

## TTUHSC El Paso

### LARC Policy

#### Visiting Scientist Policy and Authorization

These are the procedures and requirements for outside Scientists visiting the Laboratory Animal Resource Center (LARC) as part of a collaborative scientific effort, for educational purposes, or to develop an awareness of the importance of animal use in research.

#### Policy Statement

To ensure that TTUHSC El Paso's research enterprise is protected, that animal exposure to adventitious pathogens is minimized, that IACUC and LARC policies and procedures are followed, and that all parties are informed of the risks involved when entering an animal facility, visitors are prohibited to enter animal facilities unless prior written approval is given by the Institutional Veterinarian or his/her designee. Approvals will be given only for educational purposes or for collaborative research.

#### Definitions

- **Animal Facility:** Any area housing experimental animals of any species, including the TTUHSC El Paso-managed animal vivarium and IACUC-approved satellite housing areas in which animals are temporarily housed for more than 12 hours.
- **Escort:** A TTUHSC El Paso individual who has completed all required training and is authorized to access the area. This individual is required to accompany any and all visitors throughout the visit. The escort may be a member of the LARC staff, a Principal Investigator (PI), a senior laboratory member, or an IACUC member.
- **Visiting Scientist:** Personnel participating in research in TTUHSC research facilities must be listed on an approved IACUC protocol. The PI is responsible for assuring that all visiting scientists working in his/her laboratory are appropriately trained, supervised, enrolled in the occupational health program, and compliant with all IACUC policies and guidelines, including those outlined in this policy.
- **Visitor:**
  - An official from an external agency, which may include, but is not limited to the following: USDA, OLAW, AAALAC, DEA, DOD, VA, NIH, or a pharmaceutical company.
  - TTUHSC El Paso faculty, staff, graduate or professional students, or post-doctoral/clinical trainees who are NOT on an approved IACUC protocol.

TTUHSC El Paso faculty and staff, graduate or professional students, or post-doctoral/clinical trainees who ARE on an approved IACUC protocol are NOT considered visitors.

#### Procedure

TTUHSC El Paso is committed to ensuring that all aspects of a sound program of animal care extend to visitors of the animal housing facility. To this end, we require that visitors adhere to the following rules:

- The visitor must be listed on the PI's IACUC protocol.
- The visitor must provide proof of appropriate training (e.g., either CITI training or an approved substitute). This training should be attached to the IACUC protocol. Visitors who will handle animals must also have detailed in the IACUC protocol their experience handling animals, as well as education and experience with each procedure that he/she will perform, unless he/she is a student participating in a teaching protocol.

- All visitors must understand that possible exposure may occur to pathogens that are infectious to humans (i.e., zoonoses exposure). It is recommended that visitors are healthy prior to entry, with no signs of upper respiratory tract infections, influenza, or strep. Visitors should be enrolled in an occupational health program at their originating institution or have an active relationship with a physician.
- Visitors to LARC facilities will receive a visitor badge from the MSB1 front desk that must be worn during the entire time that they are in the vivarium and returned prior to departure.
- All visitors must understand that there are inherent risks in entering an animal facility, including animal bites, scratches, chemical exposures, allergic responses, and risk of injury from equipment.
- Visitor approval generally will not be given for time periods greater than two weeks.
- PIs should request access for their visitors to enter LARC-managed animal facilities by contacting the institutional veterinarian or his/her designee at least 48 hours prior to the planned vivarium visit. The PI is required to submit the last page of this document to the LARC for approval.
- Visitors are required to follow all facility rules including wearing personal protective equipment and adhering to appropriate traffic flow through the vivarium.
- Visitors are not permitted to take unauthorized pictures while in the facility.
- Failure to follow this policy will result in the visitor being immediately escorted out of the LARC vivarium or satellite facility and may result in the visitor being removed from TTUHSC El Paso property. Corrective actions may also be taken with the TTUHSC El Paso employee who escorted the visitor into the LARC vivarium, including revocation of facility access. The Institutional Veterinarian has the authority to make short-term decisions on the temporary revocation of access to the vivarium for TTUHSC El Paso employees who violate this policy. Long-term access decisions will be made through the IACUC and the Vice President for Research. Human Resources and the individual's supervisor will be involved in any disciplinary action of the employee.

### Visitor's Assurances

I acknowledge the following covenants are required before I will be authorized to visit or tour the TTUHSC El Paso animal housing facility:

1. **Scientist Visitor Policy:** I have read and will adhere to the Scientist Visitor Policy.
2. **Physical Security of Facilities and Animals:** I will not take any pictures of the animals or animal facilities while touring the facility.
3. **Confidentiality:** I recognize that I may come into contact with proprietary information of TTUHSC El Paso or third-party sponsors, and that I am bound to maintain this information in confidence and in perpetuity, unless granted authority to release the information by TTUHSC El Paso, the TTUHSC El Paso IACUC, or a third-party sponsor, as otherwise may be required by a court of competent jurisdiction.
4. **Personal Danger and Indemnification of TTUHSC El Paso:** I acknowledge that there are certain inherent dangers in touring animal facilities and indemnify and hold harmless TTUHSC El Paso, its Board of Regents and employees from any harm, howsoever caused, that may accrue to me resulting from my visit to the animal housing facility.
5. **Obligation to Report Concerns:** If I observe any practices or circumstances that I believe represent less than the highest standard of ethical care and treatment of animals, I will report such to the TTUHSC El Paso IACUC. The IACUC will consider the concerns and may call upon me to present additional details in writing or in person to the IACUC but will not be obligated to report back to me the outcome of its deliberations.
6. **Opposition to Animal Use:** To the extent I am opposed to the use of animals in research and/or training purposes, I recognize that TTUHSC El Paso's efforts to include visitors external to the IACUC and appropriate facility's management is intended to raise awareness and confidence in our animal care and use program. Note: You must acknowledge your opposition to animal use in research and training below, but this does not in and of itself preclude you from touring the facility.

Name of Visitor:	
Date of Visit:	
Vivarium Sponsor:	
Purpose of Visit	

*By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understand and accept the covenants above and recognize my responsibilities and obligations in visiting the TTUHSC El Paso animal housing facility.*

I am NOT opposed to animal use in research and/or training.

I AM opposed to animal use in research and/or training.

<b>Visitor's Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Visitor's Name (Please Print)</b>			
<b>Reviewed and Approved by:</b>			
<b>Institutional Veterinarian or his/her Designee</b>		<b>Date:</b>	