IACUC POLICY  
CANINE EXERCISE AND SOCIALIZATION

The University of Pennsylvania’s Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and Attending Veterinarian (ULAR) have adopted the following policy to clarify the regulatory responsibilities of the institution and to outline the minimally acceptable standards for providing appropriate socialization and exercise for canines used in research.

Animal Welfare Regulations 3.8
“…research facilities must develop, document, and follow an appropriate plan to provide dogs with the opportunity for exercise... The frequency, method, and duration of the opportunity for exercise shall be determined by the attending veterinarian and, at research facilities, in consultation with and approval by the Committee.”

All facilities housing research or teaching dogs must adhere to the minimum standards established in this policy. The specific mechanisms or activities performed to comply with this policy may be facility-specific, which must be documented with an IACUC-reviewed standard operating procedure (SOP).

This institutional policy focuses on the following topics directly related to the provision of exercise and socialization for dogs housed in Penn animal colonies:

- Required Floor Space
- Requirements for Exercise
- Requirements for Socialization
- Exemptions
- Standard Operating Procedures

REQUIRED FLOOR SPACE

The Animal Welfare Regulations considers the floor space provided to the dog(s) as a factor in determining the requirements for exercise. The minimum required floor space is based on the dog’s body length which is measured in inches—as a straight line from the tip of the nose to the base of the tail. The floor space of a cage or run is measured in square feet.

\[
\text{Minimum floor space (sq.ft.)} = \frac{(\text{body length (in.)} + 6)^2}{144}
\]

Group housing of dogs will require the full floor space required for each dog individually. The table is a summary of required floor space based on the nose-to tail length.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Length (in.)</th>
<th>Floor Space (sq. ft.) per dog</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>27</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPROVED
6/24/14
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REQUIREMENTS FOR EXERCISE

Dogs, especially when housed individually in a room or in smaller enclosures, should be allowed to exercise (Guide). Exercise is required for individually housed dogs maintained in runs that provide less than twice the minimum floor space needed for an individual dog (AWR 3.8(a)).

When exercise is required, daily exercise for the dog(s) will be provided for at least 10 minutes. Allowing the dogs outside of the cage during cleaning, if for at least 10 minutes, may constitute the official documented exercise period. The provision of at least 10 minutes exercise, if required, must be documented by whoever has exercised the dog(s). Acceptable methods of documentation include:

- The individual animal’s clinical record
- Daily husbandry log
- Facility exercise log

The following dogs do not require specific exercise periods:

- Dogs housed individually in 200% of their required space needs
- Grouped housed dogs in runs that provide 100% of the required space for each dog individually
- Puppies less than 12 weeks old
- Mothers with pre-weaned litters

REQUIREMENTS FOR SOCIALIZATION

Dogs should be provided with positive human interaction (Guide). If a dog is housed, held, or maintained at a facility without sensory (e.g., visual) contact with another dog, it must be provided with positive physical contact with humans at least daily (AWR 3.8(c)(2)).

If a dog is housed in isolation (e.g. in a room without visual contact with other dogs), then this dog must be provided with daily positive human interaction for at least 10 minutes. This time period may coincide with the period of daily exercise, if additional exercise is required. The provision of at least 10 minutes of positive human interaction, if required, must be documented by whoever has socialized the dog(s). Acceptable methods of documentation include:

- The individual animal’s clinical record
- Daily husbandry log
- Facility exercise log

Performing normal husbandry procedures (e.g. cleaning runs, providing food and water) does NOT constitute “positive” human interaction. Examples of positive human interaction include, but are not limited to, additional opportunities for social contact (e.g., grooming), play, or exploration (Guide).

EXEMPTIONS

There are two (2) scenarios by which an exemption to the dog exercise or socialization requirements may be administered (AWR 3.8(d)).

1. The Attending Veterinarian or designees (ULAR veterinarians) may exempt a dog from exercise or socialization because of their health, condition, or well-being. Veterinary-based exemptions
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must be documented in the animal’s clinical record and must be reviewed and updated at least every 30 days by the Attending Veterinarian or designees (ULAR veterinarians).

2. The Principal Investigator justifies that the scientific objectives of the project conflict with the provision of exercise or socialization. Research-related exemptions must be documented in an approved exemption “form” and must be reviewed not less than annually (linked with the annual continuing review).

In order to avoid the inadvertent exercising of a dog that may prove deleterious to the animal’s condition, the facilities must have a mechanism for accurately identifying dogs that are exempted exercise or socialization. This mechanism should be clearly described in the standard operating procedure.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

This guideline outlines the regulatory and institutional requirements of a canine exercise program. The IACUC understands that different facilities working with different canine models of disease may have different means of appropriately fulfilling the requirement of exercise programs. Individual SOPs must be made available to the IACUC and filed with OAW—including any modifications made to the SOPs. The SOP outlining a distinct canine exercise program, based on facility and research needs must include at least complete descriptions of following items:

- **Exercise Program**
  - A statement indicating that dogs will be provided an opportunity for at least 10 minutes of exercise daily
  - The mechanism(s) by which exercise is provided
  - The personnel/position that will be responsible for providing and documenting daily exercise, if exemptions are not in place (avoid listing an individual person)
  - The mechanism by which exercise is documented

- **Socialization Program (for dogs housed in isolation)**
  - A statement indicating that dogs housed in isolation will be provided an opportunity for at least 10 minutes of positive human interaction daily
  - The mechanism(s) by which positive human interaction is provided
  - The personnel/position that will be responsible for providing and documenting positive human interaction (avoid listing an individual person)
  - The mechanism by which positive human interaction is documented

Updating the SOPs is the responsibility of the facility manager and veterinarian. An up-to-date SOP must be readily available at any IACUC or USDA inspection or OAW post-approval monitoring (PAM) visit.