

Standard Operating Procedure

SOP Number: **02-18-4260**

Service: **Research**

Operating Section: **Husbandry**

Unit: **CMF**

Title: **Completion and Distribution of Animal Observation Forms**

Purpose:

To describe the procedures for completing and distributing animal observation forms.

Procedure:

- 1) The CMF Veterinary Care Team (VCT or veterinary staff) is made up of animal health technicians and veterinarians. They perform physicals and assess conditions on ill or injured animals in response to animal observation form submissions or to investigative staff concerns.
- 2) When a Laboratory Animal Care Technician notices an animal that appears to have a behavioral problem or an illness, they must complete an animal observation form. The terminology listed on the back of the form should be used whenever possible.
- 3) The Laboratory Animal Care Technician checks the back and front of the cage card so any previous conditions can be noted on the new observation form. If an old observation report number is on the card, it is included in the report along with the date, if available. A member of the VCT will check the old report to discern if this is a new or recurring condition. If the issue is a cloudy or small or missing eye and has been previously reported, the old information will be marked on the back of the cage card. It is only reported again if the condition has worsened or if there are signs of infection.
- 4) Animal Health Care Technician(s) (AHT) are notified by e-mail or text. If the animal needs immediate attention, this must be identified in the appropriate location on the form and a member of the veterinary team is contacted. A member of the VCT may ask the CMF tech to send pictures or videos or facetime with them in order to initially assess the animal's condition. On weekends or holidays the veterinarian on call is notified.
- 5) The AHT, or the attending veterinarian if they are not available, will write up their findings, which may include more "official" medical terminology than the initial write-up. They then e-mail the PI/PI staff if it's a boilerplate observation (ocular opacity, aggression wounds, hydrocephaly, malocclusion, etc.) that comes from a template they have for the particular condition. When the AHT observes there are signs of possible infection or pain, they consult the attending veterinarian prior to notifying the PI/PI staff to see if they want to suggest or require treatment. If they do, the AHT presents that in their email to the PI/PI staff. The AHT documents on the form that they contacted the PI and their staff and hand it off to the attending veterinarian.
- 6) The veterinarian will examine the animal during regular rounds (if not an urgent matter) and document their instructions in the appropriate section of the form. They will determine whether or not a health sheet needs to be initiated, whether the Investigator needs to be notified and whether the IACUC needs to be notified. These decisions will be documented in the appropriate section of the form and the veterinarian will notify the Investigator and/or IACUC as necessary. The veterinarian will return the form to the AHT as soon as possible for appropriate action. If it will continue on observation, a member of the VCT puts a yellow transparency over the card and marks the card with the observation form number and the date. If the AHT trims the teeth for malocclusion, they will also add a plain, white cage card, upright behind the coded card and indicate the date and which teeth were trimmed (upper, lower, all 4).

- 7) The veterinary staff follows the observed animal(s) out until their condition has improved to normal, for a specified amount of time (as in a case with unchanging conditions), or at the animal's "final disposition" (euthanasia). "Following" means all the animals on observation are checked regularly. On the weekends, they are checked via the CMF husbandry technician's observations which is why it is important for the veterinary staff to give some indication in the weekend notes as to the current state of the animal and what to look for to report.
- 8) Currently open observation reports will be kept in an upright bin next to the mailboxes in the CMF offices so there is one copy upon which everyone can notate and access.
- 9) Once the observation form is completed the AHT will distribute copies of the form as identified on the bottom of the form. The observation report originals are kept in two files, one by date and one by PI for at least one year from write-up (for non USDA-covered rodents). Covered species copies are kept for at least three years past the date of euthanasia, the original goes in the animal's record and the copy in a binder by PI.
- 10) Barbering alone (the hair loss that often looks it's been cut with scissors) without other injury is not written as an observation. "Barbering" and the date is written on the back of the cage card so everyone can see if it's a new condition or if it's been going on for a while. If there are any cuts, scabs, or other injuries along with the barbering, it is written up as an observation.
- 11) In cages where animals are barbering or food grinding (not reportable, imitated behaviors), the cage is moved out of (side) view of other cages or a visual divider is put in place (like a Supermouse cage filter, for example) to prevent the mimicking of the behavior. This is not reported, but the issues are written on the back of the cage card.

OFFICE USE ONLY:

APPROVALS

Responsible Official		Date	
<i>John Lee DVM MD</i>		08/25/2022	
QA Signature		Date	
<i>[Signature]</i>		08/25/2022	
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