

Guidelines for NIH Rodent Transportation

A. General

- Refer to the sections below for specific transportation requirements.
- All methods of transporting NIH animals must provide for the health and welfare of the animals.
- Rodents shall not be transported with any other animal, substance and/or device that may be expected to be injurious to its health or welfare.
- Care shall be exercised in handling enclosures used to transport rodents. They shall not be tossed, dropped, needlessly tilted, stacked in a manner that may reasonably be expected to result in their falling, or handled in any manner, which may cause physical trauma or stress to the animals.
- Appropriate transport cages must be used. These vary depending on the distance and/or purpose of the transportation. The enclosure must be resistant to escape and provide adequate ventilation.
- Minimum label requirements for all transport boxes should include the words "Live Animals" and an arrow indicating the up position.
- All transportation should occur in the most direct and timely manner.
- Temperature extremes are to be avoided when transporting animals. If transportation is not avoidable, precautions [e.g., climate controlled vehicle, extra insulation (cold), larger ventilated box with fewer animals (hot)] are required.
- The Division of Veterinary Resources (DVR) Transportation Service is available for transporting animals between buildings on the NIH Bethesda campus, to other NIH locations [e.g., NIH Animal Center (NIHAC), NIDA (Baltimore), NIA (Baltimore)], local airports, and other areas within the greater Washington metropolitan area. Arrangements can be made for scheduling animal deliveries by contacting DVR Transportation (301-496-4184, http://dvrnet.ors.od.nih.gov/animal_trans.asp).
- Personal vehicles are not to be used for animal transportation without the prior approval of an Institute Veterinarian and the Office of Animal Care and Use.
- The IC Veterinarian or IC Animal Transportation Coordinator is responsible for oversight of these guidelines, can grant exceptions when it is considered in the best interest of the animal(s), and is the contact person for information concerning the transportation, receipt and shipment of animals.

B. Movement of animals within an NIH building

- Occupants of the building should be protected from allergens of animal origin, microorganisms, chemicals, radioactive materials and escaped animals.
- For movement of animals **within the Clinical Center** (Building 10) and **the Clinical Research Center** (CRC) see Policy 614 Research Animal Transport (http://oacu.od.nih.gov/NIHpolicy/CCAnimTranspwAppdx_F0807.pdf). This policy addresses the correct method of movement within the Clinical Center, including the use of the appropriate elevators.
- Movement of animals **inside the animal facility** is usually within the animal's home cage. To guard against flooding, the water bottle should be removed prior

to transport. The appropriate conveyance should be verified with the Facility Manager or Facility Veterinarian.

- Movement of animals from the **animal facility to a laboratory** within the same building may require the use of a container other than the animal's home cage [e.g., a filtered cardboard NIH animal transport box (NIH stock #8155-00-L04-0817), or a 16 oz. vented hot food container ([http://www.solocup.com/catalog/pdfs/GS1006%20DoublePolyPprCon%20\(2\)_130_07.pdf](http://www.solocup.com/catalog/pdfs/GS1006%20DoublePolyPprCon%20(2)_130_07.pdf))]. The appropriate conveyance should be verified with the Facility Manager or Facility Veterinarian.
- Transport boxes that are not contaminated with biological, chemical, or radiological hazards can be disposed of in the regular laboratory trash.

C. Moving animal between buildings on the NIH Bethesda campus

- Occupants of the building should be protected from allergens of animal origin, microorganisms, chemicals, radioactive materials and escaped animals.
- Transporting rodents by hand carrying them should be limited to travel in a direct and timely manner between buildings with the animals in escape resistant enclosures. Animals should be protected from extremes of temperature.
- A filtered, cardboard NIH animal transport box (NIH stock #8155-00-L04-0817) should be used. Bedding, a "no-spill" water source and/or food may be required.
- For movement of animals **to the Clinical Center** (Building 10 and **the Clinical Research Center** (CRC)) see Policy 614 Research Animal Transport 08/06/07 http://oacu.od.nih.gov/NIHpolicy/CCAnimTranspwAppdx_F0807.pdf. This policy addresses the correct method of movement within the Clinical Center, including the use of the appropriate elevators.
- For movement of animals **to all other buildings**, an IC Veterinarian or IC Animal Transport Coordinator should be contacted.
- Transport boxes that are not contaminated with biological, chemical, or radiological hazards can be disposed of in the regular laboratory trash.

D. Transportation of animals between the NIH Bethesda campus and other NIH locations, i.e. NIH Animal Center (NIHAC, Poolesville), NIDA (Baltimore), NIA (Baltimore)

- The DVR Transportation Service or other appropriate courier for live animals must be used for transporting animals between the NIH Bethesda campus and other NIH locations.
- A filtered, cardboard NIH animal transport box (NIH stock #8155-00-L04-0817) should be used. Bedding, a "no-spill" water source and/or food may be required.

