

**INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE**  
**Policy # 29**  
**IACUC PROCEDURE FOLLOWING DEPARTURE OF A PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

In concurrence with  
TTUHSC El Paso Assurance #D19-01056  
and Federal Regulations and Guidelines

**Purpose**

This policy outlines the TTUHSC El Paso IACUC procedure for ensuring that animal welfare is protected following the sudden departure of a Principal Investigator (PI) from the institution.

**Description**

During certain circumstances, a PI may suddenly leave the institution without terminating the IACUC protocol or amending the protocol to list a new PI. These circumstances may include, but are not limited to termination of employment, or death of the PI. In these circumstances, the IACUC must take steps to ensure the immediate welfare of any animals on that protocol. These steps are intended as a stop-gap measure. Beyond the immediate timeframe, it is the responsibility of the department chair and any grant-awarding agencies supporting the study, to identify a potential new PI or request termination of the protocol.

1. The IACUC office should be informed of the PI's departure by the department chair or study staff, with a minimum of 30 days in advance to plan accordingly or at the earliest possible opportunity.
2. The IACUC chair (or designee) will consult with LARC and the study staff to determine if there are any animals currently housed on the protocol.
3. If animals are currently housed on the protocol, the IACUC chair (or designee) and the institutional veterinarian will meet with the department chair, grant co-PI (if one exists) and study staff to determine if there are any ongoing experiments and/or breeding, and assess the animal welfare needs.
4. If the IACUC chair (or designee) and veterinarian determine that the animals' continued welfare can be assured in concordance with the IACUC protocol, and assigned PI (Co-PI) on the protocol, the study staff may continue with the experiments and/or breeding, in close consultation with the institutional vet. In this case, the immediate responsibility for animal welfare and protocol compliance will fall with the department chair, or a person designated by the IACUC, until the study is terminated or reassigned to a new PI. Once a potential new PI has been identified and any funding-related issues have been resolved by the department chair and Office of Research (OR), the appropriate amendment should be submitted via iRIS. Amendment will be reviewed via the normal procedure (described in Policy 13) by the IACUC. DMR may be requested to expedite this process (as described in Policy 7).
5. If the IACUC chair (or designee) and veterinarian determine that the animals' continued welfare cannot be assured, the protocol will be put in hiatus and any animals housed on the protocol will be euthanized or transferred to the holding protocol. The ultimate decision in regards to the animal welfare of the animals will be made by the IACUC chair (or designee), department chair, veterinarian and IO.

## **Related Policies**

Investigators must comply with all other institutional policies at TTUHSC El Paso and Federal Guidelines. This list includes, but is not limited to, the following:

IACUC Policy 7: Designated Reviews

IACUC Policy 13: Protocol Approval, Implementation, Review and Amendment Processes

Procedure Room Rental Guidelines under LARC