IACUC Policy 2: Veterinary Care

1. Institutional (Attending) Veterinarian

The Institutional Veterinarian (IVet), located at the TTUHSC Lubbock campus, is responsible for laboratory animal care and veterinary care of animals at all TTUHSC animal-resource centers and satellite facilities. The IVet reports to the TTUHSC Institutional Official.

2. Qualifications of the IVet

The IVet is also the TTUHSC Attending Veterinarian and must meet the minimum requirements as defined by the USDA. These requirements include:
- being a graduate of a veterinary school accredited by the AVMA or foreign equivalent;
- having appropriate training and/or experience in the care and management of the species being tended; and,
- maintaining a valid license to practice veterinary medicine in the US.

3. Duties of the IVet

The IVet:

A. has overall responsibility for emergency health matters at all TTUHSC animal resource centers. The IVet may assign or direct a Clinical Veterinarian, a veterinary technician or designee to triage emergency health or other clinical situations.

B. may suspend animal use and, if necessary, quarantine animals, when deemed in the best interest of the animal(s). If suspension or quarantine occurs, the IVet shall notify the Principal Investigator (PI) immediately. The IVet will also notify the PI and IACUC Chair, in writing, within 3 business days.

C. will oversee the Laboratory Animal Resource (LARC) staff and oversee its day-to-day functions.

D. will provide veterinary oversight and may assist on all approved research and training projects and may assign appropriate LARC personnel to assist in procedures for any current protocol.

1) Although the IACUC will provide general oversight to ensure that all personnel are properly trained, the IVet will provide specific training and ensure that personnel have been trained appropriately in the relevant procedures and for the pertinent species.

2) Records of staff qualifications, training and experience with each species will be kept by the Research Integrity Office. These records will be made available for annual IACUC review and assurance that personnel are adequately trained.

3) The IVet and LARC personnel supervised by the IVet have TTUHSC IACUC approval to work on all IACUC-approved protocols without being individually named on the protocol. This allows the IVet and LARC staff to freely assist any investigator with animal procedures in the approved protocol. However, this does not allow the IVet and LARC staff to change any animal procedure without IACUC approval.

E. will provide “on-call” animal health support on an ongoing basis including weekends, holidays and after regular business hours or will arrange back-up veterinary care in the absence of the IVet.

F. will participate as a voting member of the TTUHSC IACUC.
G. will review all protocols and those amendments that affect personnel or animal welfare that are submitted to the IACUC. The IVet will work with the IACUC member assigned as reviewer to effect revisions as necessary.

H. will supervise Clinical Veterinarians at all TTUHSC animal resource centers and their satellites on any TTUHSC campus.

4. Clinical Veterinarians

TTUHSC retains a local veterinarian at each of its campuses that possesses an animal resource center. Each Clinical Veterinarian shall have authority to carry out the duties described below.

The Clinical Veterinarian at each campus is directly responsible to the IVet and acts in conjunction with the IVet and the IACUC to maintain the health of animals.

5. Qualifications of Clinical Veterinarians

All Clinical veterinarians are required to meet current training and licensure requirements, to be determined by the Institutional Veterinarian.

6. Duties of Clinical Veterinarians

In the event of a conflict between any action taken by a Clinical Veterinarian and the IVet pursuant to carrying out the duties below, the IVet exercises final decision-making authority.

If a Clinical Veterinarian anticipates being unavailable, the Clinical Veterinarian shall contact the IVet to make arrangements for coverage at that particular campus.

A. Lubbock - duties to be carried out in the absence or unavailability of the IVet.

The Clinical Veterinarian shall:

1) Respond promptly to emergency health matters at the request of IVet, LARC technician(s)/staff, or research staff at the TTUHSC campus in Lubbock.

2) Provide “on-call” animal health support on an ongoing basis including weekends, holidays and after regular business hours for the LARC.

3) Suspend animal use, and, if necessary, quarantine animals at the LARC, when deemed in the best interest of the animal(s). If suspension or quarantine occurs, the Clinical Veterinarian shall immediately notify the IVet, or when unavailable, the LARC, who in turn shall immediately notify the PI. The IVet and/or the LARC will also notify the PI and IACUC Chair, in writing, within 3 business days.

B. Other TTUHSC Campuses (including campuses at Amarillo and Abilene).

The Clinical Veterinarian shall:

1) Perform an inspection of the applicable TTUHSC animal resource center at least once per week to observe animals for general health and to note any issues that involve the facility, including sanitation, but also to include any other issues that should be addressed by the IVet. The Clinical Veterinarian shall provide (in writing) any findings of non-compliance to the IVet or the LARC by using the clinic visit sheet. Significant infractions will be relayed immediately to the IVet.
2) Meet with the IVet or designee on an as-needed basis to discuss issues related to the applicable TTUHSC animal resource center and for training.

3) Respond promptly to emergency health matters at the request of the IVet, technician(s)/ staff at that TTUHSC campus animal resource center.

4) Suspend animal use, and, if necessary, quarantine animals at the LARC, when deemed in the best interest of the animal(s). If suspension or quarantine occurs, the Clinical Veterinarian shall immediately notify the IVet, or when unavailable the, LARC, who in turn shall immediately notify the PI. The IVet and/or the, LARC, will also notify the PI and IACUC Chair, in writing, within 3 business days.

5) Provide veterinary oversight on approved research and training projects as needed at the applicable TTUHSC animal resource center.

6) Provide “on-call” animal health support on an ongoing basis including weekends, holidays and after regular business hours at that TTUHSC campus animal resource center.