Animal Care Occupational Health & Safety Program

Program Aims

Boise State University (University) is committed to providing a safe and productive working environment for all individuals with animal exposure. The University provides the following Occupational Health and Safety Program (OHSP) for all individuals who are involved in the direct care of vertebrate animals and their living quarters, and those individuals who have direct contact with animals, their viable tissues, body fluids or wastes. Participation in this Occupational Health and Safety Program is based on contact time with vertebrate animals and potential exposure to hazardous agents. This program is applicable to but not limited to the following categories:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Academic Students</th>
<th>Those students with animal exposure in coursework for academic credit</th>
<th>e.g. class related laboratory activities and/or field trips</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Employees</td>
<td>Visitors, volunteers, and those students not receiving course credit, who have exposure to animals under the direction of Boise State University faculty or staff.</td>
<td>e.g. visiting faculty and staff, students helping other students or professors with field work; contract personnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>Individuals employed by Boise State University</td>
<td>e.g. faculty, staff, and student employees, graduate students receiving stipends, maintenance personnel</td>
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Level of participation in the OHSP is based on personal risk assessment and hazards associated with animal care and use. Participants are encouraged to discuss their risk with their Principal Investigator, Supervisor, and/or health care provider. Exposure to animals may put the individual at risk of being bitten, scratched or acquiring a physical injury, and/or acquiring a zoonotic, allergic, or animal related disease.

**Students:**
Students in coursework with exposure to animals will be provided health and safety information related to their animal exposure by their instructor in the classroom. Student employees are covered by the Employee section below. Students with exposure to animals under the direction of Boise State faculty or staff who are not employed and not receiving course credit are covered under the Non-Employee section below.

**Non-Employees:**
Visitors, volunteers, and those students not receiving course credit who have exposure to animals under the direction of Boise State faculty or staff.

1. Complete the Non-Employee Enrollment Form and submit to animalcare@boisestate.edu.
2. Non-Employees should contact their primary health care provider to discuss any concerns with their exposure to animals.
3. Non-Employees that become Boise State Employees in the future must complete the Employee Enrollment form prior to exposure to animals under their new status.
4. Volunteers and/or the PI/Supervisors are encouraged to contact the University Risk Management and Insurance to determine Authorized Volunteer Services Agreement requirements.

Boise State University acknowledges the University of Alaska-Fairbanks for the development of this document.
Employees:
All individuals (faculty, staff, and student employees) employed by Boise State University who have exposure to animals.

1. Complete the Employee Enrollment Form (EEF) and submit it to animalcare@boisestate.edu. Principal investigators may submit their EEF without supervisor approval, but all other personnel should complete the EEF in conjunction with their Principal Investigator (PI), or Supervisor.

2. The EEF enables the employee participant to determine whether or not they wish to complete the Health History Questionnaire (HHQ) and discuss their animal exposure with an occupational health services provider at no cost to the employee. Factors that the employee should consider when making this decision should include the general surveillance needs of the individual based on real or potential occupational exposure to specific species of animals. The assessment of risk should also be based upon frequency of contact, intensity of exposure, hazards associated with the animals being handled, hazardous properties of agents used in research, the susceptibility of individual employees, the hazard-control measures available, and the occupational history of individual employees.

3. The employee can decline the opportunity to complete the HHQ and to discuss their animal exposure with an occupational health services provider by signing in the Participant Declination section of the EEF. If at any time in the future, the participant elects to fill out the HHQ and discuss their animal exposure with an occupational health services provider, they may do so at no cost to the employee.

4. The HHQ is a confidential medical document, and as such should be completed by the participant and picked up by the contract provider representative or sent directly to the Health Care Provider; it is maintained in the clinic's medical records and is not returned to the participant or the University.

5. Following review of the EEF and HHQ by the health care provider, they will ask the participant to set up an appointment with the health care provider to discuss their animal exposure in relation to their health history. The health care provider may recommend risk specific preventive measures, immunizations, additional tests, and/or health monitoring.

6. Once the assessment is complete, the results of the assessment are returned to the Office of Research Compliance (ORC) notifying them of the health care provider’s determination and of any requirements. No personal medical information will be included in this notification; it is a clearance document indicating if any restrictions or precautions need to be taken by the University and/or the participant.

7. Once the participant has fulfilled the recommendations or provided justification for exclusion they may begin work with live vertebrates.

8. The participant and their supervisor must ensure that the EEF is kept current with respect to any changes in job or task and any changes in animal contact or exposure to hazardous agents. Significant changes in activities may require a reconsideration of the employee’s level of participation in the OHSP.

9. Each participant is responsible for ensuring that they submit an updated HHQ whenever there is a significant change in their health status.

Professional Medical Care

Contract Provider
The University contracts out medical services (assessment, testing, preventative care, and treatment) to a local health care provider, St. Luke’s Occupational Health Services, located at 520 S. Eagle Rd., in Suite 1239, Meridian, Idaho 83642; phone: 208-706-7200.
Obtaining Occupational Health Services
All non-emergency occupational health services related to animal care and use must be pre-approved by the Office of Research Compliance (ORC), 208-426-5404. See Incident Reporting for immediate care needs.

Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and OHSP Enrollment
All Boise State University personnel (faculty, staff, students, and volunteers) must enroll in the OHSP prior to beginning work with live vertebrates, except for students with animal exposure in coursework for academic credit. Continuing access to animal facilities and authorization to work with live vertebrates is contingent upon your continued participation in the OHSP.

Medical Evaluation and Preventative Medicine for Employees
The Occupational Health Services Program for employees working with animals or animal tissues, fluids or waste includes medical evaluation and preventive medicine provided through the participation of a contract health care provider experienced in occupational health if elected by the employee. Confidentiality and other medical and legal factors have been considered in the context of appropriate federal, state, and local regulations.

A pre-assignment health history questionnaire is recommended for employees within certain risk categories. This includes establishing an appropriate immunization schedule for each employee. Immunizations are provided as recommended by the health care provider and possibly in consultation with the Attending Veterinarian (e.g. tetanus, rabies, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, etc.).

Pre-employment or pre-exposure serum collection is not normally done but will be considered if recommended by the health care provider or the University Biosafety committee.

Zoonosis surveillance within the Institution's animal facilities is an integral component of the preventive medicine program. All captive animal colonies have regular assessments for known zoonotic diseases. Individuals working with free-ranging species are provided training to minimize exposure to zoonotic diseases present within the population(s) under study.

Contacts and forms for reporting concerns or identification of potential or known exposures as well as suspected health hazards and illnesses is located on the University IACUC web page.

Personnel Training
All personnel working in University animal facilities receive an introduction to the occupational health and safety program as part of the required Facility orientation. This includes an overview of the goals of the program, services available, the types of hazards present in the BSU animal facilities and their symptoms. In addition, participants receive information on good work practices, personal hygiene, engineering controls and use of appropriate personal protective equipment. Contact information for on campus resources for information concerning occupational health and safety are also provided. Personnel working with vertebrates outside of BSU animal facilities are provided with information appropriate to their activities on an as needed basis.

Personnel at risk are informed of the hazards involved, trained in implementing required safeguards, and provided with clearly defined procedures for conducting their duties during on the job training. Personnel are required to complete online CITI training. Additional training may be delivered by the animal facilities staff, supervisor/principal investigator, other experienced research staff, or the attending veterinarian. The ORC may provide additional guidance on specific hazards or situations. Personnel are trained, as appropriate to the risk imposed by the work environment, in zoonoses, chemical safety, microbiologic and physical...
hazards (including those related to radiation and allergies), unusual conditions or agents, handling of waste materials, personal hygiene, and other considerations (i.e. precautions to be taken during pregnancy, illness, or decreased immunocompetence).

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) may require additional safety training in areas such as:
- Laboratory Safety Training (EHS)
- Radiation Safety Training (Radiation Safety Officer)
- Chemical Safety Training

**Personal Hygiene**

Personal hygiene is a component of the animal care, lab safety and field training programs. Included in these programs is the requirement for personnel to wash hands and change clothing as often as necessary to maintain personal hygiene. PPE worn in animal rooms or during handling of animals in outdoor facilities are not to be worn outside the animal facility. Personnel are only permitted to eat, drink, use tobacco products or apply cosmetics in designated areas.

**Facilities, Procedures & Monitoring**

The Institution requires a high standard of personal cleanliness in all its facilities; therefore, washing and showering facilities are available in facilities where appropriate. Cleanliness during field research is equally important although logistically more difficult.

Facility design and SOPs ensure housing of species so that potentially contaminated food and bedding, feces, and urine can be handled in a controlled manner. Facilities, equipment, and procedures are provided for appropriate bedding disposal. SOPs have been generated for waste disposal at each facility.

**Animal Experimentation Involving Hazards**

In addition to IACUC review, additional compliance committee review may be necessary if the activity involves additional hazards such as biohazardous materials or radiation. The Office of Research Compliance, which provides administrative support to the University research compliance committees, facilitates this integrated approach to committee review. Review of these experiments addresses procedures for animal care and housing, storage and disbursement of the agents, dose preparation and administration, body-fluid and tissue handling, waste carcass disposal, and personal protection.

**Personal Protection**

Personal protective equipment (lab coats, coveralls, scrub suits, boots, shoes, shoe covers, gloves, etc.) will be provided to all personnel and ensure their proper cleaning, laundering, and disposal. When required, personnel shower and change garb when leaving certain areas. Protective clothing is not worn outside the boundaries of any hazardous-agent work area or the animal facility. Personnel working in high-noise areas are provided ear protection.

In addition to standard requirements for the Institution’s animal facilities, EHS, or compliance committees, Radiation Safety and Biosafety Committees specify protective gear (including but not limited to gloves, arm protectors, goggles, face shields, and masks), cleanliness, and containment (including proper disposal) requirements for each individual project involving specific hazardous substances.
Personnel working in areas where they may be exposed to contaminated airborne particulate material or vapors are provided with suitable respiratory protection and are trained and evaluated for its use by EHS.

**Incident Reporting**

All injuries, accidents, bites, scratches, and allergic reactions are to be treated immediately. Once the immediate care needs have been provided, injured personnel must complete an Incident Report (and if medical care was necessary workers compensation paperwork for covered individuals) and notify their immediate supervisor. Incident reports and/or workers compensation forms should be filed at the unit/departmental office with all forms subsequently distributed in accordance with guidelines established by the Statewide Office of Risk Management and University EHS and Risk Management offices.