IACUC Policy 21: Satellite Animal Facilities

Policy Purpose: The intent of this policy is to describe the approval process, management and follow-up procedures for all facilities not part of the TTUIACUC-approved, dedicated animal facilities.

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1. Definitions

**Dedicated Animal Facility:** an IACUC-approved animal facility designed specifically for animals, managed by dedicated staff. The use of dedicated facilities is highly recommended. Dedicated staff is defined as staff whose job description involves daily animal care and they are appropriately trained with the species in which they are caring for.

Examples of dedicated animal housing facilities include:

- ACS-managed vivariums
- Coop Fisheries
- New Deal Farm
- Texas Tech Equestrian Center
- Tech Therapeutic Riding Center
- Erskine Quail (Quail Tech)
- The Institute for Environmental and Human Health (TIEHH)

**Satellite Animal Facility:** an IACUC-approved animal facility maintained primarily by an investigator, and outside of TTU dedicated facilities, in which animals are housed for greater than 12 hours.

**Example of satellite facility**

- Littlefield Deer Facility

As defined by Federal law, a Satellite Animal Facility is any area holding animals outside the Texas Tech University dedicated facilities within the Animal Care and Use Program. This
Involves USDA covered animals that are housed for more than 12 hours, and all other animals that are housed for more than 24 hours. Any animal holding or housing area that is not part of the TTU Animal Care and use Program is designated as a satellite facility. Federal guidance states that:

“Animals should be housed in facilities dedicated to or assigned for that purpose, not in laboratories merely for convenience. If animals must be maintained in a laboratory to satisfy the scientific aims of a protocol, that space should be appropriate to house and care for the animals and its use limited to the period during which it is required.” (Guide 2011)

The Animal Welfare Act Regulations defines study area (“satellite”) as “any building room, area, enclosure, or other containment outside of a [main] facility or centrally designated or managed area in which animals are housed for more than 12 hours.” (AWAR § 1.1 Definitions)

The authority and oversight of these facilities rests with the institution through the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator (PI) to ensure that all applicable federal, state and University regulations and guidelines for care and use of the animals are carried out, seven days a week, and 24 hours per day. It is also the PI’s responsibility to ensure that all personnel having exposure to the animals while in the laboratory are included in the Occupational Health Program. It is the responsibility of the PI to assure that all laboratory personnel involved in handling animals are appropriately trained in animal care and use.

Satellite Animal Facilities must follow all applicable federal regulations, the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, the Animal Welfare Act when applicable to USDA regulated animals, the Guide for the Care and Use of Agriculture Animals, and all TTU policies, SOP’s and guidelines.

2. Application

The IACUC highly recommends the use of dedicated animal facilities within the Animal Care and Use Program. Centralized, dedicated animal facilities allow for enhanced communication at all levels, and consistent and high quality animal care. Maintaining animals in areas outside of currently approved, dedicated animal facilities requires significant additional resources from numerous sources, as each animal facility must be maintained in accordance with accreditation standards, oversight agency requirements and local policy.

Prior to housing animals in a satellite facility, connected with TTU, the facility must be inspected and approved by the IACUC. Cost and convenience cannot be primary considerations for proposing animal care and use in an unapproved facility. Prior to any
IACUC consideration of housing or procedures outside of the IACUC-approved areas, the PI should contact both the Attending Veterinarian and the IACUC office early in the planning process to discuss available options.

The required steps for implementation of a Satellite Animal Facility at TTU are:

1. IACUC approval of scientific justification for a Satellite Animal Facility.
2. IACUC, ACS and EH&S approval of:
   a. Space assignment
   b. Facility Plan
   c. Operational Plan
3. Facility construction/modification/renovation
4. Final On-Site Inspection—ACS, IACUC, EH&S, etc.
5. Required documentation should be available for review upon request:
   a. HVAC validation,
   b. availability of emergency power supply,
   c. light control,
   d. temperature/humidity control,
   e. SOPs, etc.
6. Keys/access provided by PI. The IACUC and ACS Veterinary Staff must have access at all times.
7. Security. The PI is responsible for maintaining and ensuring that the facility is secured at all times. This includes restricted access and animal escape.

3. **Approval**
   Animals may not be housed in the satellite housing space until the written approval is received for the specific housing request. The IACUC subcommittee will make a recommendation after inspection, and then the full committee may decide to approve the site, may require additional modifications, or may disapprove the satellite housing facility. The PI will be notified promptly of any decision in writing.

4. **General Management**
   Required at all satellite facilities:
   1. Satellite housing areas must be maintained as a main animal facility would be maintained.
      a. Any deficiencies must be addressed by the PI, Department, or College prior to approval.
      b. An approved satellite facility must continue to meet these criteria or be removed from the ACUP Program Description.
      c. Reasonable emergency and contingency plans must be developed in the event of unexpected circumstances that jeopardize animal welfare (e.g. failure of HVAC system to maintain appropriate environmental conditions).
   2. The satellite facility must be overseen by a scientist trained and experienced in the proper care, handling, and use of the species being maintained or studied.
3. **One PI must be designated the “responsible party” for the entire room area or facility.**
   a. This individual will be the main contact for all facility-related issues.
   b. This individual will be responsible for notifying the IACUC and ACS staff’s when animals will be housed at the facilities.

4. **Veterinary Care**
   a. Reporting “sick animals” must be an ongoing and timely communication with the ACS veterinary staff.
   b. It is the responsibility of the PI to make arrangements for emergency veterinary care for facilities that are more than 60 minutes from the TTU Main Campus.

5. All rooms or areas must have appropriate daily and emergency management procedures in place.

6. All satellite facilities must either:
   a. Follow established TTU IACUC approved SOPs, as written, or
   b. Maintain a library of LOPs to describe the area’s husbandry practices.
   c. All SOPs/LOPs must be kept current and on file with the TTU IACUC office.

**5. Post Approval Requirements**

Regular ACS-Veterinary Staff, Post Approval Monitoring (PAM) staff and semi-annual IACUC Inspections will be required of each permanent Satellite Animal Facility when animals are being housed. Video or photographic media may be used to satisfy inspection requirements at satellite facilities only when no animals are present. Failure to meet these responsibilities will result in the loss of Satellite Animal Facility status.