

UNIVERSITY ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE

Policy on the Reporting of Animal Welfare and Compliance Concerns

Queen's University regards the use of animals in science as an integral component to our research intensive program. We are committed to conducting the highest-quality research and to providing animals with the best care. The use of animals in science is mandated by the guidelines and policies of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) and the Animals for Research Act, enforced by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). The University Animal Care Committee (UACC) conducts protocol reviews and facility inspections to ensure that animals are only used when necessary and under humane conditions in accordance with the relevant policies and guidelines. This policy outlines the responsibilities of all participants in the Animal Care & Use Program and provides guidance on the processes to be taken when animal welfare or compliance concerns are raised.

Responsibilities

All participants in the Animal Care & Use Program have a dual role:

- Collegiality between the different stakeholders (researchers, instructors, veterinarians, animal care staff, UACC members, managers, administrators, and anyone involved directly or indirectly)
- Accountability to the UACC, Queen's University, the CCAC, OMAFRA and the granting agencies

All participants have the responsibility to report concerns as a moral obligation.

If you see any circumstance that you feel may be in breach of animal welfare or compliance, please report your concerns anonymously via the online animal welfare and compliance concern reporting tool found on the [Animals in Science website](#), the following anonymous hotline (1-844-535-2988), or contact the UACC Chair (nicolc@queensu.ca; 613-533-6531), University Veterinarian (andrew.winterborn@queensu.ca; 613-533-3047) or the UACC Coordinator (uacc@queensu.ca, 613-533-6000 x 78805).

Any person reporting a concern is protected by the Queen's Safe Disclosure Reporting and Investigation Policy <https://www.queensu.ca/ombuds/contact-us/safe-disclosure>

Guidelines

The following points are to guide individuals when animal welfare and/or compliance concerns are raised:

- Animal welfare or compliance concerns can be submitted electronically via the online animal welfare and compliance concern reporting tool found on the [Animals in Science](#)

[website](#). These reports are received by the UACC Chair and the UACC Coordinator. Reports can also be submitted verbally through the anonymous hotline (1-844-535-2988). In all cases where no conflict of interest is present, the University Veterinarian will be informed. The UACC will investigate any concern that is received.

- Based on the information received, the UACC Chair and/or the University Veterinarian will conduct an investigation as appropriate. All incidents will be reported to the UACC. If identified, the complainant will be informed about the progress of the investigation and the final resolution.
- Communication will be professional and based on mutual respect and trust between individuals. Following the investigation if no satisfactory resolution is achieved for all parties, senior administration will be consulted. Response and reporting will be expedient to benefit both people and animals. While gathering facts, generalization, assumptions and associations will be avoided in order to maintain good communication and willingness to resolve the issue.
- In cases where the complaint involves animal distress, the University Veterinarian or delegate must clinically examine the animals before proceeding to an intervention (veterinary instruction can be given over the phone). The veterinarian will try to contact the researcher and/or emergency contact person prior to taking action as feasible.

Authority

- As per the UACC Terms of Reference, the University Veterinarian has the authority to relieve pain and distress in any animal and the UACC has the authority to terminate any procedure.
- The UACC has the authority to withdraw animal use protocol (AUP) approval until a satisfactory resolution is achieved.
- The Department Head or Dean may be consulted for resolution of unresolved issues.
- The Vice Principal (Research), or delegate, is the highest authority in the Animal Care and Use Program.

Appendix 1:

Animal Welfare and Compliance Report	
Date of Complaint:	Anonymous: Yes / No
Method of Communication: Email Phone Hard Copy Toll-Free Number Personal Communication	
<p>Compliance Concern: (If known, please include the species, protocol number and date of the event associated with the complaint).</p>	
Complaint Received By:	Date:

Revision History:

Date	New Version
09/12/2007	Policy Created and Approved
12/15/2011	Triennial Review; Revised to include reference to Quality Assurance Program and the targeted protocol review following an incident
11/19/2014	Triennial Review
04/26/2018	Triennial Review; Revised title and scope to include anonymous hotline/reporting tool and process for following up on concerns
04/22/2021	Triennial Review; Revised to include CCAC Major Animal Welfare Incidents (MAWI)
06/26/2024	Triennial Review; Revised to remove MAWI (now RAWI) and captured in standalone policy