



CM SOP #006 – Import of Rodents

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I. Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish standardized procedures for the review, approval, coordination, receipt, quarantine, and documentation of rodents imported into Comparative Medicine (CM) facilities.

These procedures are designed to:

- Protect existing animal colonies from introduction of infectious agents
- Maintain established health status and biosecurity of CM vivaria
- Ensure regulatory compliance with institutional, federal, and accreditation requirements
- Provide consistent documentation and communication throughout the import process

This SOP applies to:

- Rodents imported from non-approved vendors
- Rodents imported from other academic or research institutions
- Transfers of animals between institutions
- All Comparative Medicine personnel and research staff involved in animal importation

Animals arriving without prior approval will not be accepted into CM facilities and may be returned to the originating institution at the expense of the requesting Principal Investigator.

II. Roles & Responsibilities

Comparative Medicine Staff

- Following procedures outlined in this SOP
- Coordinating communication between FAU researchers and sending institutions
- Reviewing import documentation for completeness
- Receiving and evaluating animals upon arrival
- Performing quarantine husbandry and health monitoring
- Collecting samples for health surveillance testing
- Maintaining accurate records in VSATS
- Updating import status and documentation throughout the process

Research Staff, Students, Visitors

- Submitting import requests through VSATS
- Ensuring an active IACUC protocol exists for the animals being imported
- Initiating Material Transfer Agreements (MTA) when required
- Providing accurate animal and facility information
- Paying all associated import and testing costs
- Coordinating shipment timing with Comparative Medicine



Note: Investigators must not independently order or ship animals without prior Comparative Medicine approval.

CM Management

- Ensuring quarantine housing availability
- Coordinating room assignments and special husbandry requirements
- Ensuring staff training and compliance with this SOP
- Coordinating animal transfers following quarantine
- Overseeing billing and documentation completion

CM Director and AV

- Reviewing health records and facility information
- Determining import approval or denial
- Establishing quarantine testing and husbandry requirements
- Providing final authorization for shipment and release from quarantine
- Ensuring biosecurity standards are maintained

The Attending Veterinarian has final authority over all animal imports.

III. General Notes & Definitions

- **VSATS:** Veterinary Services Animal Tracking System
- **FAU PI Contact:** Point of contact at FAU for the importing study
- **MTA:** Materials Transfer Agreement
- **ACT:** Animal Care Technician
- **VT:** Veterinary Technician
- **Approved Vendor:** An approved vendor is a commercial supplier whose health surveillance program has been reviewed and accepted by CM veterinarians.

Non-Approved vendors include:

- Research institutions
- Universities
- Commercial suppliers not on the approved vendor list
- Collaborating laboratories

Imports from non-approved vendors require full veterinary review.

- **Quarantine:** housing animals in a designated area for health evaluation and diagnostic testing prior to introduction into established colonies.

- **Biosecurity Principle**

No animals may enter Comparative Medicine vivaria without:

- Veterinary approval
- Completed documentation
- Established housing and quarantine plan

IV. Materials & Equipment

- VSATS database system
- *CM Form 009: Import Request Form*
- *CM Form 062: Email Template*
- *CM Form 012: Approval to Ship Animals Form*
- *CM Form 014: Rodent Quarantine Record*
- *CM Form 019: Time and Supply Log*



- Shipping containers
- Personal protective equipment
- Quarantine housing equipment
- Diagnostic sample collection supplies
- Courier services (e.g., Validated Delivery Solutions, Optimize Courier, World Courier)

V. Procedure

A. Import Request Submission

The Principal Investigator must:

1. Submit an import request through VSATS
2. Provide funding account information
3. Initiate Material Transfer Agreement

CM Staff will:

1. Receive the request through VSATS
2. Verify protocol approval status and availability of animal numbers
3. Record Import Order ID#

B. Documentation and Communication

Comparative Medicine staff will:

1. Pre-fill the *CM Form 009: Rodent Import Form*
2. Email the form to the sending institution using *CM Form 062: Email Template*
3. Request the following:
 - a) Health surveillance reports (minimum 12 months)
 - b) Facility description
 - c) Biosecurity practices
 - d) Outbreak history
4. Email techdevelop@fau.edu to verify status of the MTA.

