

## Occupational Health and Safety Information for Field Research

### PURPOSE

To provide regulatory oversight and occupational health and safety information to students who may do field research on a limited basis during their coursework at the University of Cincinnati. Students must remain under the direct supervision of the course instructor.

### OVERSIGHT & COMPLIANCE

**Many federal and local regulations govern disturbing, handling or collecting animals and plants.** Several regulations also protect threatened or endangered wildlife and certain habitats (e.g. streams, wetlands) in order to protect animal welfare and environmental preservation and are enforced by private landowners and local/federal officials.

At UC, all live vertebrate animal research and field activities are overseen by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). This committee is responsible for overseeing humane animal care and use at UC and consists of scientists, non-scientists, community members, and the Attending Veterinarian. They review and approve all animal research and field activities, perform continuing review of those activities, review and investigate concerns, and enforce regulations set forth by the [Animal Welfare Act \(AWA\)](#), the [Public Health Service \(PHS\) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#), and the [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#). For more regulatory information, contact your instructor, the [UC Animal Regulatory Compliance Office](#), or state official.

### REPORTING CONCERNS

Everyone working with animals has the ethical and legal responsibility to report animal welfare concerns to the IACUC. Animal welfare concerns can be confidentially reported to:

- Compliance Hotline 1-800-889-1547 or [Anonymous Reporting Hotline](#)
- IACUC Office 513-558-5103, [IACUC@uc.edu](mailto:IACUC@uc.edu)
- Attending Veterinarian 513-558-5518

**In all cases, anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained to the limits allowed by law.** The Animal Welfare Act states that “No facility employee, Committee member, or laboratory personnel shall be discriminated against or be subject to any reprisal for reporting violations of any regulations or standards” (9 CFR § 2.32(c)(4)).

### IMPACT OF FIELD RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The potential impact of humans in the field can be significant and is largely dependent on species behavior/physiology and timing and duration of the study relative to species norms. It is important to balance gaining knowledge by minimizing adverse effects caused directly or indirectly by humans. Observational activities can greatly impact animal behavior and cause downstream effects such as abandoning nests, young, or home territories, disruption to prey-predator relationships, and unnatural resource distribution. Interventional (hands on) activities can cause physical injury, behavioral change/distress, and disrupt normal social patterns. UC’s IACUC ensures that humane endpoints specific to the study are reviewed prior to activity approval.

The IACUC Attending Veterinarian (AV) provides oversight and veterinary care for all animals covered by an approved protocol; however, due to the nature of a field study, a Veterinarian (AV or field Vet may not always be onsite to treat an injury. **It is very important that individuals interacting with the animals are discouraged from unnecessary handling and should follow appropriate measures when interacting with field species to ensure animal wellbeing.**

### FIELD ANIMAL ASSOCIATED HEALTH RISKS

General precautions include good hygiene practices, being aware of your surroundings, using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), asking questions, and reporting incidents/injuries. **For all incidents, notify your instructor immediately. For all medical emergencies, call 911.**

Potential Hazards	Appropriate Precautions
Allergies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know common symptoms of animal or environmental allergies (e.g. breathing difficulty, sneezing, itchy eyes, runny nose, or a rash/hives)</li> <li>Be cautious of animals that sting and may cause allergic reactions (e.g. bee, wasp)</li> <li>Be cautious of plants known to cause allergic reactions (e.g. poison ivy/oak/sumac)</li> </ul>
Animal Bites/Scratches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know species behavior and use proper handling/restraint techniques and PPE.</li> </ul>
Environmental Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request training before using new equipment or performing unfamiliar tasks.</li> <li>Report potential hazards to supervisor and exercise caution in areas of known risk.</li> <li>Follow all procedures and use equipment as detailed by your instructor.</li> <li>If you are uncomfortable handling an animal, tell your instructor immediately.</li> </ul>
Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash your hands after handling animals to prevent zoonotic diseases.</li> </ul>
Zoonotic Diseases (Zoonoses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoonoses are diseases that can be passed from animals to humans. Common Examples:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amphibians/Reptiles: Salmonella</li> <li>Bats: Rabies</li> <li>Canids/Canines (fox, coyote racoon, wolf, bear, dog): Rabies, roundworm</li> <li>Felids/Felines (binturong, cheetah, cat): Rabies, Roundworms, Ringworm, Cat-scratch fever, Toxoplasmosis</li> <li>Birds: Avian flu, Psittacosis, Toxoplasmosis, Salmonella</li> <li>Fish: Mycobacterial dermatitis</li> <li>Insects: West Nile virus (mosquitos); Lyme disease (ticks), Babesia (ticks) , rocky mountain spotted fever (ticks), erlichiosis(ticks), anaplasmosis(ticks)</li> <li>Rabbits: Ringworm, Leptospirosis. Tularemia</li> <li>Rodents (wild): Hanta virus, Leptospirosis, Lymphocytic choriomeningitis,</li> <li>Marine Mammals (whale, seal, dolphin): Brucellosis, Leptospirosis, Erysipeloid, Influenza, Mycoplasmosis</li> <li>Pachyderms (elephant, rhinoceros): Tuberculosis, salmonella, trypanosomiasis</li> <li>Ungulates (hooved animals-camels, goats, zebras, giraffes: Brucellosis, Cryptosporidium, Ringworm, Q fever</li> <li>Non-human primate-Herpes B virus, monkeypox, tuberculosis Shigella, campylobacter.</li> </ul> </li> <li>This This list may not include all possible zoonoses. Be aware of the risks related to the species or area that you will be working in.</li> </ul>

I have read and understand the information provided in the Occupational Health and Safety Information for Field Research form, as well as the risks associated with the specific animal and hazard contact that I will have at the University of Cincinnati. I agree to comply with all applicable federal, state, and university regulations, policies and guidelines relating to research animal contact and associated hazards.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF STUDENT IS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE:**

- Review UC EH&S Advisory 21.1: [Occupational Health & Safety Guidelines on Minors in Potentially Hazardous Locations Other Than Laboratories](#)

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_