

Animal Welfare Concerns

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Purpose & Scope

Colorado Mesa University (CMU) has an obligation under the [American Veterinary Medical Association \(AVMA\)](#), [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#), [Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service \(APHIS\)](#), [Animal Welfare Act](#), and the [Public Health Service \(PHS\)](#) to ensure that all research and training using animal models is carried out in a humane and appropriate fashion.

This policy outlines the principles and guidelines governing animal welfare and applies to all faculty, staff, and students involved in the care, use, or oversight of animals in research, teaching, or testing activities.

Whistleblower Policy

CMU's full whistleblower policy can be found on the Office of Sponsored Program's website [here](#).

No individual will be discriminated against or subject to reprisals for reporting possible violations of animal care standards.

The [Animal Welfare Act](#) protects the rights of individuals who report animal welfare concerns in good faith, as well as prohibits discrimination against or reprisal for reporting of violations of associated regulations and standards. In addition, [Colorado Revised Statutes Section 24-50.5-103](#) protects whistleblowers who are public (state) employees. Furthermore, it is against CMU policy to retaliate against those who report suspected wrongdoing in good faith. The university will protect the confidentiality of whistleblowers to the fullest extent allowed by law. CMU is committed to protecting whistleblowers from any form of retaliation or adverse action as a result of their good-faith reporting. Retaliation against whistleblowers is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary actions, up to and including termination, against those responsible for such actions. Whistleblowers who believe they have faced retaliation should report such incidents promptly.

How to Report

Concerns may be reported in confidence, either in person or in writing, to the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Chair, IACUC Administrator, Attending Veterinarian, or the Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs. Contact information and reporting guidelines are listed below.

What Should be Reported

Concerns regarding possible misuse, mistreatment, abuse, or neglect of an animal or animals associated with CMU and CMU Tech should be reported immediately to the IACUC Chair, the IACUC Administrator, or one of the other contacts listed below. Any concerns about suspected inappropriate, unauthorized, or noncompliant conduct of activities involving animal care and use should also be reported promptly.

Reporting Guidelines

Prompt reporting of concerns enables protection for any affected animals and promotes a caring and ethical culture at CMU. Reports should be made in good faith and with a reasonable belief that the information is accurate.

Reports should include (but are not limited to) instances of:

1. Significant adverse impact on the health or welfare of one or more animals
2. Significant threat of adverse impact to animal welfare (such as extended power outages, flooding, facility damage)
3. Significant or repeated noncompliance issues with regulatory ([State of Colorado](#), [OLAW](#), [USDA](#)) or funding entity (NSF, NIH) requirements
4. Significant or repeated noncompliance issues with CMU and Animal Care and Use Program Protocols, Policies, Assurances, and Agreements

When making a report, please provide the following details when possible:

- Date & Time
- Location(s)
- Animal Species and Numbers
- Associated Protocol(s)
- Descriptions of particular incidents or events
- Any actions taken

Investigation & Follow-Up

It is the IACUC's responsibility to review concerns and incidents, as well as to initiate appropriate follow-up actions. Any reported concerns will be shared with the IACUC chair and if warranted, an IACUC meeting will be called and the Institutional Official informed. All concerns will be reviewed and, if necessary, investigated by IACUC officials. Any issues will then be addressed immediately and corrected, and measures will be implemented which prevent the recurrence of the problem. The IACUC may impose sanctions on training or may revoke animal use privileges in the event that an animal welfare concern is valid, jeopardizes animal health and safety, and is not resolved.

The Institutional Official, Attending Veterinarian, funding agency, regulatory agencies, and individual voicing concern will be notified of issue resolution.

Contact List

- IACUC Chair/Attending Veterinarian contact information can be found on OSP's website [here](#).
- IACUC Administrator/Deputy Research Integrity Officer: iacuc@coloradomesa.edu
- Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs contact information can be found on OSP's website [here](#).
- Institutional Office/Research Integrity Officer:
academicaffairs@coloradomesa.edu