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RECINTO DE CIENCIAS MÉDICAS • DECANATO DE ADMINISTRACIÓN  
DEANSHIP OF ADMINISTRATION • MEDICAL SCIENCES CAMPUS




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2026 MAR 24 P 5:00

  
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Directora  
Oficina de Calidad Ambiental, Salud y Seguridad Ocupacional

**APROBACIÓN Y CERTIFICACIÓN DE LA POLÍTICA PARA EL MANEJO DE ANIMALES DE INVESTIGACIÓN EN EL RCM**



Estimada Dra. Quiñones Feliciano:

Reciba un cordial saludo. Mediante la presente, someto para su consideración, aprobación y firma la política revisada del Animal Exposure Surveillance Program (AESP) del Recinto de Ciencias Médicas (RCM), así como los documentos complementarios que la acompañan.

Esta política es obligatoria según los estándares regulatorios que aplican al personal que maneja, trabaja o se encuentra en proximidad a animales de investigación, incluyendo:

- Los requisitos establecidos por *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (2011).
- La *Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*.
- Las directrices de acreditación de AAALAC.
- Las normas internas del RCM para la vigilancia de salud ocupacional y seguridad en el manejo de animales de investigación.

La política revisada formaliza los procedimientos relacionados con:

- Inscripción obligatoria en el Programa de Vigilancia por Exposición a Animales (AESP).
- Evaluación médica basal mediante el *Medical Health Screening Questionnaire (MHS)*.
- Evaluación anual mediante el *Follow-Up Health History Form (FUHH)*.
- Proceso de emisión de *Medical Clearance* por la Clínica de Salud Ocupacional (OHC) o Servicios Médicos de Estudiantes (SMS).
- Responsabilidades de investigadores, técnicos de animales, estudiantes y personal que trabaja cerca de animales de laboratorio.



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- Integración del AESP como requisito para aprobación y renovación de protocolos IACUC.

La revisión de 2026 actualiza el documento previo (publicado en 2013 y revisado por última vez en 2024), fortaleciendo el cumplimiento institucional, la protección del personal y la trazabilidad requerida para auditorías internas y externas.

Agradeceré su firma en la hoja de certificación incluida en la política para proceder con:

1. Su implantación formal en todas las unidades con actividad de investigación animal.
2. La comunicación oficial a investigadores, IACUC, OHC/SMS, Oficina de Calidad Ambiental y Seguridad Ocupacional, y personal de apoyo.
3. La incorporación del documento en los repositorios oficiales del RCM.

Quedo a su disposición para discutir cualquier detalle o presentar un resumen ejecutivo si lo estima necesario.



## **ANIMAL EXPOSURE SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM POLICY**

### **I. Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of the Animal Exposure Surveillance Program (AESP) is to protect all personnel who handle or have contact with laboratory animals or persons who work near laboratory animals (not in direct contact with animals) in the Medical Sciences Campus (MSC). This Program is **MANDATORY**.

The policy for the AESP applies to the following:

- Principal Investigators on Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) protocols.
- Personnel handling animals listed on IACUC protocols.
- Animal Care Staff (animal care technicians, veterinarians, veterinary technicians and veterinary technologist).
- Students using and caring for animals.
- Personnel working near laboratory animals with no direct contact with animals.
- Maintenance personnel.
- All IACUC members.

### **II. Background**

The requirements for an occupational health program for personnel working with laboratory animals are found in a variety of sources such as The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals 2011 (The Guide) and the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS Policy).

The PHS Policy (IV, A, 1, f) requires a "health program for personnel who work in laboratory animal facilities or have frequent contact with animals." The same PHS Policy (IV, A, 1) requires institutions receiving PHS financial support to use The Guide in developing its various animal care and use programs.

The Guide itself (pp.17- 23) discusses many aspects of an occupational health and safety program. Our accreditation agency (AAALAC) also uses the Guide as a basis for its review of our program of animal care and use, including our occupational health and safety program. Other appropriate documents (e.g., those of OSHA) also apply to aspects of the animal care and use program.

