Guidelines for UMD Animal Transportation

A. General
• This policy applies to the shipment of rodents, bats, birds, ferrets, reptiles and amphibians. It does not apply to ungulates (animals with hooves) 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 is responsible for packing and transporting his/her animals.
• The University 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.

D. Movement of animals from the animal facility to a laboratory within the same building
• Animals may be transported in a standard holding cage, their home cage, polypropylene vented food container, commercial shipping container, commercial pet carrier or appropriate card board box (see Section H). 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 prior to transport to guard against flooding.
• Bedding is required if the animal 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.
• Species such as bats and birds may be hand-carried in a gloved hand. However, the animal must be placed in an appropriate holding cage immediately upon entering the lab.
• Consideration must be given to the route the animals will be moved. If the animals can be potentially seen by passer-bys, a cloth or paper cover or secondary container should 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.
• Transport boxes that are contaminated with biological, chemical, or radiological hazards should be disposed of in accordance with DES policy. Non-contaminated containers can be disposed of in the regular trash.

E. Moving animal between buildings on the UMD campus
• Animals may be transported in a standard holding cage, their home cage, polypropylene vented food container, commercial shipping container, commercial pet carrier or appropriate card board box (see Section H). If in doubt, the appropriate conveyance should be verified with the facility manager or veterinarian.
• Small carnivores such as ferrets can be transported in standard pet carriers.
• If the animal’s home cage is used, the water bottle should be removed prior to transport to guard against flooding. Bedding is required if the animal 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.
• If the animals can be potentially seen by passer-bys, a cloth or paper cover or secondary container should be used. Vented cardboard boxes are preferred for transporting animals in holding cages.
• Inclement weather and temperature extremes (above 85°F. or below 45°F.) should be considered when transporting animals.
• To decrease the possibility of escape, rodents transported with direct contact of 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 DES policy. Non-contaminated containers can be disposed of in the regular trash.

F. Delivery of animals to locations outside of UMD
• Animals may only be transported in appropriate commercial shipping containers or pet carrier. All animals require bedding. 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.
• For shipping animals other than rodents, reptiles, and amphibians to another state or country, a USDA Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service Certificate of Veterinary Inspection is required. The appropriate form must be signed by a USDA accredited veterinarian within 30 days of shipment and accompany the animals. Additional paperwork may be needed depending on the species and the State receiving the animals. An Animal Transfer Agreement may be needed when transferring government-owned animas to other research facilities. A Materials Transfer Agreement may also be required. Contact the University Veterinarian for assistance.

• 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 University Veterinarian.

• 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) should 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 DES 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/) 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.

• Minimum label requirements for all transport boxes should include the words “Live Animals” and an arrow indicating the up position.

• 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 CARF.
For outside continental United States, rigid filtered animal shipping boxes with viewing windows are required. Taconic Transit Containers
http://www.taconic.com/wmspage.cfm?parm1=725

• Non-spill water sources
  • Aqua-Jel - a reliable food-grade moisture source  www.perotech.com
  • Hydro Gel - a hydration system in a non-wetting gel form www.pharmaserv.net
  • Napa Nectar - water gel pack to provide water for laboratory animals in transit. www.leanderking.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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