Title: Husbandry Care of Raptors

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum standards of care for birds (species of the Accipitrimorphae clade or Strigiformes order).

II. Policy:

All units providing animal care for raptors must meet or exceed these minimum requirements based on the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide), and Public Health Service Policy (PHS). 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 (Guide pg. 112).
- 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 minimum and maximum temperatures and humidity.
  - Temperature range for raptors is species-dependent.
  - Humidity range for raptors is 30% to 70% (Guide pg. 44).
- Spot clean excessively soiled or flooded areas of housing (Guide pg. 70).
- Clean and organize room, anterooms, and surrounding premises (Guide pg. 72).
- Record daily completion of tasks, initial, and date log sheet.

Weekly:

- Clean cages, feeders and waterers (Guide pg. 70).
- Replace bedding for animals in solid-bottom caging/housing.
- Clean footbaths, as applicable.

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).
• 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).
• Trim excessively long toenails and beaks per facility SOP.

Environmental Enrichment:
• Refer to the Environmental Enrichment policy.
• Birds should be provided the opportunity to demonstrate species typical behavior. Examples of enrichment for raptors include perches.
• Devices must be checked regularly for wear and discarded when safety hazards are observed.

Facilities:
• Temperature alarms must be installed in all temperature-controlled rooms housing raptors (Guide pg. 143).
• Adequate ventilation must be provided for the health and comfort of the animal at all times.
  o 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 and Facilities Maintenance policy.

Housing:
• Whenever possible, raptors should be socially housed in compatible groups, as applicable based on species (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).

When housing this species, please also refer to the Animal Care Program’s Standards of Care Policy on Pest Control, Identification and Labeling of Cages, Environmental Enrichment, Food Storage, House-Keeping in Facilities Housing Biomedical Research Animals, Physical Plant Facilities Maintenance, as well as the IACUC’s Policy on Social Housing of Social Species.