C. Health Record Review

1. Health records must be dated within 12 months and include:
 - a) Pathogen exclusion list
 - b) Testing frequency
 - c) Diagnostic methods
 - d) Husbandry practices
 - e) Facility workflow
 - f) Access control procedures
2. Incomplete documentation will be returned for correction.

D. Veterinary Review and Risk Assessment

The Attending Veterinarian will:

1. Review all health records
2. Evaluate disease risk
3. Determine quarantine requirements
4. Approve or deny import
5. Request additional testing prior to shipment.

E. Import Approval

If approved, CM staff will:

1. Complete *CM Form 012: Approval to Ship Animals Form*
2. Obtain veterinary signature



3. Send approval to sending institution

If denied, reasons will be documented and communicated to the investigator.

F. Shipment Coordination

Comparative Medicine staff will:

1. Confirm quarantine housing availability with FM
2. Obtain quote from Validated Delivery Solutions (preferred domestic courier), Optimize Courier (preferred international courier), or World Courier
3. Coordinate shipment timing
4. Schedule courier service
5. Record tracking information in VSATS
6. Notify all parties of shipment schedule

Note: Shipment costs are the responsibility of the requesting investigator unless otherwise arranged.

G. Animal Receipt and Quarantine

Upon arrival, CM staff will:

1. Enter Animal Order Form in VSATS
2. Request CM Cage Cards from VSATS, specifying the quantity and any special husbandry needs or requests
3. Receive shipment per *CM SOP 406: Receiving Rodents*
4. Inspect animals for health status
5. Document arrival condition
6. Assign animals to quarantine housing
7. Initiate quarantine record

Animals will not be released from quarantine without veterinary approval.

H. Diagnostic Testing

CM staff will:

1. Collect diagnostic samples per *CM SOP 204: Rodent Quarantine Testing*
2. Submit samples to approved laboratory
3. Record tracking information
4. Update VSATS Animal Import Request Form (VS Section 1)
5. Document results and record final health status (approved/not approved)

I. Release from Quarantine & Animal Transfer

Animals may be released when:

1. Record permission to transfer, including building, room, and date
2. Complete CM Form 014: Rodent Quarantine Record with test results, release information, and any other relevant notes.
3. Submit Animal transfer Form in VSATS
4. Update VSATS Animal Import Request Form (VS Section 2).
 - a) Note: do not fill out actual # of animals received as this will close out the animal order.
5. Record total time effort on Time and Supply Log, submit to FM and update monthly spreadsheet.

J. Billing and Documentation Closure

CM staff will:

1. Record quarantine completion
2. Document animal transfer



3. Submit billing information
4. Close import request in VSATS
5. File all documentation in Import Binder

K. Recordkeeping

The following records must be maintained:

1. Import Request Form
2. Health surveillance records
3. Veterinary approval documentation
4. Shipment tracking information
5. Quarantine testing results
6. Animal transfer documentation
7. Billing records

Note: Records must be available for inspection.

VI. Health & Safety

- Personnel handling imported animals may be exposed to:
 - Infectious agents
 - Animal allergens
 - Biological materials
- To reduce risk, personnel must:
 - Wear appropriate PPE
 - Follow quarantine procedures
 - Maintain separation between quarantine and colony animals
 - Follow established sanitation procedures
- All injuries, exposures, or animal health concerns must be reported immediately.

VII. References & Attachments

- *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*
- Public Health Service Policy
- FAU IACUC Policies
 - 10.4.3: Animal Procurement and Acclimation
 - 10.4.10: Animal Transport
- CM Forms and SOPs
 - CM Form 009: Import Request Form
 - CM Form 012: Approval to Ship Animals Form
 - CM Form 014: Rodent Quarantine Record
 - CM Form 019: Time and Supply Log
 - CM SOP 203: Rodent Quarantine Husbandry
 - CM SOP 204: Rodent Quarantine Testing

VIII. Revision History

Revision Date	Revision Number	Summary of Changes
09/20/2017	2	Added procedures
03/24/2026	3	Updated format, made ADA compliant,

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