

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of these procedures is to define the requirements for the reporting of compromised animal welfare due to morbidity, mortality or incidents impacting the welfare of animals used in the research and teaching programs at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) and its related facilities.

**DEFINITIONS**

Morbidity - ill health or compromised welfare as a result of disease or the procedure or treatment applied.

Unexpected morbidity- conditions unrelated to experimental procedures that are not described in the Animal Use Protocol (AUP), or if described are not accurate.

Mortality - death.

Unexpected mortality - unexpected deaths not described in the AUP including those animals found dead, that die during procedures, or mortalities exceeding approved baseline mortality.

Animal Welfare Incidents - incidents that may not involve morbidity or mortality but may impact animal welfare

**SCOPE**

These procedures apply to all research, teaching, or production animals (i.e., those animals identified on an Animal Use Protocol (AUP)) used by faculty/staff/students/research personnel at the University of Saskatchewan and its affiliated facilities. All personnel working with animals must follow approved procedures, monitoring, and reporting requirements outlined in the applicable AUP and University Animal Care Committee (UACC) Procedures.

If the mortality or morbidity is unexpected and/or the result of a procedure approved on a teaching or research Animal Use Protocol then a Morbidity/Mortality/Animal Welfare Incident (MMI) form must be submitted to the UACC Veterinarians. Any other welfare incidents must also be reported using an MMI.

The UACC Morbidity/Mortality/Animal Welfare Incident (MMI) Report Form [https://research.usask.ca/rei/documents/researchers/animal-care-and-research-support/forms/uacc\\_mmi-report-2023.docx](https://research.usask.ca/rei/documents/researchers/animal-care-and-research-support/forms/uacc_mmi-report-2023.docx) should be completed electronically and submitted to the UACC Veterinarians [uacc\\_veterinarians@usask.ca](mailto:uacc_veterinarians@usask.ca).

A separate form, Morbidity/Mortality/Incident Report Form for Fish and Wildlife [https://research.usask.ca/rei/documents/researchers/animal-care-and-research-support/forms/uacc\\_mmi-report-2023-fish-and-wildlife.docx](https://research.usask.ca/rei/documents/researchers/animal-care-and-research-support/forms/uacc_mmi-report-2023-fish-and-wildlife.docx) is required to report morbidities, mortalities, welfare incidents, bycatch and over-catch for field or wildlife studies.

In resident production and/or breeding populations of fish, poultry, cattle, bison, and pigs, where a certain percentage of mortality may be expected, Facility Managers (FMs) record mortalities and submit monthly mortality reports to the UACC Veterinarians.

Minor expected morbidities (as described in an approved AUP) are recorded in health records.

An incident of animal welfare concern can be reported, without discrimination or fear of reprisal, by any animal care staff, laboratory personnel, faculty, or any person witnessing a situation that causes them to have a concern about the care and use of teaching and research animals at the University of Saskatchewan. The form for anonymous reporting can be found at:

<https://research.usask.ca/rei/documents/researchers/animal-care-and-research-support/anonymous-animal-welfare-concerns-report-form.php>

Reportable Animal Welfare Incidents (RAWIs) are incidents resulting in significant mortality or serious or continuous noncompliance and are reported to the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC). See University Animal Care Committee (UACC) Procedures on Reportable Animal Welfare Incidents [https://research.usask.ca/rei/documents/researchers/animal-care-and-research-support/policies-and-procedures/uacc\\_procedures-rawi-30nov2022.pdf](https://research.usask.ca/rei/documents/researchers/animal-care-and-research-support/policies-and-procedures/uacc_procedures-rawi-30nov2022.pdf) and the CCAC frequently asked questions: CCAC reportable animal welfare incidents for more information <https://ccac.ca/en/guidelines-and-policies/policies.html>.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The University Animal Care Committee (UACC) is responsible for:

1. Oversight of these reporting guidelines.
2. Reviewing
3. Reporting RAWIs to the CCAC.

The Principal Investigator (PI) is responsible for:

1. Describing expected baseline mortalities and morbidities in Animal Use Protocols.

2. Ensuring 24 hour emergency contact information is available to any research personnel, veterinarians, and animal care staff responding to animal health concerns.
3. Ensuring morbidities and mortalities are reported at annual and full protocol renewal.

Research and Teaching Personnel are responsible for:

1. Responding to incidents of morbidity and mortality, and reporting these incidents to PIs and UACC Veterinarians

Facility Managers (FM), or designates, are responsible for:

1. Acting to resolve facility issues that may impact animal welfare.

UACC Clinical Veterinarians are responsible for:

1. Ensuring animals receive appropriate treatment, care or euthanasia in collaboration with research personnel and animal care staff.

UACC Post Approval Review Veterinarian

1. Investigates MMIs and reports MMI information to the UACC.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

Prompt reporting of morbidity, mortality, and animal welfare incidents will ensure relevant veterinary and animal care staff can tend to any affected animal(s) without delay.

The following outlines a general process when an animal health and/or welfare issue arises:

1. Upon identification of a serious animal health/welfare issue that requires immediate attention, contact the Facility Veterinarian listed or UACC Clinical Veterinarian by phone. If a non-life threatening animal health/welfare/facility issue is identified contact the Facility Manager (FM), Facility Veterinarian (FV), or UACC Veterinarian by email.

UACC Clinical Veterinarians:

[uacc\\_veterinarians@usask.ca](mailto:uacc_veterinarians@usask.ca)

On Call Emergency UACC Veterinarian Phone: 306-966-7700

- a. Veterinarians will determine the best resolution to the animal health and/or welfare issue, in consultation with the PI and/or FM as necessary.
- b. Veterinarians have the authority to take measures to safeguard welfare, including euthanasia of an animal, even in instances where the PI or their designate cannot be contacted.
- c. Veterinarians will contact the Principal Investigator (PI) and/or Facility Manager when the immediate health issue has been addressed.
- d. For mortalities that exceed 20% of the approved mortality rate, the University

Veterinarian must be immediately notified to follow up as a CCAC RAWI.

2. In all cases, complete a morbidity, mortality or animal welfare incident (MMI) report and include photographs if appropriate. The individual who first identified the MMI should complete the MMI and submit it to the UACC by emailing [uacc\\_veterinarians@usask.ca](mailto:uacc_veterinarians@usask.ca). Any personnel associated with an AUP or knowledge of the incident (e.g. research personnel, animal care technician, Facility Manager, Facility Veterinarian) may complete an MMI report following the identification of a morbidity, mortality, or welfare incident. An MMI submission may be requested by a UACC Veterinarian.
3. Additional comments from Facility Veterinarians, Principal Investigators, or personnel with knowledge of an incident may be submitted in a revised report or emailed to [uacc\\_veterinarians@usask.ca](mailto:uacc_veterinarians@usask.ca).
4. The MMI report becomes part of the health record for the animal(s) and is included in the AUP file. The Post Approval Review Veterinarian reports MMI information for the Animal Research Ethics Board and the UACC.

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<b>SOP Review and Revision History</b>		
<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Review/Revision Date</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>
1	February 2023	B.Gray
Definitions added. Updated links and contact information. Addition of information Fish and Wildlife MMI Form(2022) Addition of Anonymous Animal Welfare Reporting Form information Addition of RAWI reporting information Updated Responsibilities section.		
2	31 May 2023	UACC