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| TITLE: Adoption of Research Animals | Effective Date: 27-February-2023 |
| IACUC POLICY: 006 REVISION: 0 | Last Revised: |
| SCOPE: This policy applies to all research and teaching animals at Radford University. | Review Date: |
| PURPOSE: This policy establishes and provides procedures for the adoption of animals that are no longer needed for research and teaching purposes from Radford University. | |
| KEYWORDS: IACUC, Adoption, Research animals | |
| Policy Owner: Research Compliance Office Radford University | |
| Policy Contact: Anna Marie Lee, Research Compliance Manager, alee16@radford.edu or irb-iacuc@radford.edu | |

1. BACKGROUND

Guides for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching discuss the termination of research animals at the conclusion of research projects. The private adoption of research animals for pets after a study has been completed is not addressed in these guides, PHS Policy, or the Animal Welfare Act. However, the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine supports the adoption of research animals, and the 9 CFR policies offer institutions the option of developing and implementing their own adoption policies.

This policy, which applies to eligible animals used in research, testing, and demonstration, serves as Radford University's procedures for adopting research animals to qualified members of the general public.

2. POLICY

In some instances of non-terminal research, overbreeding, or receiving animals that cannot be used as intended in research protocols, the Radford University IACUC encourages the adoption of such animals into a private home. Once the adoption transfer is complete, the adopter is responsible for any future medical care/support as may be required.

Research animals eligible for adoption must meet the following conditions:

- Must be in good health and of acceptable behavior.
- Must not have been administered drugs other than FDA-approved human or veterinary drugs, food supplements, or pharmaceutically compounded veterinary drugs. If any FDA-approved drugs have been administered to the animal, the drug should be disclosed to the potential adopter.
- Must not have been exposed to infectious agents.
- Must not be classified as transgenic or immune-suppressed.
- Must be adopted as personal or family pets.
- Must not be used for food (human or animal consumption).

3. PROCEDURES

The Principal Investigator (PI). Once the PI determines that an animal is no longer needed for research and is approved for adoption under the protocol for which the animal is covered, he or she can determine whether it is appropriate for adoption. The Attending Veterinarian can be consulted to evaluate or confirm the animal's eligibility for adoption based on its research history and a physical examination.

Availability for Other Research. Prior to initiating the adoption process, reasonable attempts should be made to make the animals available for other research efforts.

Prospective Adopter Assessment. If a prospective adopter indicates an interest in adopting an animal, the qualified designee will interview the adopter to assess the reasons and intentions behind the adoption and the prospective adopter's qualifications and ability to provide acceptable animal care. The questionnaire (attached as Appendix I) must be completed by the designee and adopter during the adopter screening interview.

Completion of Animal Adoption Agreement. The designee will provide the adopter with an Animal Adoption Agreement that must be signed, completed, and forwarded to the RCO (see Appendix II). The Research Compliance Office will retain an electronic copy of this agreement and provide a copy to the new owner as proof of ownership transfer.

Transfer of Animal. The animal must be removed from the Radford University animal facility within seven (7) calendar days after the Animal Adoption Agreement is signed. Once the animal leaves the facility, all involved parties recognize that it belongs to the new owner, and the University is no longer responsible for its care or damages.

References

1. **Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources (U.S.).** 2011. *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
2. **National Institutes of Health (U.S.). Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare., United States. Public Health Service.** 2002. *Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. Bethesda, MD (6705 Rockledge Dr., Bethesda 20892-7982): Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, National Institutes of Health, Dept. of Health and Human Services.
3. **Federation of Animal Science Societies.** 2010. *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching*. Champaign, IL: FASS, Federation of Animal Science Societies.
4. **United States., United States. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.** 2005. *Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.
5. **American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine.** Adoption of Research Animals – ACLAM Position Statement updated October 2017. <https://www.aclam.org/about/position-statements>, accessed February 18, 2018.



**Radford University Questionnaire
Request to Adopt Vertebrate Animals**

Name:

E-mail:

Radford University ID #:

Contact Number:

Animal Information

Species:

Gender:

Age:

Description:

Principal Investigator & Protocol Number:

ID:

Home Information

I own my own home

I rent my apartment/home

If applicable, I have obtained approval from my landlord/rental agency.

Please indicate whether other pets will regularly be around your adopted pet (e.g., your home, or your parents' home). If your answer is yes, provide information about the other pets that will be around your adopted animal, including breed, sex, age, health, how many other pets, whether their vaccinations are current, and any pertinent details:

Veterinary Care

Provide the name and phone number of the veterinarian who will provide healthcare for this animal once you have adopted it:

Adoption Contract

I, _____, am adopting the animal described below from Radford University and agree to be fully responsible for its care, treatment, actions, and well-being.

A Radford University designee has examined the animal described below and determined it to be clinically healthy and suitable as a companion animal. I acknowledge and agree that (just as with any physical examination) this does not guarantee the animal has no health issues but that none are known based upon this examination.

I have been provided a copy of the Radford University “Animal Adoption Agreement.” Having read this document, I attest and understand the terms under which I take ownership of this animal and agree to fully comply with the conditions of adoption. Additionally, I have had an opportunity to ask health and husbandry-related questions, with each question being answered to my satisfaction.

By signing this document, I agree to take full possession of this animal within seven (7) business days.

In accepting this animal, I agree to care for it following all applicable laws and regulations of my and/or the animal’s place of residence, including but not limited to having the animal spayed or neutered, if appropriate, vaccinated against rabies and registering the animal with local animal control officials as required. I also agree not to use this animal as a food source or religious object or for any commercial purpose, including but not limited to breeding and exhibiting. I will not sell this animal. If I am subsequently unable or unwilling to care for this animal, I will make other arrangements for its care.

By signing this agreement, I release and indemnify Radford University, its trustees, officers, employees, and agents from any liability and expenses resulting from this adoption. I understand that Radford University accepts no liability for the animal’s continuing care or veterinary treatment or for any damages arising from my ownership of the animal once it has been removed from the Radford University facility.

***If you are adopting a rat:**

Your rat is a pet, like a gerbil, hamster, or cat. You can find appropriate food, housing, and bedding at your local pet store. **Do NOT use cedar bedding** for rats (it causes respiratory problems). Provide the proper nutrition (purchase a balanced rodent chow), but remember that treats may include peanut butter, lettuce, breakfast cereals, etc. Chew toys are also essential to keep their teeth in good shape.

A rat adopted from the rat colony **cannot** be returned to the lab due to biosecurity concerns. Freeing a laboratory rat to live his/her life “in the wild” constitutes a slow and painful death because the animal has never acquired the most straightforward skills in avoiding predators (e.g., dogs) or foraging for food.

Radford University **Adopter** Signature

Date

Radford University **Designee** Signature

Date