

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of these procedures is to define the process for reporting and investigating Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) defined Reportable Animal Welfare Incidents (RAWI) involving animals used in research, teaching, testing, or production at the University of Saskatchewan (USask).

**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. This includes off-site facilities, field work and breeding or holding AUP.

**BACKGROUND**

Animal use for research, teaching, testing, and production must align with the CCAC policies and guidelines. The CCAC requires institutions to report on CCAC defined reportable animal welfare incidents. Reports must be submitted to the CCAC within 14 days of incident occurrence. The detailed CCAC policy can be found on the CCAC website at:

<https://ccac.ca/en/certification/reportable-animal-welfare-incidents.html>

AND

[https://ccac.ca/Documents/Assessment/CCAC frequently asked questions CCAC reportable animal welfare incidents.pdf](https://ccac.ca/Documents/Assessment/CCAC_frequently_asked_questions_CCAC_reportable_animal_welfare_incidents.pdf)

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR OVERSIGHT**

Responsibility for oversight of these reporting guidelines rests with the University Animal Care Committee (UACC).

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES and PROCEDURES**

It is the responsibility of all animal users to monitor the health and record and report mortality and incidents affecting the welfare of the animals they use (refer UACC Procedure for Morbidity/Mortality/and Animal Welfare Incident Reporting). As described in the above referenced CCAC documents, mortality exceeding a defined reporting threshold (generally 20% of animals on site for an AUP) must be reported immediately to the University Veterinarian or delegate who will then submit a RAWI to the CCAC. Immediate reporting is essential as the CCAC requires institutions to notify them of reportable incidents within 14

days of occurrence. If you are unsure if the incident qualifies as a reportable event, contact the University Veterinarian or delegate via [uacc\\_veterinarians@usask.ca](mailto:uacc_veterinarians@usask.ca) who will work with the CCAC to determine if the situation qualifies as a RAWI.

The reporting of RAWI and the development of action plans is a collaborative process with the relevant parties to ensure accurate reporting and appropriate preventative measures are put in place to prevent recurrence.

**The CCAC policy in brief:**

- If mortality is 20% above the listed baseline mortality within the AUP, then a RAWI report must be completed. Baseline mortality is assumed to be 0% unless it is denoted specifically in an approved AUP. Animals euthanized at the end of a study (i.e., having reached their scientific endpoint) are not reportable.
- As per the CCAC policy, animals euthanized based on criteria in humane intervention point checklists must be included within the mortality count.
- Mortalities must have occurred over a defined period of time; the CCAC defines this as a consecutive 7-day period.
- Serious or continuous noncompliance with CCAC standards that leads to the suspension of animal-based activity threatening animal health or welfare

**Reporting Process:**

- Mortality events, exceeding the RAWI reporting threshold, observed/noted by research personnel, students, facility staff, or veterinarians are immediately reported to the University Veterinarian or designate through the [uacc\\_veterinarians@usask.ca](mailto:uacc_veterinarians@usask.ca) email address using an UACC Morbidity/Mortality/Incident (MMI) form.
- After the University Veterinarian has been notified, further information will be gathered by the UACC Clinical Veterinarian(s) or the Post-Approval Review Veterinarian, Aquatics Manager (for aquatic RAWI), and applicable Facility Manager.
- The investigation and information gathering will involve the relevant parties present or otherwise involved in the incident (e.g., PI, students, technicians, facility staff).
- The investigative report will present information on details of what occurred, factors contributing to the mortality including procedural or facility issues. The report will also detail who was involved in the incident and will highlight any recommendations for preventative safeguards, including but not limited to training/re-training.
- The report will be reviewed by the University Veterinarian and a UACC Chair prior to submission to the CCAC. Reports delivered to the CCAC will remove names of those involved and personal identifiers; these will be kept on file by the Animal Care and Research Support (ACRS) office for the purposes of training and follow up.
- Following the information gathering and submission of the initial report to the CCAC, the University Veterinarian or UACC Clinical Veterinarian will develop an action plan to detail preventative measures and improvements. The action plan may involve facility manager(s) and College/Department/University Senior Administration if facility deficiencies were a contributing factor.
- The CCAC may request further follow up materials which will be coordinated by the University Veterinarian.

- The UACC Animal Research Ethics Board (AREB) will be notified of the RAWI and will be provided the final RAWI report and action plan.
- All relevant parties will be updated as information is received back from the CCAC until the RAWI is considered closed.

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Procedure Review and Revision History		
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*Approved by the UACC, November 30, 2022*