### **III. Requirements and Instruction**

#### **A. Enrolment in AESP (Animal Exposure Surveillance Program)**

An individual's requirements for participation in the institutions' Animal Exposure Surveillance Program will depend on the nature of the person's relationship with the MSC (i.e., employee or visitor), the research activity and/or nature or frequency of the animal contact or exposure, animal species involved, and associated risks for workers and animals.

All MSC employees and students, that work with or around research animals, must participate in a baseline health screening procedure by completing the following:

#### [Risk Assessment Information and Medical Health Questionnaire](#)

Employees must submit this form to the MSC's Occupational Health Clinic (OHC) and the students must submit it to the Students Medical Services (SMS). The MHS questionnaire is reviewed by the OHC or SMS to determine if any risk based medical surveillance, screening, or prevention measures (i.g. vaccines or personal protection equipment) are needed in order to reduce animal related health risks. The OHC or the SMS will issue a Medical Health Screening and Surveillance Form, which is a written approval that the individual may work with laboratory animals, based on the evaluation of the risk assessment and medical health questionnaire. Restrictions may apply and if necessary, the SMS Health Physician may refer to the OHC, participant cases that require further preventive measures related to occupational medicine.

All individuals covered by this policy are required to provide all health information requested in the MHS Questionnaire. The medical information collected is for the protection of the employee, their co-workers and the students. The Occupational Health Clinic (OHC) and the Students Medical Services (SMS) treats this information as confidential

and abides by the University policy, which follows HIPAA guidelines. Health and medical information cannot be distributed or shared with any third party without the written and informed formal consent of the individual.

### B. Annual Follow-Up Health Screening

Annual follow-up health screening in the AESP is also required for all MSC individuals covered by this policy. All individuals are required to update their health information annually by completing the following:

[Follow-Up Health History Form \(FUHH\)](#)

This form must be submitted to the MSC's Occupational Health Clinic (OHC) and the Students Medical Services (SMS) for review and to get the Medical Clearance.

### C. Non MSC participants- Individuals from other academic institutions or organizations.

Students, investigators and participants from other academic institutions or organizations, must submit the form Visitors: Researchers, Students, Non MSC Personnel Working with or Around Animals in a MSC Facility. They must fill all the corresponding parts of the document and submit it to the corresponding MSC supervisor or Principal Investigator.

### D. Policy Exclusion

This Policy doesn't apply to:

1. Short term visitors- individuals that will be present in MSC animal facilities or laboratories where animals are manipulated for the purpose of observing an animal procedure or educational activities that have been approved by the IACUC or to visit the animal facility. The activities will not involve work with non-human primates, work in a BSL-2 or BSL-3 research facility or other high-risk activity as determined by the facility manager or the facility veterinarian.
2. Independent contractors- non-MSD personnel that are contracted to perform a duty in an animal facility or laboratory where animals are manipulated or housed.
3. Students whose only animal exposure is in the classroom or in the field as part of a course.

The individuals mentioned above must sign the Animal Exposure Program Visitor's Form. This form is provided by your MSC supervisor, coordinator or PI.

## IV. Research with laboratory animals

All animal research protocols need to comply with the Animal Exposure Surveillance Program in order to be approved by the Medical Sciences Campus IACUC until is met.

Therefore, all individual Medical Clearances issued by the OHC, SMS or personal Health Care Provider must be submitted to the IACUC as part of the documentation at the time of an initial submission of an animal protocol, the renewal of an expiring protocol, when new personnel are added to an approved protocol, when an individual's health status changes or when indicated by the medical reviewer.


All participants written assurances will be good for one (1) year.

### V. Policy Certification



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Myrna L. Quiñones Feliciano, MD, JD  
Chancellor  
Medical Sciences Campus, UPR



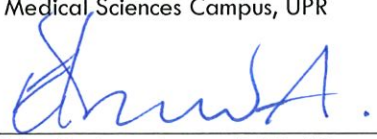
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