

## **ORDERING AND IMPORTING ANIMALS FROM OTHER FACILITIES / LABS**

The NCBS Animal Facility will NOT order or receive animals from any Indian commercial vendors / collaborators which are not registered under the Indian CPCSEA.

ACRC will guide you in any animal or cryosample import process- Briefly: the procedures are the following:

Any international animal import need advance import license issued from Directorate General of Foreign Trade, New Delhi (DGFT) and 'NOC' from regional quarantine officer. (see paragraph below for specific import license procedures).

➤ **External animal requests and imports must be submitted as part of a specific research proposal approved by the IAUC and the IAEC.**

For all animal imports to the facility, it is made mandatory that PIs submit their Animal use research project proposal justifying their mice imports before the animals can be shipped to the facility.

As for all other Animal-use research project proposal, the <Animal Import Request> and eventual associated <Cage Space Request> forms submitted to the IAUC should include the specifics - Housing, Breeding and Cage requirements details for each newly imported strain.

The cage requirements for “Animal Imports” should be detailed in THREE distinct phases:

- **Phase 1**: The PI should fill the “Animal Import Request form” detailing the actual number of animals which are being imported, as well as the gender and age group
- how should the imported animals be segregated in each cage during the quarantine period. (See the “quarantine procedures” paragraph below for more details – importantly: **no breeding is allowed during quarantine**).

- **Phase 2:** the post-quarantine NON-experimental Animal Housing period - providing the basic colony maintenance breeding scheme details and cage number requirements for each of your imported strains once they exit the quarantine and before animals are set up for colony expansion breeding & experimental breeding needs. Phase 2 (colony maintenance) breeding information should be provided as a separate “colony maintenance phase” entry of the "IAUC\_Cage Space Request Form”.
- **Phase 3:** actual experimental breeding and cage number requirements as detailed “experimental” entries of the "IAUC\_Cage Space Request Form”.

If the imported animals are not to be experimentally used immediately after their quarantine exit, then Phase 3 details can be given after the animals are imported. However, Phase 1 and Phase 2 details are required by the IAUC to ensure that the facility has the available cage space to welcome and maintain the animals upon arrival.

Phase 3 details however will have to be submitted and approved by the Institution before any colony expansion and experimental cage space can be allocated to the lab for all newly imported strains.

➤ **Providing the Budget Code / funding source to which the import fees will be charged**

Who is going to pay for the import fees and the future Animal Housing fees once the animal arrive at the NCBS Animal Facility? The funding source and/or the Institutional Budget Code to which these fees will be charged to need to be provided.

## ➤ **Checking for any required MTA approvals and obtaining the correct institutional MTA approval**

It is critical that PIs check the MTA (Material Transfer Agreement) requirements for ALL the animal strains they wish to use for their research. It should also be verified that the MTAs obtained for a given animal strain is specific to the Institute (NCBS or InStem or C-Camp) that is going to use this specific strain.

This is obviously true for all animals that need to be imported from external facilities/labs to the Animal Facility. But importantly: this may also be true for animals already housed within the different Animal Facility Vivarium. MTAs are generally bipartite contracts signed by TWO institutes, labs or repositories and should be looked at carefully.

In case of JAX mice: we have recently obtained an agreement allowing the sharing of JAX mice between InStem and NCBS labs. But this might not be the case for mice coming from other repositories.

Publishing data with animals under invalid MTAs conditions can have serious legal consequences for the PI and for the hosting Institute.

## ➤ **Obtaining research animal import license**

The following documents are required for obtaining advance import license:

1. Duly filled “Animal import request form” approved by IAUC (downloadable from the ACRC website).
2. Proforma invoice (if you are purchasing animals from a commercial vendor) or donor letter (if you are receiving animals as a gift from collaborator).
3. Approval from IAUC and IAEC.
4. Budget code for obtaining DD towards application fee.

➤ **Obtaining the Specific Pathogen Monitoring Veterinarian certificate from the lab of origin**

The NCBS facility requests the latest three quarterly sentinel health reports (third party certification is a must) of the animal room from where the animals meant for shipping are originally being maintained in the sender's vivarium facility.

If the Health reports are compatible with import of animals in our high barrier facility: the animals will be housed in quarantine as detailed below.

If the Health reports do not meet our SPF standards or if Health monitoring form the lab of origin is not possible- Then the animals will need to be re-derived via surgical embryo-transfer. This will need to be coordinated with the MGEF facility.

➤ **Quarantine procedures (= one month quarantine period after arrival of animals - even if imported from JAX – without animal breeding possibilities)**

Animals are taken in charge by the Animal Facility staff immediately upon arrival (international shipments arrive in night time) and the transport boxes are taken inside the facility through its service corridor to the quarantine room and are sprayed with 70% ethanol before opening the box.

All the paper works attached to the box are collected; details on the labels are copied on to the cage card.

Transport boxes are taken in and opened inside changing station of quarantine room and animals are transferred to clean sterile cages using forceps and little feed from the box is transferred to the fresh cage.

Animal are transferred to Individually Ventilated Cages (IVC) with fresh water and feed and the empty transport boxes with bedding material are sent back to washing area.

Concerned PI and the Purchase department will be intimated on the animal condition.

Animals will be monitored in the quarantine room daily for any abnormalities or mortality and are reported to the concerned PI.

After 27 days in quarantine, the institute veterinarian will submit the health status report of imported animals to the regional quarantine officer and based on that report final quarantine clearance certificate will be issued by the regional quarantine officer (RQO).

If there is any animal mortality, it will to be reported to RQO and a post-mortem examination has to be done immediately and its report submitted to RQO for further action.

After 27 days, samples from sentinel animals (on contact with dirty bedding) from the quarantine room is sent out for detail health report, based on the health report quarantine animals are released for use.

Please note that no animal breeding is permitted during the quarantine period.

#### ➤ **Estimated delays and timeline**

- IAUC meets twice a month and can review proposals and proposal amendments as they are submitted to its members

**Note:** Form B and <Animal Cage Space Request Form> should be discussed with and approved by the IAUC before complete project proposal submission to the IAEC.

- IAEC currently meets twice a year for final proposal review and approval (December and June sessions) - Estimated time for obtaining import license 10-12 weeks.
- Estimated time for obtaining health report after quarantine period is 10-12 days.