

**Policy- Occupational
Health Program for
Individuals with Animal
Contact**

Version 3.2

I. Introduction

The Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals requires an institution to have a "health program for personnel who work in laboratory animal facilities or have frequent contact with animals". Moreover, the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* states that, "An occupational health program must be part of the overall animal care and use program." In order to ensure compliance with regulatory and accrediting agency requirements, the ACC has developed the following Occupational Health Program for Individuals with Animal Contact.

II. Institutional Policy

The UIC Occupational Health Program for Individuals with Animal Contact is administered by University Health Service. The risk categories (Addendum A) and specific components of the health assessment (Addendum B) for each respective risk category were determined by UIC Occupational Health Physicians. The program covers faculty, staff, students, volunteers and visitors who work with or in proximity to vertebrate animals. Entrance into the program occurs at the time access to an animal facility is requested or at the time a field study protocol is submitted. Program requirements must be completed in order to obtain final authorization for animal facility access, or in the case of field studies, to obtain ACC approval of the protocol.

The institution at no additional expense to the investigator will cover the costs for the basic components of the program. These components include the initial and periodic health assessments, tetanus immunization, initial and annual tuberculosis testing required for access to the nonhuman primate colony, animal-related injuries or illness, and B virus exposures for those who work with macaque monkeys. However, costs associated with research-specific health risks, such as special immunizations (i.e. hepatitis B, rabies, measles), special diagnostic testing (i.e. antibody titers for rabies or measles), and any additional tuberculosis testing required by a medical surveillance program developed for a specific study, will be charged to the investigator (e.g. grant and/or department funds). For graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, research assistants, or other animal protocol support staff, the costs associated with research-specific health risks are the responsibility of the mentor, employing principal investigator, and/or the employing department.

Failure to comply with the program may result in loss of facility access and/or protocol suspension.

APPENDIX A
Definitions of Occupational Risk Categories

RESEARCH STAFF

- LOW** Individuals with no direct contact with mammals, including physical plant employees, contractors, security staff, and visitors
Individuals in contact with reptiles, amphibians, or fish with minimal risk to human health or safety
- MILD** Individuals in contact with rodents, rabbits, dogs, pigs, and ruminants
- MODERATE** Individuals in contact with rodents, rabbits, dogs, pigs, and ruminants that require annual assessment (i.e. personnel with history of allergies, immunosuppressive medical condition, immunosuppressive drug therapy, or other conditions as determined by the medical staff of University Health Service)
- HIGH** Individuals in contact with nonhuman primates

BRL EMPLOYEES

- MILD** Office and janitorial staff
- HIGH** Any staff member in contact with animals, including veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and animal care technicians

FIELD STUDIES/WILD SPECIES

- LOW** Individuals conducting field studies in North America or Europe in which only animal observation is performed (i.e. no animal handling)
- HIGH** Individuals in contact with wild species brought into the laboratory environment.
Individuals conducting field studies in which animals are handled or in a geographic location other than North America or Europe. The occupational health program is custom designed based on the species, potential zoonotic or physical risks, and/or geographic location.

**APPENDIX B
UIC Occupational Health Program for Individuals with Animal Contact
Components of Health Assessment**

FOR RESEARCH STAFF

Risk Category	Veterinary Orientation	Health Assessment	Tetanus Vaccination	TB Screening	Measles Screening	Serum Banking
LOW	NO NEED TO VISIT UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES Accompanied by BRL or research staff member enrolled in occupational health program for individuals with animal contact					
MILD	Baseline + every 5 years	Every 5 years	As needed	NA	NA	NA
MODERATE	Baseline + every 5 years	Annual	As needed	NA	NA	NA
HIGH	Baseline + every 5 years	Annual	As needed	Every 6 or 12 months	Baseline	Baseline

FOR BRL EMPLOYEES

Risk Category	Veterinary Orientation	Health Assessment	Tetanus Vaccination	TB Screening	Measles Screening	Drug Screening	Respirator Clearance	Hepatitis B Vaccination	Serum Banking
MILD	Baseline	Annual	As needed	Annual	Baseline	Baseline	NA	NA	NA
HIGH	Baseline	Annual	As needed	Every 6 or 12 months	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

FOR FIELD STUDIES/WILD SPECIES CONTACT

LOW	NO NEED TO VISIT UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES
HIGH	Custom program based on the species, potential zoonotic and physical risks, and/or geographic location