Authority of the Attending Veterinarian

This policy defines the authority of the Attending Veterinarian (AV) at Washington State University. This policy does not supersede state or federal law. In the case of any inconsistency, state and federal law govern.

In accordance with the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWAR) (9 CFR 2.33(2)), the institutionally-appointed Attending Veterinarian of record for WSU has final authority and responsibility to:

- Ensure the provision of adequate veterinary care; and
- Oversee the adequacy of other aspects of animal care and use that impact animal welfare and safety. (9 CFR 2.33(2))

Other aspects include:

- Animal housing
- Husbandry
- Nutrition
- Sanitation practices
- Biosecurity
- Behavioral management

The duties of the AV may be shared with or delegated to other veterinarians. However, ensuring provision of adequate veterinary care remains the responsibility of the AV.

Treatment and Euthanasia

Washington State University has empowered the AV with the final authority to treat or humanely euthanize animals at his or her discretion. Ideally, this is done after consultation with the principal investigator (PI) or responsible members of the research team.

However, in emergent situations with animal welfare or safety considerations, the AV is not required to seek approval from the PI, the PI's supervisor, or the WSU Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (WSU IACUC) in order to treat or euthanize animals if such actions are judged prudent by the AV. The AV promptly notifies the PI or responsible members of the research team and the WSU IACUC of the animal treatment or euthanasia.

Suspension of Animal Activities

The AV has full authority to immediately suspend animal activities that are inconsistent with adequate animal care or for protocol deviations that have a negative impact on the animal.

In cases where an activity is suspended, the AV or his or her designee promptly forwards the incident to WSU IACUC for further review.
Authority of the Attending Veterinarian

Unrestricted Access to Areas and Records

The AV has unrestricted access to:

- All areas where animals are used or housed, including:
  - Animal housing
  - Research laboratories
  - Satellite facilities
- All animal medical and use records

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this section (BPPM 45.42):

Animal

Animal is defined as any vertebrate animal or cephalopod handled at Washington State University for purposes of:

- Research
- Research training
- Testing
- Teaching
- Outreach (including, but not limited to, veterinary medical services)
- Related activities

The AV may provide guidance on the presence of stray domestic animals and naturally-occurring wildlife which do not fall under the direct authority of the AV.

Attending Veterinarian

Attending veterinarian is defined as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, with training or experience in laboratory animal science and medicine, who has direct or delegated program authority and responsibility for activities involving animals at the institution.

( Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals)

The AV is responsible for cooperating with and providing assistance to other animal control entities that visit University campuses.

Adequate Veterinary Care

Adequate veterinary care consists of appropriate methods to prevent disease including:

- Surveying, diagnosing, treating, and controlling disease.
- Managing protocol-associated disease, disability, or other sequelae.

Sequelae are defined as chronic conditions resulting from a disease, injury, therapy, or other trauma.
Authority of the Attending Veterinarian

Adequate Veterinary Care (cont.)

• Providing anesthesia and analgesia.
• Performing surgery.
• Providing post-surgical care.
• Assessing animal well-being.
• Performing euthanasia.

Adequate veterinary care methods must be in accordance with professionally-accepted medical and veterinary care practice.

REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE

The following regulations and guidance apply to this section:

  "Each research facility shall ensure that the attending veterinarian has appropriate authority to ensure the provision of adequate veterinary care and to oversee the adequacy of other aspects of animal care and use."


  aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalwelfare/sa_publications/ct_publications_and_guidance_documents


• Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching 3rd edition, 2010 (the Ag Guide):
  aaalac.org/about/Ag_Guide_3rd_ed.pdf

• American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine position statement regarding adequate veterinary care:
  aclam.org/about/position-statements

• Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals:
  olaw.nih.gov/policies-laws/phs-policy.htm