Working With Animals Policy

Effective: September 2000
Reviewed: June 2023
Revised: June 2023
Signature/Position: Vice-President, Finance and Operations

Applicable Legislation:

Occupational Health and Safety Act, (OHSA), R.S.O. 1990

Applicability:

This Policy applies to all University of Guelph employees (faculty and staff), students and volunteers whose work and/or academic activities require them to handle animals.

Policy Statements:

1. Animal handlers, (who may include employees, students, or volunteers) shall be trained in safe techniques for restraining, manipulating and transporting animal species in their care, along with precautions required for health protection. Supervisors are responsible for providing appropriate training.
2. As a baseline, all employees and students using animals for teaching and research must complete the online Animal User Training Program through the Research Services Office.
3. Supervisors shall review with all animal handlers the risks of sensitization, zoonotic diseases, routes of exposure and exposure prevention strategies.
4. Supervisors and animal handlers shall decide in advance how many experienced people will be required to handle and restrain an animal safely, the equipment to be used, whether working alone is acceptable, and safe procedures for working alone, as applicable.
5. Occupational Health and Wellness (OHW) and Student Health and Wellness with Environmental Health and Safety shall determine requirements for immunization programs (e.g., rabies) and other health surveillance initiatives. Identified employees and students shall participate in the program.
6. Supervisors must confirm participation of identified employees and students in the required program(s) prior to working with animals. Volunteers must provide proof of the required immunization status prior to working with animals.
7. All suspected zoonotic exposures resulting from bites, scratches, needle-stick injuries shall be reported to Occupational Health and Wellness (OHW), following the University Injury and Incident Reporting Process [1].

Glossary:

Term	Definition
Sensitization	the development of allergies upon repeated contact with animals or their excreta or dander.
Zoonotic Diseases	diseases that are shared between species; diseases transmissible from animals to humans.

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