

UCAR Policy on NIH Noncompliance: Overcrowded Rodent Cage

Approved by UCAR 4/17/19

Objective: The objective is to maintain the University of Rochester's Assurance with PHS/NIH. NIH requires that PHS assured institutions comply with all standards of the NIH *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. Exemptions to the *Guide* must be scientifically justified by the Principal Investigator and approved by UCAR.

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to describe a UCAR approved process for correcting investigators' rodent breeding colony practices which lead to overcrowded cages.

Standard: The *Guide's* housing specifications are documented in the UCAR Rodent Density policy. ([Mouse Cage Density](#), [Rat Cage Density](#))

Prevention: UCAR policy requires that all investigators and staff directly involved with managing breeding colonies of rodents complete the "Breeding Colony Management" class as a condition of UCAR approval of the protocol or modification to add personnel.

Corrective Actions for Noncompliance:

Step 1: If an investigators' lab has more than two overcrowded cages reported per month over a 6 month period or greater than 2% of his/her total inventory, UCAR will notify the Principal Investigator of the noncompliance. All staff will undergo retraining by re-taking the online Rodent Colony Management training. The PI will submit a written assurance that he/she will oversee the laboratory practices to maintain compliance. If compliance is not maintained over the next 6 months, the PI will understand that Step 2 will take place.

Step 2: The noncompliance issue will be discussed at a committee meeting, during which potential action plans will be determined. The solution will include specific changes in practice required by UCAR. If noncompliance persists over 6 months, Step 3 will take place. Since PHS considers over-crowded cages to be significant noncompliance UCAR may notify PHS of the ongoing noncompliance.

Step 3: UCAR repeats the notification process above and mandates that breeding ceases or that all breeding be managed by the DCM veterinary staff at a charge to the PI over a 3 month period with an option for the PI to apply to UCAR for breeding privileges with assurances to meet measurable outcomes.