

Policy: SC-32-600
Date: 6/9/2025
Enabled by: IACUC/AV/
ILAR/APHIS
Supersedes: 4/1/2022

Title: Husbandry Care of Bats

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum standards of care for bats.

II. Policy:

All units providing animal care for bats must meet or exceed these minimum requirements based on the USDA Animal Welfare Regulations (*AWR*) and the ILAR Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (*Guide*). Deviations or exceptions must be approved by the Attending Veterinarian and the IACUC.

III. Procedure:

Daily (365 days a year without exception):

- Observe each animal and check for health concerns (*AWR* 2.33).
- Ensure adequate feed and potable water is available (*Guide* pg. 65-68).
- Record sick and dead animals and report them to Campus Veterinary Services (CVS) or designated clinical veterinarian per standard operating procedure for reporting sick or dead animals.
- Record/document minimum and maximum temperatures and humidity on the daily log
 - Temperature range for bats is species-dependent.
 - Humidity range for bats is species-dependent.
- Change any excessively soiled cages, bedding, and feed (*Guide* pg. 70).
- Clean and organize room, anterooms, and surrounding premises (*Guide* pg. 72).
- Record daily completion of each task, initial each task, and date the log.

Weekly (not to exceed every 7 days):

- Provide clean feed and water dishes (*Guide* pg. 70).

Biweekly (not to exceed every 14 days):

- Provide clean cages (*AWR* 3.31 & 3.131).

As needed:

- Disinfect the animal room including walls, floors, and ceilings (if possible) (*Guide* pg. 72).
- Remove and replace worn or damaged equipment from primary enclosures and surrounding facility (*Guide* pg. 72).

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- Chow must be discarded after 6 months of the milling date unless manufacturer guidelines recommend a shorter or longer expiration date (*Guide* pg. 66).
- Clean and sanitize feed storage containers (*Guide* pg. 67).
- Each facility will develop their own best practices for sanitization of the macroenvironment typically occurring every 6 months or whenever there is a change in species.

Environmental Enrichment:

- Refer to the Environmental Enrichment policy (SOC-30-102).

Facilities:

- Temperature alarms must be installed in all rooms housing bats (*Guide* pg. 143).
- Adequate ventilation must be provided for the health and comfort of the animal at all times.
 - A minimum of 10-15 fresh room air exchanges per hour shall be provided in animal housing areas (*Guide* pg. 46).
- Floors shall be moisture-resistant, non-absorbent, impact-resistant, and relatively smooth (*Guide* pg. 137). Refer to Physical Plant SOC 50-102.

Housing:

- Whenever possible, and as appropriate based on species, bats should be socially housed in compatible groups (*Guide* pg. 51).
- Floor space taken up by food bowls, water containers, and enrichment devices should not be considered part of the floor space (*Guide* pg. 56).
- Animals must have enough space to express their natural postures and postural adjustments without touching the enclosure walls or ceiling, be able to turn around, and have ready access to food and water. In addition, there must be sufficient space to comfortably rest away from areas soiled by urine and feces (*Guide* pg. 56).