University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

IACUC
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

Subject:	Processing Cage Cards for Weanlings & Separations
Source:	CU Denver | Anschutz Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Effective
Date:	07/14/2025
Replaces:	01/11/2021
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

Federal regulations and our accrediting agency (AAALAC) require the Office of Laboratory Animals Resources (OLAR) to report CU Denver | Anschutz animal usage to them and to ensure that animals are counted against current IACUC approved protocols. OLAR determines animal usage at CU Denver | Anschutz through the animal ordering system that records the number of animals received and housed against investigator protocols. Federal regulations, accreditation guidelines and CU Denver | Anschutz policy prohibit cage overcrowding. Overcrowding is a threat to the health and well-being of the animals (See the IACUC policy on Overcrowding). A cage is overcrowded when the number allowed per cage, or the weight of the animals in the cage, exceeds those allowed by law or presents a health risk to the animals.

Policy Statement

This policy allows OLAR to accurately account for the number of animals used on a protocol and prevent cage overcrowding. Principal Investigators and laboratory personnel must request cage cards for weanlings and animal separations by completing a Cage Card Request Form on the day of the activity.

Procedures

1. The Cage Card Request forms are available in vivarium housing rooms, or in specialized areas such as biohazard housing, via an online form.
2. Animals not covered on active valid protocols will be dealt with immediately (See IACUC Policy on Animals and Expired Protocols). Regulations indicate that there is no grace period. Under no circumstances will the IACUC be able to grant a waiver to this policy.
3. Laboratory personnel must submit the white copy of the Cage Card Request form by placing it in the appropriate box outside of the main facility office or by the facility freight elevator in the respective facility.
4. Laboratory personnel will fully complete and place a green Temporary ID card on each newly created cage.
    a. The yellow or pink copy of the Cage Card Request form is placed behind one of the cards.
    b. The Temporary ID cards can be found in each animal room. Additional Temporary ID cards are available in the main vivarium offices upon request.
5. OLAR personnel will print requested cage cards during standard University business hours, Monday – Friday, excluding holidays.
    a. The Cage Card Request is processed in the animal order system and given a requisition number. The number of animals from the weaning request is deducted from the PI's protocol.
    b. There are no costs associated with the new cage cards but per diems start on the date the cage was created.
6. Laboratory staff pick up the printed cage cards from the PI cage card files outside of the main office in the animal facility that the animals are housed in.

   a. PIs or laboratory staff are responsible for retrieving cards from the correct file and placing cage cards on their cages within three business days of the date on the cage card request form.
   b. At the time of placement, PIs or laboratory staff should remove the yellow or pink copy of the Cage Card Request form and green Temporary ID cards.
7. OLAR staff will place cage cards on temporarily identified cages if not completed by laboratory staff within three business days. OLAR will charge $10 per cage to create/and or place cage cards on cages.
8. If a cage does not have a temporary ID card or a corresponding Cage Card Request form, OLAR staff will submit a Cage Card Request form and place cards on cages without green Temporary ID cards and will charge $10 per cage to do so.
9. Cage cards are deactivated by submitting either the entire cage card or the bar code at the top of the cage card. Per diem charges will be stopped on the same business day for all cage cards turned into the deactivation box by 2:00 PM on regular business days.
   a. Cage cards turned in after 2:00 PM during the week, on weekends, or holidays will be deactivated on the next regular business day.
10. ABSL2+/3 cage card requests are submitted online, reference number must be recorded on temporary cage card.

Procedures for Implementation of Actions When Authorized Animal Number Use is Exceeded

1. If the number of animals authorized by the IACUC for a protocol is exceeded when weaning occurs, then the weaned animals are not covered by a valid protocol. If the protocol is not valid, the Principal Investigator will not be able to further wean, breed, or order animals.
   a. Animals not covered by a valid IACUC approved protocol will be transferred to OLAR's holding protocol and access to them will be denied to everyone associated with the originating protocol. The IACUC will determine whether this is an NIH reportable offence.
2. Animals will be housed and cared for by OLAR Staff and the investigator will be charged double per diems.
3. An amendment to request authorization of additional animals must be submitted by the next IACUC submission deadline and/or the Investigator must respond to IACUC comments by the IACUC designated deadline.
   a. If an amendment is not submitted, or comments are not responded to within that established timeframe, the IACUC will make a determination on the disposition of the animals (See IACUC Policy on Animals and Expired Protocols).
4. As soon as a protocol amendment to increase the authorized number of animals, or a new protocol, is approved by the IACUC, access will be reinstated, and cage cards must be placed on the cages as required above.
   a. If the Principal Investigator or their designee does not place cage cards within 3 business days, OLAR staff will place the cage cards and charge $10 per cage to do so.

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.