Title: Pre-Exposure Vaccinations
Policy Number: 023
Policy Intent: The intent of this policy is to outline the requirements for all individuals handling animals.

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1. Purpose
   A. To ensure that all university personnel (PIs, graduate, and undergraduate students) handling animals are sufficiently vaccinated before taking part in the activities outlined in an IACUC approved protocol.

2. Background
   A. Many zoonotic diseases may be transmitted by direct contact with animals. When handling these animals, often the most effective means of prevention of these infectious diseases is pre-exposure vaccination followed by a demonstration of an effective immune response. Pre-exposure vaccination, while not 100% effective, does simplify management of post-exposure treatment and provides protection when post-exposure treatment might be delayed. Pre-exposure vaccination is provided through the Occupational Health Program by contacting the Department of Environmental Health and Safety.

3. Policy
   A. Requirement for Tetanus/diphtheria Vaccination
      1) The Tetanus/diphtheria (Td) vaccine/titer is required for all animal handlers.
   B. Pre-Exposure
      1) You must have a current Tetanus/diphtheria (Td) vaccination or booster (one that can be documented within the last 10 years).
   C. Post Exposure
      1) It is recommended that you receive a Td booster if you experience a significant injury, and your vaccination was administered more than 5 years previous.

D. Requirement for Rabies Vaccination
   E. Pre-Exposure
      1) All university employees and students on an approved TTU IACUC protocol who handle, trap and/or obtain samples from live mammal species known to be zoonotic carriers of rabies (bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes, and unvaccinated dogs and cats), which do not have a documented rabies vaccine must utilize pre-exposure rabies vaccination available through the Occupational Health Program.
Pre-exposure vaccination is not required if individuals have documented protective antibody titers. Costs for this vaccination will be provided by the Occupational Health Program. Only individuals with a documented antibody titer within the last two years will be vaccinated under this guideline. Vaccinations for rabies and titer requirements will follow the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control - Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

2) Volunteers and students not on an approved protocol who handle, trap and/or obtain samples from live mammal species known to be zoonotic carriers of rabies and cannot physically mitigate exposure to animal bites using personal protective equipment must provide proof of effective immunologic titer at their own cost. Vaccinations for rabies and titer requirements will follow the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control - Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

F. Post-Exposure

1) Any employee or student that receives a bite or scratch from animals described in this document should first clean the wound with soap and water and then report the incident to their supervisor and seek out medical attention which may include post-exposure prophylaxis. The university employee or student must also report the incident to the Office of Risk Management.

4. Requirement for Foreign Travel

A. All employees and students who travel to foreign countries for the purposes of collecting, trapping, and/or obtaining samples from live animals should seek information regarding pre-travel immunizations and/or chemoprophylaxis to prevent endemic diseases. These employees are encouraged to discuss their health status and planned foreign travel with an occupational health professional. This will include pre-exposure rabies immunization if work is to be conducted with mammals known to be zoonotic carriers of the disease in areas with endemic disease.

5. Recommendations for Influenza Vaccination

A. The seasonal influenza vaccine is recommended for personnel working with animals experimentally exposed to influenza and those working in close contact with species with high zoonotic and/or reverse zoonotic potential (i.e., ferrets, pigs, some seal species and poultry).

6. Requirements for Other Prophylaxis

A. Other vaccinations may be required by the researcher as needed for individual projects when warranted by the risk assessment.

7. References and Resources

- https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/rabies.html
- https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7118a2.htm
- https://www.depts.ttu.edu/ehs/about/incident-reporting.php