

University at Buffalo Institutional Animal Care and Use Program Policy on “Trained Trainers” for Research Labs Conducting Surgeries

Purpose

This policy provides standards to ensure that all research labs have designated, well-trained staff to provide continued, **in-lab training for research personnel** conducting **surgical procedures** on research animals. This policy has been developed to ensure compliance with the *Guide for the Care and Use of Animals*, 8th Edition, the Animal Welfare Act and Regulations, PHS Policy and AAALAC International’s Rules of Accreditation. This policy complements an existing policy on IACUC Training Requirements for Research Personnel.

Animal Welfare Act and Regulations, 9 CFR Part 2, Subpart, §2.32, Personnel Qualifications: “It shall be the responsibility of the research facility to ensure that all scientists, research technicians, animal technicians, and other personnel involved in animal care, treatment, and use are qualified to perform their duties. This responsibility shall be fulfilled in part through the provision of training and instruction to those personnel.”

Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, Eighth Edition, pp. 115-116: “**Researchers conducting surgical procedures must have appropriate training** to ensure that good surgical technique is practiced—that is, asepsis, gentle tissue handling, minimal dissection of tissue, appropriate use of instruments, effective hemostasis, and correct use of suture materials and patterns. Training may have to be tailored to accommodate the wide range of educational backgrounds frequently encountered in research settings. For example, persons trained in human surgery may need training in interspecies variations in anatomy, physiology, the effects of anesthetic and analgesic drugs, and/or postoperative care requirements. Technical staff performing rodent surgery may have had little formal training in surgical techniques and asepsis and may require general surgical training as well as training for the specific techniques they are expected to perform. Training guidelines for research surgery commensurate with an individual’s background are available to assist institutions in developing appropriate training programs. **The IACUC, together with the AV, is responsible for determining that personnel performing surgical procedures are appropriately qualified and trained in the procedures.**”

PHS Policy, U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training #VIII: “Investigators and other personnel shall be appropriately qualified and experienced for conducting procedures on living animals. Adequate arrangements shall be made for their in-service training, including the proper and humane care and use of laboratory animals.”

Effective Date: 9/30/2025
Next Review Date: 6/2028
First Approved: 6/16/2025
Revised: --

Definitions

- **Trained Trainer:** "Trained Trainer" (TT) refers to an individual who is qualified and authorized to provide training on the performance of specific procedures using research animals. This should be the Principal Investigator (PI) and/or one of the PI's fully trained and experienced designees who the PI has assessed to be proficient in one or more specific procedures.
- **Research Personnel:** Any undergraduate student, graduate student, post-doctoral student, laboratory employee (technician, lab manager) or Principal Investigator (PI) that performs (including assists with) any procedures on live vertebrate animals in accordance with an approved IACUC protocol.

Policy

1. The following types of procedures **require** PIs to name trained trainers that are qualified to provide training and oversight on these specific procedures within the lab. Training is in addition to all formal training that is required by the IACUC Training Requirements for Research Personnel (ex. CITI Training, UB Learns Training, Hands-On Training Labs taught within the LAF, In-Person Lectures taught within the LAF).
 - a. **ANY survival surgery procedure as defined by the IACUC**
 - b. **ANY non-survival surgery procedure as defined by the IACUC**
 - c. **ANY other procedure at the specific direction of the IACUC (i.e., procedures with unexpected adverse events or part of a non-compliance follow-up)**
2. Trained Trainers may be either PIs or their fully trained and experienced designees. Trained Trainers (one or more) must be on the approved protocol and should be specifically named for each procedure for which they are required.
3. Trained Trainers are responsible for documenting any in-lab training that occurs for any new or existing lab personnel. Documentation may be completed via digital or written records via any template that the PI has approved as long as it captures the following information:
 - a. Who has been trained (full name)
 - b. Who provided the training (the "Trained Trainer")
 - c. Time spent training
 - d. Exact procedures trained on
 - e. How the training was validated (e.g., test, visual, verbal).
4. All Trained Trainers must schedule a ~~one~~ Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM) Visit with the IACUC's Post-Approval Monitoring Coordinator.

- a. Procedures should be observed (in real time). Procedures of a similar nature conducted within a protocol or multiple protocols under one PI may be covered in one PAM visit. (eg stereotactic surgery)
- b. Either the LAF's Attending Veterinarian or a Clinical Veterinarian must attend any visit involving an observed (real time) **survival** surgery. Veterinarians will help ensure Trained Trainers are adhering to good surgical techniques (asepsis, etc.) and offer feedback during these sessions to avoid protocol drift.
- c. The PAM Coordinator may attend alone if the visit involves ~~only mock~~ or non-survival surgeries.
- d. Trained Trainers should present documentation of ongoing in-lab training on the procedures observed during these PAM Visits.
- e. Trained Trainers should review relevant SOPs, IACUC Policies and IACUC Protocols in advance of the visit and attest to reviewing and understanding each. See the Trained Trainer Report for the list of documents.
- f. PAM Visits will be documented as per the IACUC's existing Post-Approval Monitoring Policy.
- g. A "Trained Trainer Report" will be started/printed by the PI/Trained Trainer and approved by the Veterinarian and/or PAM Coordinator after each session. Approved Trained Trainer Reports should be added to the last Supporting Document Section of the Click protocol via administrative amendment as soon as possible.

References:

1. National Research Council. 2011. Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th Edition. Washington (DC): The National Academies Press. pp. 115-116. [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition. National Academies Press \(nih.gov\)](#)
2. United States Department of Agriculture. 2023. Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations. [Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations \(usda.gov\)](#)
3. United States Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare. Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. [Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals Office](#)

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