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**UC Davis  
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)**

***Title: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) When Working with Animals in Investigator Laboratories and Animal Facilities***

**I. Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to describe the minimum personal protective equipment (PPE) required for working with research animals in laboratories and animal facilities. The purpose of PPE is two-fold. First, it ensures potential allergens and other hazards do not have direct contact with the investigator/researcher. Second, PPE minimizes the exposure of research animals to potential human contaminants.

**II. Policy:**

UCOP Lab safety Policy dictates the following minimum work attire requirements for all lab space and vivaria: Full length pants or equivalent, closed toed and closed heeled shoes (this is interpreted as a shoe covering the entire foot) the area between the shoe and the pants should have no exposed skin. Shirts and pants/skirt should overlap or be of a length that exposure to the torso is also minimized.

<https://policy.ucop.edu/doc/3500597/PersonalProtectiveEquip>

Working with rodents requires, at minimum a lab coat and disposable gloves worn over proper laboratory attire. Working with other small mammals requires the use of a lab coat or other dedicated protective clothing (i.e., scrubs, uniform). Aquatics may be handled with clean hands or non-powdered gloves depending on the species. A lab coat is also recommended.

PPE and university supplied uniforms cannot be taken home and must be laundered on-site or by a commercial university-approved laundry service.

Individual facilities and/or specialized laboratories may have additional requirements. PPE requirements for animal housing areas and field situations are described in the Attending Veterinarian Standards of Care “[Animal Care Program Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#)”.

When working in a laboratory or animal facility appropriate footwear, which consists of closed-toe and closed-back shoes, must be worn at all times.

**III. Procedure:**

PPE for rodents includes a clean lab coat and gloves. A disposable lab coat is preferred over a cloth lab coat but either will fulfill the intent of the policy. Soiled lab coats must be removed and placed in an appropriate receptacle for laundering. PPE is required at all

times when the cages are open. For most rodents (e.g., mouse, rat, hamster, peromyscus, gerbil, vole) this is when the filter top is removed to access the animal. For guinea pigs, this is when handling the animal, as they are not routinely housed or transported in filter-topped caging.

PPE required for small mammals other than rodents includes a lab coat or dedicated clothing. Rabbits should be handled wearing a disposable lab coat if at all possible to avoid contamination with fur. Traditional cloth lab coats that are contaminated with rabbit fur must be placed in an appropriate receptacle and turned in for laundering. Cats, dogs, and other small mammals may be handled wearing a lab coat or dedicated clothing.

PPE must not be worn out of the work area. PPE must not be worn in break rooms, bathrooms, or other non-animal procedure or non-laboratory space. PPE must be disposable or maintained clean and laundered by a commercial university-approved laundering service. Dirty PPE must not be used to handle animals. Under no circumstances should dirty or soiled lab coats be reused. If you are unsure about where to wear your PPE, ask yourself the following question: May I eat or drink in here? If the answer is yes, remove your animal facility or laboratory PPE and wash your hands before entering the space.

PPE for nonhuman primates is established by facility standard operating procedures and must be adhered to at all times.

Always wash your hands when you have removed your PPE and are leaving the animal work areas and facilities.

#### IV. **References:**

1. ILAR Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, Eight Edition
2. Occupational Health and Safety in the Care and Use of Research Animals