

IACUC Animal Transport Guidelines

You must review the *IACUC Animal Transport Policy* which can be found at:

<https://www.iacuc2.pitt.edu/sop/restricted/Transport.pdf>

Background and Rationale:

This document is intended to provide specific and detailed descriptions of acceptable methods and routes of transport, compliant with the policy mentioned above. These guidelines are meant to assist researchers in writing acceptable IACUC protocols and securing the authorizations necessary for transporting research animals.

For the reasons outlined below, animal traffic in or out of the vivarium areas should be kept to a minimum. Therefore, removal of research animals from the vivarium is strongly discouraged, although sometimes unavoidable. Where possible, researchers should bring experimental equipment into the vivarium, rather than removing animals to outside use sites. Both situations require a strategy implementation meeting with the involved animal facility management.

- 1) Manipulating animals within dedicated facilities is preferred. However, the IACUC may grant permission to remove animals from the vivarium, assuming the need to do so is well justified in the IACUC animal use protocol, and the provisions of the above mentioned policy are met.
- 2) Limiting transport of animals out of dedicated animal facilities minimizes exposure to contamination. This assists in maintaining rodent SPF status and the general health of all species. Exposure of animal colonies to outside pathogens can result in disruptive and costly disease outbreaks within the program.
- 3) Vivarium containment also serves to protect the public from chemicals or microorganisms that might be used in the vivarium.
- 4) Additionally, restricting traffic out of the vivarium minimizes the risk of release of research animals.




As part of the IACUC approval process, primary transport caging/device, secondary containment procedures, and route must be described in detail. Guidance for each category may be found below.







Guidance for Containment During Animal Transport:

Animal transport containers must conform to following criteria:

- 1) Identification labeling must accompany the transport container. The minimum required information includes the PI name, protocol number, and emergency contact numbers.
- 2) The container must be escape proof, even if dropped.
- 3) The container must be opaque or covered to prevent recognition of research animals by the public.
- 4) The container must prevent the release of allergens like fur, dander, bedding and contain urine, feces, or other biological fluids.
- 5) A transport container with air filters must be used when rodents will be returned to the animal holding spaces. These boxes can be obtained at the designated holding facility.
- 6) The container must be thermally insulated to protect the animals from temperature extremes or rapid temperature changes, particularly if animals are to be transported out of doors.
- 7) The container must be adequately ventilated to avoid oxygen depletion or CO₂ accumulation.
- 8) The container must be disposable or sanitizable.
- 9) For biosecurity of the vivaria, primary caging systems are not to be removed or used for transport, unless justified and approved by the animal facility.
- 10) Animals exposed to biological, chemical, or radiological agents REQUIRE a risk analysis before transport with EHS and DLAR. The outermost transport receptacle must be labeled with applicable hazard stickers when such hazards are present.

The following transport mechanisms are recommended:

SPECIES	Primary Container	Secondary Container	Comments
Rodents	Disposable cardboard containers covered with a hair bonnet. 	Ice chest cooler or plastic box. 	
	Recycled, re-sterilized rodent shipping crate from Taconic or Jax. Available from DLAR. 	No secondary container required unless exposure to temperature extremes.	

	DO NOT REMOVE MICORISOLATOR CAGES FROM THE VIVARIUM		
			
Fish	<p>Plastic bag, sealed, with 1/3 air space or container with a leak proof lid.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Fish Transport Bags</p>	Use an ice chest and not Styrofoam because Styrofoam cannot be sanitized	
Frogs	<p>Opaque plastic container with secure leak proof lid.</p> 	No secondary container required unless exposure to temperature extremes. Cover with sheet or drape if non-opaque carrier is used	
Cats	<p>Pet Carrier</p> 	Covered with sheet or drape	Must be sedated to avoid vocalization if transported in public corridors
Rabbits	<p>Pet Carrier</p>	Covered with sheet or drape.	
Dogs	<p>Pet carrier or specially designed rolling transport cage.</p>	<p>Covered with sheet or drape. Metabolic pan in place</p> 	Must be sedated to avoid vocalization if transported in public corridors.
Ferrets	<p>Pet Carrier</p> 	Covered with a sheet or drape.	
Nonhuman	<p>Jump Box</p>	Placed on cart and covered with a	Variations are acceptable if

