INTRODUCTION

This Animal Transportation SOP applies to the various animal facilities on and off Texas Tech campus.

A. General

1. All methods of transporting laboratory animals must provide for the health and welfare of the animals.

2. Transportation of animals shall be done in a direct and timely manner, avoiding public areas and areas primarily used by TTU employees and students.

3. Animals shall not be transported with any other animal, substance or device that may be expected to be injurious to their health or welfare.

4. Care shall be exercised in handling enclosures used to transport live animals. They shall not be tossed, dropped, needlessly tilted, stacked in a manner which may reasonably be expected to result in their falling, or handled in any manner which may cause physical trauma or stress to the animals.

5. Temperature extremes are to be avoided when animals are transported and special precautions or postponements are required when temperatures are at such extremes that may jeopardize the welfare of the animals.

6. The Animal Welfare Regulations (AWR) shall be followed in transporting regulated laboratory animals in intra or interstate commerce (between farms). However, the AWR specific enclosure standards are not applicable for hand carrying rodents in containers between buildings on the TTU campus.

7. Transportation of animals must comply with applicable state and local laws and regulations.

8. It is essential that primary enclosures be used in the transportation of laboratory animals, and that they be escape proof, properly labeled, provide adequate ventilation, can be sanitized or disposed of and prevent the spread of pathogenic microorganisms, chemicals or radioactive materials where indicated. The enclosures should be opaque or shielded in
such a way as to be non-stressful to the animals.

9. Cargo areas used in the transportation of animals shall be cleaned and decontaminated as necessary to prevent contamination of future animal deliveries.

10. Animal Care Services (ACS) provides transportation for laboratory animals with an environmentally controlled and sanitizable vehicle.

11. The Attending or Clinical Veterinarian may develop specific procedures for the transportation, receipt and shipment of animals if they have requirements that differ from these guidelines. The responsibility for development and approval of these specific procedures lies with the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

12. The Veterinarian, ACS Manager or other ACS staff as designated by the IACUC, is responsible for oversight of these animal transportation guidelines, can grant exceptions when it is considered in the best interest of the animal(s), and is the contact person for information concerning the transportation, receipt and shipment of animals. Conflicts regarding animal transportation issues will be resolved by the IACUC.

B. Movement of animals within a TTU building

1. Occupants of the building should be protected from allergens of animal origin, microorganisms, chemicals, radioactive materials and escaped animals.

2. Investigators may transport animals to their laboratory as described in their approved protocol.

3. Transportation must be done in appropriate enclosures according to species.

4. During transportation, animals should not be visible to the public. This may be done by placing a towel, drape, etc., over the cage, or by placing the animal(s) in non-transparent cages with adequate ventilation.

C. Moving animals between buildings on the TTU campuses

Proper containment of animals transferred between buildings is essential. An environmentally controlled and sanitizable vehicle must be used for the movement of rodents, birds or reptiles or other small animals. Transporting animals by hand carrying them should be limited to travel in a direct and timely manner between buildings with the animals in escape proof enclosures and when all the general (Item A) preceding requirements are met.

D. Moving Livestock
Livestock such as cattle, swine, sheep and horses, are transported in designated livestock trailers. Care is taken to minimize overcrowding, stress or excitation of animals when being shipped.

E. **Delivery of animals to locations outside Texas**

1. **Health certificate** - For non-rodent animals being shipped from Texas to another state or country, a United States Department of Agriculture/Animal Plant Health Inspection Service certificate of veterinary inspection is required. The species appropriate form (i.e. interstate vs. international) must be signed by a USDA accredited veterinarian within 30 days of shipment and accompany the animals. Wild caught animals being shipped from Texas must have the appropriate forms accompany the animals.

2. Air shipments of laboratory animals are made by booking flights on commercial airlines and delivering animals to the local airport in the appropriate vehicle prior to the flights. Arrangements must be made by the consignor to have the animals picked up by the consignee at the airport of destination.

3. The use of an airfreight company for door-to-door delivery of mice and rats only, can be arranged. This means can be used only when temperature extremes will not affect the animals, because the company may not have access to environmentally controlled vehicles or holding areas.

4. Any other arrangements that are made for transporting animals outside of the TTU campus must meet requirements of the AWR and be approved by the IACUC.

F. **Transporting live or dead animals containing radioactive isotopes**

1. Investigators planning to transport live animals containing radioactive materials from one location to another should contact the TTU Radiation Safety Department for specific guidance.

2. A radiation safety protocol is required for the use of any amount of radio-active material in animals. Special transportation requirements must be addressed in such protocols.

3. Warning labels are required on enclosures used to transport live or dead animals that have been exposed to radioactive hazards. The specific hazard must be identified.

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

1. The transportation of animals that are to be dosed at one location and moved to another needs to be particularly evaluated by the IACUC to assure that proper containment is used to minimize occupational exposure to persons involved with the move, and to minimize
environmental contamination. All employees involved must be enrolled in the Occupational Health and Safety program.

2. Small laboratory animals that have been exposed to human pathogens or toxic/carcinogenic substances and are actively shedding the hazardous material must be transported in closed systems. Transportation needs for larger animals so exposed will have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the veterinarian in consultation with the Occupational Health and Safety Specialist.

3. Warning labels are required on enclosures used to transport live or dead animals that have been exposed to chemical or biological hazards. The specific hazard must be identified.

4. Carcasses of contaminated animals must be handled according to the guidelines of the Environmental branch of TTU Safety Services Department for handling medical pathological waste or for disposal as chemical waste. Contaminated animal carcasses that are being transported for pathological examination also need to be placed in double plastic bags (primary barrier) then into a cardboard box (secondary barrier) and then into an ice chest with freezer packs. The carcasses must be accompanied by a detailed history of the type and amount of hazardous material.