E. Delivery of animals to locations outside the NIH

- The NIH Shipping Unit (301-496-5921, <http://olao.od.nih.gov/Transportation/ShipmentServices/OtherThanHouseholdGoods/ShipmentsOfLiveAnimals.htm>) is available for commercial shipping arrangements.

- Required Forms:
 - NIH Request for Shipment (NIH 1884)
 - NIH Animal Health Certificate (NIH-1192)
<http://forms.cit.nih.gov/adobe/animals/NH1192.PDF>)
 - Animal Transfer Agreement
<http://oacu.od.nih.gov/ARAC/FinalATA607.pdf>)
 - A Materials Transfer Agreement (MTA) may be required. Contact the tech transfer office in your Institute.
 - NIH Commercial Invoice (NIH 1884-1)
http://forms.cit.nih.gov/adobe/procurement/NH1884_1.PDF) – *foreign shipments only.*
 - NIH Declaration for Exportation of Biologic Materials (NIH 2388)
<http://forms.cit.nih.gov/adobe/procurement/NH2388.PDF>) - *foreign shipments only.*
- Required Transport Boxes
 - Continental United States
 - Filtered, cardboard NIH animal shipping box
<http://dvrnet.ors.od.nih.gov/procurement.asp>). A filtered, cardboard NIH *animal shipping* box is different than a filtered, cardboard NIH *animal transport* box!
 - Rigid filtered animal shipping boxes available from commercial vendors (e.g., Taconic Transit Containers)
<http://www.taconic.com/wmspage.cfm?parm1=725>)
 - Outside continental United States
 - Rigid filtered animal shipping boxes with viewing window available from commercial vendors (e.g., Taconic Transit Containers)
<http://www.taconic.com/wmspage.cfm?parm1=725>)
 - At a minimum, a “no-spill” water source, food, and bedding is required.
 - The International Air Transport Association (IATA) Live Animals Regulations serve as a worldwide standard for shipping animals, domestically or internationally. IATA copyrighted regulations are revised annually. OACU maintains a copy of those regulations for IC reference.
<http://www.iata.org/ps/publications/lar.htm>

F. Transporting live or dead animals containing radioactive isotopes

- Animal studies involving radioactive materials or radiation producing equipment (RPE) require an approved Animal Study Proposal (ASP) reviewed by your institute's Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC), as well as, the Division of Radiation Safety (301-496-5774, <http://drs.ors.od.nih.gov>). Contact your [Health Physicist](#) for specific radiation safety guidance for animal transportation. Correct disposal of the transport box should also be confirmed with the Health Physicist.
- Warning labels are required on enclosures used to transport live or dead animals that contain radioactive materials. Minimum label requirements include a “Caution – Radioactive Material” label and identification of the specific hazard.

G. Transporting animals treated with human pathogens or carcinogenic material

- NIH Manual 3040-2 Animal Care and Use in the Intramural Program (http://oacu.od.nih.gov/NIHpolicy/3040-2_2007_OMA%20022708_final.pdf) requires that IC Animal Care and Use Committees review animal study proposals for research with animals, including work with biohazards or chemical hazards. The transportation of animals that are to be dosed at one location and moved to another needs to be particularly evaluated to assure that proper containment is used to minimize occupational exposure to persons involved with the move, and to minimize environmental contamination. The Occupational Safety and Health Specialist (301-496-2346, <http://dohs.ors.od.nih.gov/index.htm>) shall be consulted.
- Rodents that have been exposed to human pathogens or toxic/carcinogenic substances and are actively shedding the hazardous material must be transported in closed systems (e.g., filtered, cardboard NIH animal transport box). Correct disposal of the transport box should also be confirmed with the Occupational Safety and Health Specialist.
- Warning labels are required on enclosures used to transport live or dead animals that have been exposed to chemical or biological hazards. Minimum label requirements include a “Biological Hazard” or “Chemical Hazard” label with the specific hazard identified.
- Carcasses of contaminated animals must be handled according to the NIH Waste Disposal Guide (<http://orf.od.nih.gov/Environmental+Protection/Waste+Disposal/>). Contaminated animal carcasses that are being transported to DVR for pathological examination also need to be placed in double plastic bags (primary barrier) and then into a cardboard box (secondary barrier) and must be accompanied by the Diagnostic Submission Form (<http://dvrnet.ors.od.nih.gov/pathology.asp>) with a detailed history of the type and amount of hazardous material.

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