<p>Primates</p> <p>ABSL2 without transport through public areas.</p>		<p>sheet or drape.</p>	<p>approved in IACUC protocol. Examples include: filter covered chairs, filtered incubators, or plastic containers with lids vented with air holes and lined with filter material..</p>
<p>Nonhuman Primates</p> <p>ABSL3 or transport of ABSL2 nonhuman primates through public spaces.</p>	<p>Jump Box</p> 	<p>HEPA filtered transport units.</p> 	<p>DLAR has several HEPA carts of different sizes available for use.</p>
<p>Pigs</p>	<p>Species specific designed rolling transport cage.</p> 	<p>Covered with sheet or drape. Metabolic pan in place</p> 	
<p>Non-listed species</p>	<p>Consult with DLAR for instructions. Also requires EH&S and IACUC approval.</p>		

Routes:

The following criteria should be considered when choosing a route:

- The starting point and type of destination to which animals are transported
- The type of space through which animals are transported
- Whether an animal will be returned to the vivarium
- The required door access permissions, elevator access, etc.

Common Routes:

- 1) *Transport from vivarium to a research laboratory for a terminal procedure.*
- 2) *Transport from vivarium and then returned to the vivarium.*

Special practices and procedures are required when returning rodents to the vivarium to protect rodent biosecurity
<http://www.iacuc2.pitt.edu/sop/restricted/RodentBiosecurity.pdf> Rodents are returned to special housing rather than general housing, so that any pathogen picked up in a laboratory or service corridors during transport will not cause a costly disease outbreak within the colony. Animals must be protected during transport from potential exposure during transport by using closed, filtered cages, and by cleaning the animal handling area of the laboratory before and after handling each group of rodents.

- 3) *Transport to another vivarium to use stationary equipment, for example imaging equipment permanently located within that facility.* Please be aware that this option is limited to vivaria under management of the University of Pittsburgh. Movement to a vivarium outside of University-managed space constitutes an export to another institution which requires contacting the Import/Export specialist (import@pitt.edu).
- 4) *Transport to equipment outside of the vivaria, but within research space, used for animals from multiple facilities and/or human research subjects, but not human hospital patients.* Examples include research MRI, CT, PET and irradiators.
- 5) *Transport to clinical equipment within hospital space and used by human patients or transport through clinical hospital spaces.* Examples include clinical MRI, CT, LINAC and PET. The approval process entails completing the appropriate sections on the ARO protocol and the accompanying forms. Questions on the approval process can be directed to biosafe@ehs.pitt.edu
- 6) *Transport from a quarantine location to the animals' final housing location.*
- 7) *Transport to ABSL2 or ABSL3 space, or between biocontainment facilities.*

Transportation Mechanism Guidelines:

[Transport via motor vehicle](#)

[Transport via foot](#)

Key transport contact information

Transport via motor vehicle

Motor vehicles are required to move animals between vivaria, due to the distance between buildings.

- 1) A climate-controlled DLAR vehicle is the preferred option for moving animals between buildings. To schedule the transport, a DLAR “Animal Transfer Form can be found on the DLAR web site (www.dlar.pitt.edu). Complete the DLAR Animal Transfer Request Form and send electronically to the DLAR Regulatory Coordinator at dlarxfer@pitt.edu. Please call 412-648-8967 if you have any questions.
- 2) The transport of animals using a personal vehicle is discouraged. This method will only be approved by the IACUC if DLAR vehicles are not available. Transportation options should be discussed with DLAR prior to submitting a protocol.

Transport by foot between buildings

- 1) Moving animals between buildings by foot is permitted when approved in the protocol. Most buildings can be reached by foot with minimal outdoor exposure. Bridges connect several buildings, allowing indoor only foot traffic. Note that some bridges may not be used for animal transport during normal business hours, and most require additional permission for access. Other buildings may be reached with only minimal outdoor exposure. The following conditions must be met:
 - a. Animals must be protected from temperature extremes and be concealed from the public. Ice chests, coolers (Igloo or Coleman), vinyl soft-sided insulated bags with handles or wheels are ideal for this purpose, because they provide concealment, containment, and thermal and escape protection. Care must be taken to ensure adequate air exchange to avoid suffocation. Styrofoam chests or coolers are not sanitizable and must not be used as secondary transport containers.
 - b. Additional permissions are required to use the Victoria Hall Bridges during business hours (BST3 to BST/EEI complex on the Oakland campus), and to go to any UPMC Hospital-managed clinical spaces, including the Presbyterian Hospital (PUH) Bridge, Montefiore Hospital(MUH) Bridge.

