

RESEARCH INVOLVING VERTEBRATE ANIMALS

Although the recipient institution and investigator bear the major responsibility for the proper care and use of animals, NIH staff, scientific review groups, and Councils and Boards share this responsibility. Care and use of vertebrate animals in research must conform to applicable law and Public Health Service policy, especially the **Principles for Use of Animals**. These principles can be summarized as two broad rules:

- The project should be worthwhile and justified on the basis of anticipated results for the good of society and the contribution to knowledge, and the work should be planned and performed by qualified scientists;
- Animals should be confined, restrained, transported, cared for, and used in experimental procedures in a manner to avoid any unnecessary discomfort, pain, or injury. Special attention must be provided when the proposed research involves dogs, cats, nonhuman primates, large numbers of animals, or animals that are in short supply or are costly.

The evaluation by scientific review group members is to take into consideration the investigator's response to the following five points:

1. Provide a detailed description of the proposed use of the animals in the work previously outlined in the experimental design and methods section. Identify the species, strains, ages, sex and numbers of animals to be used in the proposed work.
2. Justify the use of animals, the choice of species, and the numbers used. If animals are in short supply, costly, or to be used in large numbers, provide an additional rationale for their selection and their numbers.
3. Provide information on the veterinary care of the animals involved.
4. Describe the procedures for ensuring that discomfort, distress, pain, and injury will be limited to that which is unavoidable in the conduct of scientifically sound research. Describe the use of analgesic, anesthetic, and tranquilizing drugs and/or comfortable restraining devices where appropriate to minimize discomfort, distress, pain, and injury.
5. Describe any euthanasia method to be used and the reasons for its selection. State whether this method is consistent with the recommendations of the Panel on Euthanasia of the American Veterinary Medical Association. If not, present a justification for not following the recommendations.

Any comments or concerns that scientific review group members may wish to express regarding the appropriateness of the choice of species and numbers involved, the justification for their use, and the care and maintenance of vertebrate animals used in the project will be discussed in a special note (**ANIMAL WELFARE**) in the summary statement. A "concern" is a scientific review group finding regarding animal care or use that requires resolution by program staff prior to award; a "comment" is a scientific review group observation that will be communicated in the summary statement as a suggestion to the principal investigator. Questions may be directed to the Office for Protection from Research Risks. No award will be made unless the applicant institution has given the NIH Office for Protection from Research Risks an acceptable assurance of compliance with the PHS policy and all concerns or questions raised by the scientific review group have been resolved to the satisfaction of the NIH. If concerns are expressed regarding the proper use and care of animals, a recommendation may be made that no further consideration be given to the application. This can be done by either appropriate language in the summary statement (applications eligible for streamlined review) or by majority vote (applications not eligible for streamlined review).