

Policy: SC-20-106
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Title: Identification of Animals

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum requirements for identification of research and teaching animals.

II. Policy:

Animals must be clearly identified while being housed in primary and/or secondary enclosures and while being transported.

III. Procedure:

Animal identification procedures must be documented in animal unit's standard operating procedures (SOPs). The SOP must describe how to identify which animals are assigned to each active protocol.

When possible, the animal's primary enclosures should be labeled with at least the principal investigator's name and the approved protocol number. If an animal is individually identified, the label should include the animal ID.

If it is not possible to label the primary enclosure, the secondary enclosure should be labeled or a system must be in place to ensure accurate identification of the animals.

Animal units housing individually identified animals in group enclosures (e.g. livestock, avian) may use an alternative method to labeling the primary or secondary enclosure.

Rodent and rabbit cages must have cage cards labeled with the following information: species, source of the animal, principal investigator (PI), arrival date and /or date of birth, protocol number, the sex and number of animals in the cage. Strain and stock should be added if available.

Rodents can also be individually identified to ensure accurate records by ear notching, ear tags, micro-chipping, tattooing and toe clipping. Refer to Rodent Husbandry Care policy for species specific information.

Livestock, nonhuman primates, cats, dogs, ferrets and rabbits shall be individually identified by a method that is appropriate for the specific species. For example: ear tags, collars, bands, ear notches, tattoos, freeze brands or microchips may be used. Refer to species specific husbandry polices for appropriate methods.

Fish, reptiles, amphibians and other tank/terrarium housed species should be labeled with the protocol number, PI name and the number of animals in the tank/terrarium.

In some instances, identification details that are the same for all animals in the room or on a rack may be posted at the room or tack level, with individual enclosures only labeled with their unique information (for example, the number of animals in the enclosure).

In all cases, the goal is to ensure anyone entering the room can readily identify and correlate any animal, cage or tank to:

1. Principle investigator (and contact information)
2. Protocol number
3. Species
4. Pertinent dates (date of birth or date of arrival)
5. Number of animals
6. Sex of animal if known
7. Individual animal ID if known

Animal cages or carriers used to transport animals from the vivarium to laboratory study areas should be clearly labeled with the PI's name and the protocol number.

Refer to the IACUC Policy on Genotyping/Identification for guidance regarding appropriate methods of identification and genotyping.