

WVU IACUC Policy: **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) When Working with Animals**

Purpose

This policy will outline the minimal Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements when working with animals in different settings across campus. PPE will vary based on procedure, health status, species, and biosecurity/biocontainment requirements.

Definitions

Personal Protective Equipment: Clothing or equipment that is worn in order to provide protection against hazardous substances or environment.

Engineering Controls: Protect workers by removing hazardous conditions or by placing a barrier between the workers and the hazard.

Zoonotic Disease: An infectious disease that is transmitted between species, from animals to humans.

Policy

**** ANY EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY MUST BE APPROVED BY THE ATTENDING VETERINARIAN (and EHS where applicable) ****

1. PPE recommendations are made in consultation with Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) in order to ensure the safety of individuals engaged in these procedures. The PPE recommendations are made based on risk assessment and consideration of appropriate engineering controls that are in place. EHS *must* be consulted regarding appropriate PPE if conditions in the space change.
2. Additional PPE may be required for individuals based on their health status. Occupational Medicine should be contacted if there is a change in your health status to provide guidance on appropriate safety measures.
3. In some instances, PPE is required to protect the animals (biosecurity) from exposure to pathogens.
4. All outer clothing (e.g. lab coat/gown/Tyvek/coveralls) worn while directly working with animals should be disposable or laundered according to specific guidelines listed below.
 - a. Personnel who wear cloth lab coats should work with a laundry service to clean lab coats. Cloth outerwear (e.g. lab coat/coveralls) should be laundered on a routine basis and not appear soiled.
 - b. Dirty coveralls should be placed in a plastic bag for transport to be laundered. Coveralls should be washed in a separate load from other personal clothes. Laundering coveralls can be done at a personal residence or taken to a laundry facility.
5. Room entry order should always be followed within the Office of Laboratory Animal Resources (OLAR) vivaria.
6. In the OLAR vivaria, PPE requirements will be communicated via door signage.

7. In the agricultural program, standard PPE (outlined below) should be worn unless signage or training indicates a change.
8. PPE recommendations should be adhered to regardless of location if using animals.
9. All animal spaces **require** wearing closed toe shoes and long pants.
10. High containment areas (ABSL3) **require** specialized training and equipment. EHS **must** be contacted if experiments are planned for this space.

BIOMEDICAL Research/Teaching/Animal Care

Species	Activity	PPE						
		Gloves	Surgical Mask	N95	Gown/lab coat	Shoe Cover	Hair Bonnet	Facility Dedicated scrubs/Tyvek
Rodent- Standard	Observation Only	X	X					
Rodent- Standard	Handle Cages, Animals, Bedding	X	X		X			
Rodent- Barrier	Observation and Handling	X	X		X	X	X	X
Rodent- Immunocompromised	Observation and Handling	X	X		X	X		
Rodent- ABSL2 and Chemical Hazards	Observation and Handle cages	X (double gloves if handling animals)	X	If required by EHS	X	X		
Pigeons	Observation and Handling	X	X		X			
Rabbits	Observation and Handling	X	X		X			
Sheep	Observation and Handling	X	X		X	X		
Aquatic animals	Handling	X						

AGRICULTURAL Research/Teaching/Animal Care

1. Unless otherwise stated, the standard PPE for working with Agricultural animals includes:
 - a. Gloves when directly handling animals or animal tissue that may be high risk for zoonosis, such as the following:
 - Livestock during parturient period (immediately before, during, and immediately after birth)
 - Handling products of afterbirth (amniotic fluids, placental tissue) or spontaneous abortion.
 - Handling newborn and young animals (<2 weeks of age)
 - Handling poultry (recommended for all poultry handling, *required* when handling sick animals or administering medications)
 - Handling animals with signs of clinical illness
 - Animals that the veterinary staff or EHS deems a zoonotic risk
 - When performing a necropsy
 - b. Disposable or washable outer layers of clothing (e.g. lab coat/gown/coveralls)
 - c. Dedicated waterproof shoes or boots disinfected after each use.

WILDLIFE Research/Teaching

1. Gloves may be appropriate depending on activity and animals involved.
2. PPE recommendations may vary based on conditions and location of work.
3. PPE should be appropriate for expected outdoor weather conditions.

References

- [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#), National Research Council, 2011.
- [Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations](#), United States Department of Agriculture, 2017.
- [Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching](#), Federation of Animal Science Societies, 2020.