

# DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY (DHA) COMPONENT OVERSIGHT OFFICE ANIMAL CARE AND USE REVIEW OFFICE (ACURO)

## ACURO Intramural Compliance Inspection Policy

**Applicability:** This Policy applies to all Department of Defense (DoD) institutions conducting Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation (RDT&E) or Training with animals that fall under the DHA Component Animal Oversight Office, ACURO, directly or via Memoranda of Agreement.

**Purpose:** To inform intramural programs on compliance inspection procedures and expectations. As the DHA component oversight office, ACURO is responsible for program and facility oversight of DHA animal research facilities. The purpose of the ACURO compliance inspection is to assess the program and ensure that the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) is performing their duties responsibly and verify work is being conducted in accordance with the standards outlined in DoD regulations.

### References:

1. DoDI 3216.01, "Use of Animals in DoD Conducted and Supported Research and Training," March 20, 2019.
2. DHA-MSR 6025.02, "The Care and Use of Animals in DoD Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E) or Training Programs," September 1, 2022.

### Procedures:

1. At least every three years, typically in advance of an institution's AAALAC international (AAALAC) site visit, a member of the ACURO team will reach out to the institution to schedule an ACURO compliance inspection. Visits will be scheduled at the convenience and availability of the institution's staff and leadership but, with sufficient time to address any required or suggested improvements in the program prior to the anticipated AAALAC site visit. All DoD institutions maintaining animals for RDT&E or training must attain and maintain AAALAC accreditation.
2. Once the inspection is scheduled, the IACUC administrator will receive an email from ACURO containing a DoD Secure Access File Exchange (DoD SAFE) link, a list of required documents to upload at least two weeks in advance of the visit, and a copy of the site visit checklist. Documents on the list containing an asterisk (\*) do not need to be sent in advance but must be available in hard copy during the visit. If an institute is unable to meet this requirement, you must notify ACURO in writing as soon as possible so that the inspection team can make alternative arrangements. In addition to the requirements above, the following will need to be coordinated with ACURO prior to the visit:
  - a. Program POCs will ensure that facility entry requirements are communicated to ACURO ahead of the visit.
  - b. A visit itinerary will be generated through coordination with ACURO and the site POC.

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- c. Critical items to incorporate into the itinerary and prepare for the visit include: time allotted for short an informal entrance brief, a quiet space for document review, and allotted time for formal exit brief with the institution's Commander (or Institutional Official) or designee.
3. ACURO inspection teams generally consist of one, DoD American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine (ACLAM) board certified veterinarian who will conduct the facility inspection and another member of the ACURO staff who will conduct a programmatic review. The veterinarian will visit all areas of the vivarium and other areas where DoD animals are used or housed, including study and support areas. The program reviewer will evaluate all animal program documentation.
4. Following the inspection, a formal report will be sent to the Institutional Official at the institution with courtesy copies to the IACUC point of contact and attending veterinarian. The report will include a memorandum and the completed checklist. Once the formal report is sent to the institution, all documentation previously received will be destroyed.
5. If significant deficiencies are discovered or if there are other areas of significant concern, a corrective action plan may be required. The formal report will outline required actions and documents, as well as a timeline for completion.

**Questions:** Please contact the ACURO Office Manager by e- mail: [usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamrmc.other.acuro@health.mil](mailto:usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamrmc.other.acuro@health.mil) or phone: (301) 619-6694.