Key transport contact information

Service Required	Contact Information	
To schedule DLAR truck for transport of animals	Manager of Facilities & Transport, DLAR	Lib8@pitt.edu
Access to PET Center B Wing Elevator	James Ruskiewicz, Research Coordinator, Radiology	RuskiewiczJA@upmc.edu
SBST Freight Elevator Access	DLAR	dlarsecu@pitt.edu
Gastroenterology Corridor Access 5 th floor Scaife	Manager of Facilities & Transport, DLAR	Lib8@pitt.edu

EBST Elevator Card Access	DLAR	dlarsecu@pitt.edu
Security portal between SBST/Scaife Bridge	DLAR	dlarsecu@pitt.edu
Victoria Hall corridors	Manager of Facilities & Transport, DLAR	Lib8@pitt.edu
Cell Biology Card Access 3 rd floor research corridor and freight elevator	Manager of Facilities & Transport, DLAR	Lib8@pitt.edu

Location	Restrictions	
Victoria Hall	After hours only without specific IACUC approval	
SBST conference areas and lobby	After hours only without specific IACUC approval	
MUH Bridge	After hours only without specific IACUC approval	

Appendix
Route Descriptions

Note: These routes can be copy and pasted into your ARO protocol. For assistance understanding these routes, contact lib8@pitt.edu .

SBST Animal Facilities (AF) Transport Routes:

1. **SBST Animal Facility to the BST Towers (labs):** Enter the freight elevators down to the loading dock (2nd floor). Continue on to the North freight elevators to the designated floor.
2. **SBST Animal Facility to Scaife Hall:** Enter the freight elevators down to the loading dock (2nd floor). Continue on to the North freight elevators to Scaife Bridge.

- a) Rodents move through the public corridor under appropriate containment to the Scaife freight elevator and are transported to the designated floor.
 - b) All other species are transported through the research corridor after receiving the ***appropriate authorized accesses.***
3. **SBST Animal Facility to Salk Hall:** Enter the freight elevators down to the loading dock (2nd floor). Exit the loading dock on foot; walk up the hill and across the street to Salk Hall. From Salk Hall, proceed to the research area (located in the rear of the building), continue on to the elevator and to the designated floor and IACUC approved research lab.
 4. **SBST Animal Facility to MUH:** Enter the SBST freight elevators to SBST 3rd floor; transport over the walkway bridge to MUH. Continue on to the MUH freight elevators to the designated floor and onto the IACUC approved research lab.
 5. **SBST Animal Facility to 8th Floor EEI:** Enter the SBST freight elevator to SBST AF 8th floor. Use the rear entrance door to the EEI elevators and continue to the IACUC approved research lab. ***Elevator access lock out*** must be authorized by Presbyterian Hospital Security at 412-647-3191.

EBST Animal Facilities (AF) Transport Routes:

1. **EBST Animal Facility to labs within EBST IACUC approved research laboratories:** Enter the EBST freight elevators to the appropriate IACUC approved research lab(s).
2. **EBST Animal Facility to Salk hall:** Enter the EBST elevators to the loading dock (2nd floor); exit elevator and loading dock on foot and walk up the hill and across the street to Salk Hall. From Salk Hall, proceed to the research area (located in the rear of the building), continue onto the elevator and to the designated floor and IACUC approved research lab.
3. **EBST Animal Facility to Scaife Hall:** Enter the EBST elevators to the loading dock (2nd floor). Continue on to the North freight elevators to Scaife Bridge.
 - a) Rodents move through the public corridor under appropriate containment to the freight elevator and unto the designated floor.
 - b) All other species are transported through the research corridor after receiving the ***appropriate authorized accesses.***
4. **EBST Animal Facility to MUH:** Enter the EBST freight elevator and proceed to the 1st floor lobby; exit the building and walk across to the MUH. Continue on to the MUH freight elevators to the designated floor and to the IACUC approved research lab.

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BST3 Animal Facility (AF) Transport Route(s):

1. **BST3 Animal Facility to BST3 IACUC approved research lab(s):** Enter the BST3 freight elevators to designated floors and onward to approved IACUC research lab.
2. **BST3 Animal Facility to BST Towers (labs):** Enter the BST3 freight elevators (6th floor); proceed over the bridge to the SBST lobby and take the BST freight elevators. Continue on from the lobby to the designated floor and to the IACUC approved research lab floor.