



2023 CHECKLIST FOR AAALAC SITE VISIT

Questions? Contact the ARC at arc@research.ucla.edu or 310-206-6308.

In the vivaria...

1. **Check your animal cages:** Are your cage cards correct with up-to-date information, including a telephone number, preferably one that is reachable 24/7? No handwritten cage cards?

If you are using specialized handling cards, such as the blue “Investigator will Feed/Water/Medicate/Fast” cards, are they completely filled out (and legible), and the log maintained on the back or a separate log kept in the animal room? Refer to the [Worksafe](#) training “DLAM Cage Side Communication Cards” for any questions.

Do all single-housed animals have a justification for this arrangement indicated on their cage cards? If animals are singly housed for experimental purposes, is scientific justification documented in your ARC protocol?

Is the correct protocol on the cage card: breeding colony protocol for animals that are breeding and experimental protocol for those undergoing studies?

If you are using non-disposable enrichment items (e.g., plastic huts for mice), work with the Supervisor of the vivarium where those animals are housed to coordinate DLAM washing them through an automated cage wash. Otherwise, these items must be hand-washed in the lab with DLAM-approved detergents and disinfectants, microbial testing undertaken, and a log maintained to show AAALAC that this sanitation practice is being maintained.

2. **If you use procedure space within the DLAM vivaria (either your own assigned space OR common DLAM procedure rooms):** Check these areas for your items. There should be no expired drugs or unlabeled “mystery tubes,” spaces should be neat and tidy, and corrugated cardboard boxes that cannot be sanitized must be removed.

If you use treats or supportive care for your animals, they must be stored in plastic, Tupperware-like containers with “not for human consumption” written on the outside, and either an expiration date, or a purchase date, if the item did not have an expiration date on the original container.

Soiled items, especially those that contact animals, should be promptly and thoroughly cleaned. Clean items should be stored either covered or in a non-cardboard container, preferably with a sign indicating “clean” and the date the items were washed, and a log for cleaning maintained. If you have questions on cleaning, be advised that DLAM will soon be distributing a guidance document with references to all labs.

3. **Follow the orders and recommendations of the veterinarian:** Always treat and/or euthanize your animals as directed by the veterinarian. If you have questions about orders, promptly contact the veterinarian to discuss options.

Do not treat with anything (antibiotic, analgesic, or other medications) without consulting with the veterinarian first, unless these treatments are already detailed in your approved ARC protocol. Giving supportive care in the form of moistened food on the cage floor or DietGel cups, as well as SQ or IP fluids, is OK, but actions beyond that are not.

Record that you have performed these treatments (orange treatment cards) as prescribed by the veterinarian and save the records for subsequent ARC, USDA, or AAALAC review. Review the ARC Policy on [Authority of the Attending Veterinarian](#).
4. **If removing rodents from the vivarium:** Place the cages (with the water bottles turned upside down) inside opaque plastic bags before transporting them through common hallways or elevators, or (if rodents are being removed for terminal procedures) use a disposable cardboard container, available from DLAM. Use a cart for transport when possible. These practices will minimize spread of rodent allergens in public areas and decrease visibility of animals to the public. Detach the barcode from the primary cage card, record the date on it, and deposit this into the blue box to de-activate the cage card.
5. **How to reach the vet in an emergency:** The DLAM Emergency Phone Tree, 310-825-2200, should be posted in your laboratory and can be programmed into your cell phone for quick use. Please ensure you and your team know how to reach a DLAM vet for any emergency.

If you perform surgery...

6. **Review aseptic surgery requirements:** (1) Anesthetize, (2) shave or clip fur, then (3) apply three alternating scrubs using Betadine or Chlorhexidine and 70% isopropyl alcohol.

If performing surgery in your ARC-approved lab space, make sure the area is clean and neat and that all supplies are stocked in plastic container or drawers (no cardboard) and are not expired.

Physically separate any items that are not used in animals (such as for tissue culture) from those used in animals. If such items are stored in the same area, such as a common refrigerator, it is best to label as “not for use in animals” or “not for use in live animals.”
7. **Review survival surgical records for completeness and accuracy:** All records must include the dose of drugs administered, pre-/intra-/post-op care of the animal, details of what analgesics were used and when, etc.

Review ARC Policies on [Survival Surgery in Mice, Rats, and Birds](#) and [Survival Surgery in USDA-Covered Species](#).
8. **All surgical animals, including rodents, require analgesia:** Unless otherwise approved by the ARC, minor surgery patients require at least 24hr of pain killers; major surgery patients require at least 48hr. Know how often and for how long the analgesia administer must be given.

In most cases, the first dose of analgesia is given at least thirty (30) minutes pre-emptively (before the painful stimulus of the surgical incision).

Be prepared to answer questions about how you perform your surgery and how you give post-op care, including pain relief to your animals.

If you have a Study Area...

9. **Updated SAM Doc:** Review the ARC Policy on [Maintaining Animals in Study Areas](#) and your ARC-approved Study Area Management (SAM) document to verify that everything is current; contact the ARC administrative team at arc@research.ucla.edu if you need to make updates.

Use your SAM doc and the ARC Policy as an AAALAC-prep checklist to help prepare for questions that may be asked by the AAALAC site visitors.

In your Research Area...

10. **Read your protocol:** Be aware of the procedures that have received ARC approval.

Be sure to keep the ARC updated when you hire or replace lab personnel who work with animals by submitting a personnel amendment.

Make sure that all locations where animals are housed and used are identified in the approved protocol.

If there has been any “protocol drift” over time, submit an amendment to bring the approved version of your protocol in line with current practices.

11. **Everyone working with animals must have access to the approved protocol:** All members of your Research Team have access to your approved ARC protocol in RATS 2.0.

Staff must understand their specific role/duties in the experiments.

Make sure everyone is up to date on training (documentation of training is recommended) and Occ. Health requirements (i.e., [MHQ](#)).

AAALAC visitors may ask lab members about specific procedures from their own protocols, Occ. Health, and training. Be prepared to answer!

12. **Check your lab for expired and non-pharmaceutical-grade drugs:** All drugs intended to be used on or in animals that have expired must be properly discarded.

Expired materials can be used for non-survival procedures IF they are labeled “for terminal use only” and IF they are not anesthetics, analgesics or euthanasia meds.

If you are using controlled substances, review your procedures and logs to ensure they align with DEA best practices. Contact the UCLA [Controlled Substances Program for Research](#) for assistance.

Non-pharmaceutical-grade drugs (e.g., from Sigma, Fisher) must be approved by the ARC and documented in your protocol prior to their use in animals.

Review ARC Policies on [Expired Medical Materials](#), [Use of Pharmaceutical Grade Compounds](#), and [Use of Fluids and Diluted Drugs in Research Animals](#).

13. **When animals attack:** Review procedures in case of an animal bite or scratch: (1) Wash the wound with warm soapy water or with a Betadine scrub for at least 15 minutes, (2) report to

your supervisor, (3) report to the Occupational Health Facility, (4) notify DLAM if you would like re-training in animal handling.

If you work with Macaques or their biological samples, you must have a B virus exposure kit in your lab. Know where it is located, as well as the ones in the DLAM vivaria. For your own kit, make sure nothing in it is expired, that you have all of the components, and that everyone in the lab who may need it has had the most current training on its use. If you need anything in it replaced, contact DLAMPharmacy@mednet.ucla.edu.

14. **Disaster Plan**: If you use animals in your lab, be sure that you understand processes for how to manage animals in the event of an emergency that requires building evacuation. A flow-chart for how to handle animals outside of the vivarium in the case of an emergency is available [here](#).