

# Animal Care Operations

Animal Care Operations enhances animal welfare and animal wellbeing as the University promotes and supports breakthroughs in biomedical research. The ACO is accredited through AAALAC International and is a member of the Vivarium Operational Excellence Network (VOEN) and the Texas Branch American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (TBAALAS).

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## Accreditation

AAALAC International is a private, nonprofit organization that promotes the humane treatment of animals in science through voluntary accreditation and assessment programs.

## Memberships

Vivarium Operational Excellence Network (VOEN)  
Texas Branch American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (TBAALAS)

## Purchasing Animals

Researchers are required to have an approved protocol completed and reviewed by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before conducting study on animals. Ordering animals or conducting research is prohibited before receiving written approval of the IACUC. Once a researcher has an approved protocol, the process for ordering animals for research may begin. Animal orders must be placed with approved vendors:

- Envigo
- Charles River Laboratories
- The Jackson Laboratory
- Taconic Biosciences
- Xenopus I
- Convince Inc.

All other vendors are considered Non-Traditional Vendors. Quarantine is required for Non-Traditional Vendors and will be paid by the investigators.

## Animal Order Process

The researcher's department's Business Office must complete an Animal Purchase Request Form for approved vendors. If researchers wish to order animals from Non-Traditional vendors, the Non-Traditional Vendors Import-Export Form (NTV Form) must be completed. In addition, a Materials Transfer Agreement must be completed to receive animals from other institutions or Universities.

The department's Business Administrator and Principal Investigator must provide signatures for approval on all animal orders.

Visit the website for submission forms, animal transfers and shipments.

## Occupational Health Training

The purpose of the Occupational Health Program is to prevent occupational injury and illness while promoting a safe working environment for personnel who will be working with animals or animal by-products at the University of Houston.

- All research personnel who use animals during their research are required to take this online course. The Occupational Health and Safety Training provides a brief overview of the Occupational Health Program.
- Must also indicate on the enrollment form whether they will fully participate in the Occupational Health and Safety Program by turning in the Health Surveillance Questionnaire or opt out of full participation by signing the declination section of the form. The enrollment and/or declination will be kept on file as part of the training record.

For training and Health surveillance questionnaire, please send a request to [aco@central.uh.edu](mailto:aco@central.uh.edu).

## Facility Access Training

All personnel requesting facility access must be added to an approved IACUC protocol and complete the following trainings:

- EH31: Occupational Health & Safety Training-Animal Care
- EH35: ACO Facility Access Training-HBS
- EH36: ACO Rodent Euthanasia Training
- EH34: ACO Isoflurane Training\* (Only if approved for use in the protocol)

The ACO trainings are available online.

Hands on training is also available for rodent euthanasia, isoflurane administration and a variety of other research techniques.

