

## **Guidelines for UMD Animal Transportation (Non-Agricultural)**

### **A. General**

- This policy applies to the shipment of rodents, birds (song birds and barn owls), ferrets, and rabbits. It does not apply to ungulates (animals with hooves), chickens and fish.
- All methods of transporting animals must provide for the health and welfare of the animals. All Federal and State regulations shall be followed.
- Animals will be transported in a direct and timely manner while avoiding people as much as possible.
- Animals shall not be transported with any other animal, substance and/or device that could be injurious to their health or welfare.
- Care shall be exercised in handling transport containers so that they are not tossed, dropped, needlessly tilted, or stacked in a manner that could result in physical trauma or stress.
- Occupants of buildings should be protected from pathogens, chemicals, radioactive materials, allergens of animal origin and escaped animals.

### **B. Responsibilities**

- The Principal Investigator or facility manager is responsible for packing and transporting animals.
- The Attending Veterinarian is responsible for oversight of these guidelines, can grant exceptions when it is considered in the best interest of the animals, and is the contact person for information concerning the transportation, receipt and shipment of animals.
- The Division of Laboratory Animal Resources (DLAR) can assist in transporting animals off campus. Arrangements can be made by contacting DLAR at 301 405-4921.

### **C. Movement of animals within the animal facility**

- Movement of animals inside the animal facility is usually with the animals in their home cage. The water bottle should be removed prior to transport to guard against flooding.
- Multiple cages should be transported on a cart and care must be taken not to set cages on the floor.
- When animals are in their home cage, a secondary container or cover is not required.
- Containers described below shall be used when animals are not in their home cages. Over short distances, ferrets and song birds may be transported by gloved hand.
- Bedding is required if a rodent is in the transport container for more than 3 hours. Food and a water source, preferably a non-spill system, are required if the animals will be in the transport container for more than 6 hours.

- To decrease the possibility of escape, rodents transported with direct contact to cardboard or polypropylene should not be allowed to remain in the container for more than 3 hours.
- Transport boxes that are contaminated with biological, chemical, or radiological hazards should be disposed of in accordance with ESSR policy. Non-contaminated containers can be disposed of in the regular waste stream.

**D. Movement of animals from the animal facility to a laboratory within the same building or between buildings on the UMD campus**

- Birds, ferrets, rabbits and guinea pigs may be transported in a standard holding cage, their home cage, commercial shipping container, commercial pet carrier or appropriate cardboard box (see Section H). Rodents other than guinea pigs may be in a standard holding cage, their home cage, or a paper vented food container if the animal is under 100 gms. Any rodent that will be returning to the animal facility alive must also be in a secondary filtered shipping container or on a covered cart or rack that will protect them from airborne pathogens and personnel from allergens (see section H). A lab coat is not sufficient. A secondary filtered container or covered rack is not necessary if the animal is to be euthanized before returning to the animal facility. If in doubt, the appropriate conveyance should be verified with the facility manager or veterinarian.
- If the animal's home cage is used, the water bottle should be removed or turned upside down to prevent flooding.
- Bedding is required if a rodent is in the transport container for more than 3 hours. Food and a water source, preferably a non-spill system, are required if the animals will be in the transport container for more than 6 hours.
- Ferrets are to be transported in a plastic pet carrier with a cloth cover. The maximum number of ferrets is 3. If the total body weight of the animals is over, 2.2 kgs, the maximum number is 2.
- If animals can be potentially seen by passer-bys, a cloth or paper cover or secondary container must be used.
- To decrease the possibility of escape, rodents transported with direct contact to cardboard or polypropylene should not be allowed to remain in the container for more than 3 hours.
- Cargo areas of transport vehicles including those owned by UMD shall be climate-controlled and able to be cleaned and decontaminated before and after each shipment. Personal vehicles are not to be used for animal transportation without the prior approval of the Attending Veterinarian. Animals may not be transported by bicycles.
- Transport boxes that are contaminated with biological, chemical, or radiological hazards should be disposed of in accordance with ESSR policy. Non-contaminated containers can be disposed of in the regular waste stream.

**E. Movement of animals to locations outside of UMD**

- Animals may only be transported in appropriate commercial shipping containers or pet carrier. Food and a water source, preferably a non-spill system are required for rodents if in the transport container for more than 6 hours. A health certificate signed by the Facility Veterinarian is required when animals are transferred to other research institutions.
- A Materials Transfer Agreement may be needed when transferring animals to other research facilities.
- Cargo areas of transport vehicles including those owned by UMD shall be climate-controlled and able to be cleaned and decontaminated before and after each shipment. Personal vehicles are not to be used for animal transportation without the prior approval of the Attending Veterinarian. Animals may not be transported by bicycles.
- Animals can be shipped by air cargo, courier service or in-house delivery. They cannot be shipped via the US Postal Service.
- Inclement weather and temperature extremes (above 85° F. or below 45° F.) must be considered when determining when to ship animals.

#### **G. Transporting live or dead animals treated with human pathogens or carcinogenic material**

- The specifics of transporting animals with human pathogens or carcinogenic or toxic material must be reviewed and approved by ESSR and the IACUC.

#### **H. Shipping containers**

- Appropriate transport containers vary depending on the species, distance and/or purpose of the transportation. The enclosure must be escape resistant, sanitizable or disposable and provide adequate ventilation. The container must be large enough to allow the animal to stand, sit erect, lie in a natural position and turn around while standing. If in doubt, appropriate containers should be verified by the facility manager or veterinarian.
- If animals are grouped and in the container for more than 12 hours, density guidelines found in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* ([www.nap.edu/html/labrats/](http://www.nap.edu/html/labrats/)) should be followed. Male mice should never be in direct contact with each other unless they are normally housed in the same cage. Unfamiliar female mice can be placed together because they are not as aggressive.
- Shipping containers used for animals with human pathogens or toxic or carcinogenic materials require a closed system. The container must either have a self-contained, active, ventilation system or filter paper covering the ventilation holes. Additional required warning labels include “Biological Hazard” or “Chemical Hazard” and the specific hazard.
- Appropriate containers
  - 16 oz. double polypropylene vented hot food container. Available from DLAR.
  - Jackson labs shipping containers. Available from rodent facilities.

- Taconic shipping containers <http://www.taconic.com/prepare-your-model/animal-care-products/>
- Non-spill water sources
  - Aqua-Jel - [www.perotech.com](http://www.perotech.com)
  - Hydro Gel - [www.pharmaserv.net](http://www.pharmaserv.net)
  - Napa Nectar - [www.leanderking.com](http://www.leanderking.com)
- Covers
  - Life Science Products [www.lspinc.com](http://www.lspinc.com)
  - EZ Covers - [www.euthanex.com](http://www.euthanex.com)

## **I. Reference**

- The International Air Transport Association (IATA) Live Animals Regulations serve as a worldwide standard for shipping animals, domestically or internationally. IATA copyrighted regulations are revised annually. <http://www.iata.org/ps/publications/lar.htm>

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