



Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

Attending Veterinarian

Federal regulations from PHS Policy IV.A. and USDA 9 CFR, 2.31 require the appointment of a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine to serve on the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) with the authority and responsibility for activities involving animals at the institution. The term attending veterinarian (AV) is similarly defined, in the Animal Welfare Act and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching*, as a graduate veterinarian who has received training or experience in the care of the species being attended and who has direct or delegated authority for activities involving animals. The facility/institution will assure that the attending veterinarian has appropriate authority to ensure the provision of adequate veterinary care. The attending veterinarian will be a voting member of the IACUC.

The attending veterinarian must ensure that the animal care programs include provisions of appropriate facilities, personnel, and equipment to assure compliance with regulatory requirements. Further, prevention, control, diagnosis and treatment of disease, daily observation, weekend and holiday care for animals, guidance to principal investigators regarding care, handling, immobilization, anesthesia, tranquilization and euthanasia, as well as pre- and post-procedural care, must be assured by the attending veterinarian.

Because of the diversity of animal species and decentralized nature of the animal care and use program at Tarleton State University, the duties of the attending veterinarian may be shared and/or delegated to other veterinarians, but the assurance of compliance remains the responsibility of the attending veterinarian. Should any duties be delegated, then a mechanism of direct, frequent and regular communication must be established between these personnel and the AV. The animal program needs should be regularly and clearly communicated to the Institutional Official by the attending veterinarian. In addition, there should be regular, clear communication between the attending veterinarian and the IACUC.

Critical aspects of the role of the attending veterinarian and the program of veterinary care include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The attending veterinarian should be involved in all institutional plans involving renovation or construction of facilities in which animals are housed or used including design and maintenance of animal facilities.
- The attending veterinarian must have access to all animals.
- The attending veterinarian should have input in protocol review, the development of study removal criteria, and responsible conduct of research activities.
- The attending veterinarian is expected to have oversight of several aspects of the program such as husbandry, housing, preventative medicine and health surveillance, medical treatment, establishment of sedation, anesthetic and analgesic guidelines, handling, and immobilization.
- There must be timely provision of veterinary medical care and emergency veterinary care must be available after work hours, on weekends, and on holidays.
- The attending veterinarian is expected to provide guidance and oversight to surgery programs and peri-operative care.
- Veterinarians providing clinical and/or program oversight and support must have experience, training, and expertise necessary to appropriately evaluate the health and well-being of the species used, in the context of the animal use being carried out by the institution.
- Professional veterinary staff should remain knowledgeable about the latest practices and procedures to ensure that high quality care is provided to animals involved in teaching, research, and testing at the institution.