

HKSTP IACUC

12 – Transport of Animals Policy

Version History

Version	Effective Date
1	28/02/2023

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to maintain the safety and wellbeing of animals during transport within, to and from HKSTP. Transportation of live animals must conform to all local and international guidelines, policies and regulations.

2. General Principles

- 2.1 Transport of animals shall be supervised by a qualified laboratory animal practitioner.
- 2.2 Measures shall be taken to reduce animal transport as much as possible. During transport, measures shall be taken to reduce animal stress responses. Housing environments and conditions before and after transport shall be as consistent as possible.
- 2.3 After transport, experimental procedures shall not be carried out immediately, but rather, animals shall be given sufficient time to acclimatize to their new surroundings.
- 2.4 Animals should be transported in well-covered containers.
- 2.5 During transport, measures to maintain animal health status should be taken to avoid exposure to potential pathogens, injuries, extreme temperatures, excessive noise, vibrations and other factors that may induce significant discomfort and stress to the animals.
- 2.6 For any transport arrangements within, to and from HKSTP, the Company is responsible to contact and make arrangements with HKSTP Facilities Management Office for animal delivery and routing in buildings.

3. Transport Condition

- 3.1 The shipping institution and the receiving institution shall confer and negotiate in advance, to agree an animal transport plan which includes carrier details, means of transport, transit route, transit duration, weather conditions, shipping containers, and contingency plans, in order to ensure that, for the animals, shipping occurs in the shortest, safest, and most comfortable way possible.
- 3.2 If an animal transport plan may have a negative impact on animal welfare, a welfare and ethical review shall be carried out.
- 3.3 It is not appropriate for animals to be transported while they are ill, in post-operative recovery, near parturition, or at other times when they are unfit to travel.

- 3.4 Environmental conditions during transport shall be safe and non-hazardous to animals and shall ensure that for the entire transport process animals are comfortable and can breathe freely. Transport cages shall be safe, reliable and sturdy so as to prevent animals from being injured or otherwise harmed, or from escaping, and also prevent other animals from entering. Incompatible animals should be separated to prevent them from harming each other.
- 3.5 If the duration of transport exceeds 6 hours, sufficient and appropriate food and water shall be supplied to animals. If the duration of transport exceeds 24 hours, bedding as well as rest breaks shall also be ensured.

4. Import and Export

- 4.1 Cross-border animal transport shall be carried out only when transport conditions are appropriate to the animals' physiological and behavioral needs and the animals are disease-free. Effective steps shall be taken to ensure transport cages and packaging are physically contained, so as to eliminate the possibility of cross-contamination between animals and the environment.
- 4.2 The transport plan and implementation of the plan shall comply with the relevant laws and regulations and welfare and ethics regulations of both Hong Kong and the destination country or region.

5. Loading, unloading, and arrival

- 5.1 Loading and unloading of animals shall be supervised by a qualified laboratory animal practitioner. The process shall be proficient and skilled in transport procedures in order to reduce stress in animals during transport.
- 5.2 Social animals that are transported in pairs or groups shall, on arrival at their destination, as far as possible be maintained in the same pairs or groups during the acclimatization period as they were when transported.