

	UCSD INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE POLICY MANUAL	POLICY 36.01
	Animal Identification	Approval Date: 2.17.10

I. Background & Purpose

Federal Regulations, including the Animal Welfare Act, the Animal Welfare Regulations, and The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, require appropriate identification of animals used in research, teaching or training.

II. Who Should Read This Policy

All personnel listed on UCSD animal protocols

III. Definitions

None

IV. Policy

Rodents and non-mammalian species

1. At a minimum, the following information is required for animal identification:
 - a. Animal Use Protocol number
 - b. PI name
 - c. Contact person (if different from PI)
 - d. Species
 - e. Source (e.g., vendor, colony)

2. The unit of required identification is the animal cage (including tank, aviary or other primary animal enclosure). Each animal cage must bear a cage card that uniquely identifies it with respect to other cages held together. The information required in 1.a. – 1.e. may be displayed on individual cage cards or, if common to all cages grouped together (e.g., on a rack or in a room), on a sign that clearly pertains to all of those animals. Intermixing of cages of animals with different identifying information (e.g., different protocol numbers, sources etc) requires that information to be displayed on the cage cards.

3. Where a strain, stock or mutation is expected to produce a compromised health phenotype, the phenotype or genetic information must additionally be specified.

4. If animals require post-procedural health monitoring (e.g., following surgery), non-standard care (e.g., special diet or drug administration), or present any hazard (e.g., viral, radioactive), this information (including dates) must be indicated on cage cards or Special Instruction cards through the interval of monitoring, special care or hazard.

5. Ear punch, ear tags, microchips, and tattoo are acceptable methods for marking individual animals and do not require protocol approval. Toe-clipping is only allowed with protocol approval that requires scientific justification, and then never after 7 days of age in mice.
6. Animals removed from the vivarium (e.g., brought to the lab) must additionally be labeled with the time and date of removal and the name of the responsible person.
7. Cages that contain pre-weanling animals must be marked with the date of birth of litters.

Non-rodent mammals

Except as follows, the requirements above also apply to non-rodent mammals.

1. The unit of identification is the individual animal. One identifying card per animal must be located at the site where the animal is housed.
2. Each animal must be identified according to associated federal requirements (tattoo number, transponder, medallion, etc) specific for the species.

V. Related Documents

UCSD Documents	Animal Care Program Bar Code Identification
Other Documents and References	Animal Welfare Regulations The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals

VI. Additional information

Permanent and unique identification of animals at UCSD is not only important for regulatory purposes, but is also critical for the successful conduct of scientific investigations, and for the delivery of appropriate and humane animal care. All of these processes start with the ability to identify and track each animal subject. To assist the investigator, Animal Care Program (ACP) has been developing a system whereby every animal, or groups of animals, is associated with a unique seven digit number. These numbers:

- a. Are easily obtained and printed inside (or outside) the vivaria
- b. Increase efficiency and accuracy of census and tracking of animal populations
- c. Will help prevent mistakes such as transfers of animals not intended to be transferred, or procedures performed on the wrong individual animal(s).
- d. Meet regulatory requirements for animal identification
- e. Allow for remote viewing of current animal populations.

- f. Provide a platform whereby investigators can attach important information to an animal or group of animals (we have been working with investigators over the past year to develop this feature).

The current system uses a small 1" x 2" sticker which, after printing, is attached to the upper left hand corner of a cage card displayed in standard orientation on each cage or enclosure. With this system, ACP no longer requires the use of a full size cage card to meet identification needs. For labs that use customized cage cards, leaving a 1" x 2" space in the upper left hand corner will negate the need for an additional identification card. However, ACP will provide blank cage cards for those labs who wish to use them for the small sticker. In these cases, laboratories are welcome to use the remainder of the space on these cards. Please note, if more than one card is present, the card with the sticker should be displayed on top.

Consistent with the identification policy, larger animals should have one sticker for each animal. Rodents, fish, and other group housed small animals can use one sticker for each animal, or can alternatively use one sticker for each cage or housing enclosure.

Once established, an identification sticker should not be replaced. After labeling, an animal, or group of animals (cage) should retain the identification sticker until the animals or cage is "decommissioned." Cages are decommissioned when all animals within are euthanized, transferred to other cages or outside of the university. Because some information can change frequently (such as strain and date of birth), these items will not be displayed on the ACP Sticker. Research staff can track such information elsewhere on the cage card. Changes in major information, such as PI or protocol number could require the printing of an updated sticker for display.

Currently, touch screen "kiosks" are available in each vivarium for use by investigators to print new identification stickers. Training for use is available through each facility supervisor. Printing can be accomplished by any web-enabled computer or device with access to the central system that can print using a Dymo label writer. Thus, printing of identification stickers could occur within a research laboratory as long as a Dymo label writer is available. Additionally, provisions are being made for increasing and expanding the number of locations for printing within each vivarium.