radiological studies, additional safety requirements may apply (consult with applicable safety office).

Transportation of non-rodent USDA species
Must be transported by LAMS per LAMS SOPs.

Transportation of all other species within the same or interconnected building(s)
1. Containers used for transport should be species specific, appropriate secured containers.
2. Containers should be clean (recently changed) and should limit exposure to allergens, waste products, or odors, while providing sufficient air for normal respiration.
3. A filter top cage or breathable shipping crate must be used.
4. All cages and other containment devices must be covered with a breathable opaque material to contain allergens and prevent public viewing during transport.
5. Stacking of cages is not permitted as it can obstruct airflow.
6. Proper identification must accompany the animal.
7. Service elevators must be used where available.
8. Up to 2 containers may be carried by hand. If transporting 3 or more containers, a cart is required.
9. Upon arrival to the destination, animals should have access to food and water (if species appropriate) unless restriction is stipulated in the associated approved IACUC protocol.

Transportation of all other species outside of a building
1. During times of extreme temperatures, animal transport may be detrimental to animal well-being. Therefore, it may not be possible unless an appropriately heated or cooled means of transportation is available. Precautions should be taken to help ensure that appropriate, species-specific, ambient temperatures within the cage are maintained (e.g., additional nesting material provided, heat source, or transporting within a thermal-insulated container).
2. Ensure cage lids are secure with clip, tie or residue-free tape.
3. Position and secure cages to cart/vehicle so that airflow is not blocked and the containers will not tip, slide, fall off or flip over.

General criteria for a transport vehicle include:
   a. Whenever possible, a dedicated animal transport vehicle should be used.
   b. To request LAMS transport, submit a LAMS Husbandry Service Request.
   c. ACUP must be notified by email LAMS@uc.edu and copy IACUC@uc.edu prior to transport.
d. The heating/cooling system of the vehicle must maintain the inside temperature of the vehicle at an appropriate temperature (based on species) prior to loading the animals (e.g. 65-75°F for laboratory rodents).

e. Attention should be paid to protect animals from direct sunlight to avoid animals overheating.

f. Animals should not be left in the vehicle any longer than what is necessary to transport them to their destination.

g. In the event a vehicle malfunctions in transit, animal welfare is a priority.

REFERENCES: