University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

IACUC
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

Subject: Animal Identification Policy

Source: Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
Effective Date: 12/09/2024
Replaces: 02/12/2024
Applies to: Personnel involved in research or teaching studies involving animals
Reference: Animal Welfare Act; PHS Policy on Humane Care & Use of Laboratory Animals; Guide for the Care & Use of Laboratory Animals

Introduction

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) maintains oversight of federally mandated rules and regulations of animal research for the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus (CU Denver | Anschutz).

Policy Statement

This policy provides information on the appropriate types of identification of animals, specifically small rodents and zebrafish. It also provides guidelines for each type of identification.

Procedures

The following methods of identification are acceptable with the noted conditions. All equipment that penetrates or cuts tissue should be sterile or cleaned prior to and between uses.

Tattoo

- Performed with animal grade tattoo gun or micro-tattoo system designed for use in research animals
  - Once trained by veterinary staff, tattoo gun can be reserved online via the equipment management system (EMS)

Footpad Tattoo

- One needle should be used for a maximum of 20 pups. Replace the needle if dull, even if prior to 20 pups
- Footpad tattoos should be performed on 3-9 day old pups

Ear tags

- Mice ears must be of appropriate size to tolerate the weight of the tag
- Tags are placed at the lateral base of the ear, approximately 3 mm from the edge

Ear notches/punch

- Anesthesia is *not* required

Permanent Marker

- May need to be repeated every 3-4 days
- Markings on young pups may not last more than 24 hours due to maternal grooming

Microchips

- Implanted subcutaneously in the back between shoulder blades

Fin Clip

- Fish must be anesthetized
- Only 2-3 mm should be clipped with sharp clean instruments

Toe Clipping

- Toe-clipping is a potentially painful procedure that can only be performed with IACUC approval and justification that no other methods are feasible.
- If toe-clipping is performed, the following parameters must be followed:
    - Pups are not older than 10 days
    - Only the distal phalanx should be removed from the toe
    - A maximum of 2 toes can be clipped and should not be on the same paw

Cage Cards

- All animals must have a cage card that should contain the following information, if applicable:
    - Source of animal, strain or stock, name and contact information of responsible investigator, genotype, and protocol number
- Placing cage cards
    - The research staff must immediately label cages that have been weaned or separated with appropriate identifying information and submit the cage card request to the OLAR office. The PI has up to 72 business hours to place the cage cards. Cages found without cage cards will be marked for the date and time. If cage cards are not placed on the cage within 72 hours, per the IACUC Rodent Overcrowding Policy, there will be a $10 fee per cage to place the cage cards.
- Reusing cage cards is not permitted to ensure approved number of animals is accurately tracked.

Per regulatory requirements, failure to comply with this policy may result in notification of your funding agency (e.g. NIH) and regulatory agencies (e.g. USDA) that your research has violated federal and/or local policies regarding the humane use of animals. This notification may affect continuous funding of your animal-related research. Further, depending on the violation, you may be required to take additional training and/or your privilege to conduct animal research at CU Denver | Anschutz might be temporarily suspended or even completely revoked.