POLICY: Acclimation Policy for Animals

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Scope
The purpose of this policy is to establish a period of acclimation for laboratory animals arriving at the University of Pittsburgh from a commercial vendor, other institution, or after transportation by vehicle between University animal facilities.

Requirements
1. During transport, almost every aspect of their environment changes which induces stress. Transportation stress affects multiple physiological systems in laboratory animals and has the potential to confound research if animals are utilized before homeostasis is restored and physiological measures return to normal.

2. A minimum 48-hour acclimation period is the standard default for all animals after vehicle.
   a. Animals should not be experimentally manipulated during the acclimation period. However, identity and sex verification, baseline body weight, and physical examination may be performed during the acclimation period.

3. Animals may be utilized during the acclimation period for
   a. acute non-survival procedures outlined in the IACUC approved protocol or approved by a DLAR, SNI, or MWRI veterinarian;
   b. imaging purposes involving unique resources unavailable at the primary housing facility that require transportation to a secondary facility; or
   c. other experimental manipulations outlined in the IACUC approved protocol.

4. Procedures required to provide clinically indicated veterinary care or protect individual or animal colony health may be performed during the acclimation period by veterinary staff under the direction of a DLAR, SNI, or MWRI veterinarian.