

	UCSD INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE POLICY MANUAL	POLICY 33.01
	Transportation of Rodents	Approval Date: 3.17.10

I. Background & Purpose

Movement of rodents between different vivarium and laboratory locations is essential for successful conduct of research, yet has risks in regard to animal safety, health and compliance with applicable regulations.

II. Who Should Read This Policy

All investigators who intend to move rodents between different locations.

III. Definitions

Term	Definition
Home Cage	Cage in which rodents are routinely housed
Vivarium	An IACUC approved animal housing facility
Primary enclosure	Device used for animal containment with which there is direct contact with the animals
Secondary enclosure	Device used for animal containment with which there is no direct contact with the animals

IV. Policy

1. Each person transporting rodents must be approved to handle animals by appropriate inclusion on the applicable animal use protocol approved by the UCSD IACUC, or has to be ACP personnel.
2. Animal Transportation must be described in the applicable approved UCSD IACUC protocol. Specific locations outside of a UCSD vivarium where animals will be taken must be identified in the protocol.
3. Persons transporting animals must follow all applicable operating procedures for every location visited (Facility SOPs) such as eligibility for entry, traffic flow, labeling, tracking and locations for animal handling.
4. Persons transporting animals must follow all applicable additional safety precautions established by other UCSD committees (e.g. Biosafety, Radiation Safety, Chemical Safety).

5. Approval for rodent movement and transportation ([Animal Care Program Transfer Request](#)) must be obtained from ACP whenever animals are transported to a laboratory, another housing location within a vivarium, another vivarium, or another institution.

6. The following requirements for animal transport must be met:

- a. Rodents must be properly secured to prevent escape, either spontaneously or in the event of an accident such as dropping the primary conveyance or in the event of a small collision.
- b. Rodents must be handled so as to avoid stress or physical trauma to the animals.
- c. Rodents must be obscured from view during transportation outside approved vivaria.
- d. Rodents must be contained and handled during transport so as to prevent transfer of microbes to people, other animals, animal facilities, or other facilities.
- e. Rodents must be contained and handled during transport so as to prevent human exposure to potential allergens.
- f. The animal environment must be controlled to meet the needs of the rodents in regard to space, temperature, ventilation, humidity, light, and noise.
- g. Rodents must be provided food, water/gel packs, and appropriate bedding when transportation or temporary housing takes longer than 4 hours.
- h. If the primary enclosure does not meet these criteria, a secondary enclosure must be used to conform to these requirements.

7. The following requirements for primary animal enclosures must be met:

Transport	Primary animal enclosure
Transport of rodents within the same vivarium or within the same building and return of the animals to the original vivarium	Use home cage (or follow applicable Facility SOPs if they differ in the requirements)
Transport of rodents to a different building or different vivarium and return of the animals to the original vivarium	Use home cage and change to a new cage upon return to the original vivarium and prior to reentering the housing room
Transport of rodents outside of vivarium without return to the original vivarium	Use a disposable primary enclosure provided by ACP in each facility. Other enclosure options must be approved and documented by ACP. Note: If animals will be housed in a new UCSD vivarium, the animals should be re-housed according to the applicable facility operating procedures
Transport of rodents to a non-UCSD institution and return to any UCSD vivarium	Use a disposable primary enclosure provided by ACP in each facility and change to a new cage prior to entering housing room. Other enclosure options must be approved and documented by ACP

8. Transporting rodents in vehicles not specifically designated for animal transportation (e.g. personal or rented vehicles) must be described in the applicable animal protocol and requires prior approval of the IACUC. Vehicles must be legally owned and operated. Each vehicle must allow for all requirements listed in section 6 to be met and must meet all of the following criteria:

- a. Adequate heating/cooling to maintain general animal comfort
- b. Protection from direct sun
- c. Obscured from public view
- d. Containment of waste (e.g. plastic sheet under the cage)
- e. Prevention of aerosolized allergens (adequate enclosure)
- f. Secured cage inside the vehicle to prevent jarring, tipping and escape
- g. Adequate sanitation

V. Related Documents and References

UCSD Documents
Animal Identification Policy
Use of Rodents in Research
Animal Care Program Transfer Request
Other Documents and References
The Guide to the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals

VI. Additional Information

1. The following are practical guidelines for complying with UCSD policy when moving rodents “by hand”:

- a. Large, sealable, sanitizable, plastic (e.g. Rubbermade-style, or Tupperware-like) containers are very practical for transport of groups of cages or containers, as they prevent escape in the event of an accident and obscure animals from view.
- b. Disposable containers for rodent transfers are supplied in the vivaria and are good to use for animals that will not be returned to the vivarium or otherwise re-housed. Keep in mind that disposable containers for transporting rats are different than those for mice.
- c. Do not overcrowd disposable containers. See your ACP facility supervisor for animal density limits for disposable containers.

- d. When using an animal's home cage for transport, do not hand carry more than one cage at a time. For standard, washable microisolators, rubber bands or bungee cords are better than tape to secure lids on these cages.
 - e. Well-balanced carts with side barriers are suitable for transporting more than one home cage at a time as they prevent cage falls.
 - f. Paper bags or other materials that become compromised by chewing animals or when exposed to fluids as stand alone transportation containers do not meet the above transportation requirements.
 - g. Do not stack cages for extended periods of time during transport or temporary housing as this increases the risk of toppling over and can compromise air supply.
2. Approval of animal transfers is done by ACP upon investigator requests ([Animal Care Program Transfer Request](#)). Requests can be made and granted for single transfers or for repeated transfers, depending on the specifics of the transfer and the research needs of the investigators. Where appropriate, ACP will provide comprehensive approval for routine transfers with low contamination risks for longer periods of time. On-line requests are generally addressed within 2 business days, but request handling can be expedited for emergencies.
3. ACP maintains an expanding animal shuttle service. Requests for this service are made on-line at the ACP website when requesting an animal transfer. Standard transfers are done on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Requests for Tuesday transportation must be received by noon of the previous Friday. Requests for Thursday must be made by noon of the preceding Tuesday. Other transfer times can be arranged as needed. Contact your ACP facility supervisor for additional information.
4. Transferred animals need to be labeled with PI name, protocol number, date and time of removal from the original location (e.g. vivarium), and the person responsible for the particular animals.