



## CM SOP #105 – Small Animal Carcass Disposal

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### I. Purpose & Scope

This SOP establishes standardized procedures for the safe, compliant, and sanitary disposal of small animal carcasses within Comparative Medicine–managed animal facilities. The purpose is to ensure proper verification of death, secure containment, labeling, storage, and timely coordination of carcass pickup in accordance with FAU EH&S Biological Waste Program requirements and institutional animal care policies. This SOP applies to all CM personnel handling carcass disposal and to any locations designated for carcass storage (refrigerators/freezers) across FAU vivaria. It also outlines required actions for atypical findings, including animals found dead with abnormalities, fluid leakage/contamination, and any instance of an animal found alive or improperly disposed.

### II. Roles & Responsibilities

#### Comparative Medicine Staff

- Verify death prior to disposal (including secondary confirmation after euthanasia per policy).
- Bag, seal, label, and store carcasses properly in designated refrigerators/freezers.
- Maintain carcass areas (clean/disinfect leakage, restock bags/labels as needed).
- Notify research/vet staff when dead animals are held refrigerated for 24 hours for potential tissue collection/necropsy.
- Request EH&S pickup as needed and report any improper disposal or animals found alive immediately to CM management.

#### Research Staff, Students, Visitors

- Follow CM procedures for carcass bagging, labeling, and placement in designated storage units.
- Do not place food/drink in carcass/lab refrigerators.
- Notify CM staff of leakage, improper disposal, or any concern requiring CM follow-up.
- Respond promptly if notified about refrigerated holding for tissue collection.

#### CM Assistant and Associate Directors

- Ensure staff compliance with this SOP and ensure supplies/storage/signage are adequate.
- Ensure required training is provided and documented.
- Coordinate EH&S pickup workflow and investigate/report disposal issues as needed.
- Notify the AV (or designee) and IACUC of any live animals found in carcass disposal.

#### CM Director and AV

- Provide oversight of carcass disposal practices and institutional compliance.
- Ensure appropriate disposal resources and EH&S/vendor support are available.
- Direct response to significant incidents (e.g., live animals in disposal) and ensure corrective actions/training are implemented.



### III. General Notes & Definitions

Small animal carcasses must be handled using universal precautions and disposed of in a manner that maintains sanitation, biosecurity, and compliance with FAU EH&S requirements. All carcasses must be placed in sealed, labeled carcass disposal bags and stored only in designated, properly labeled carcass refrigerators/freezers (no food or drink permitted). Any leakage must be cleaned promptly using appropriate PPE and the area disinfected. Animals found dead may be held in a refrigerator (not freezer) for up to **24 hours** to allow tissue collection/necropsy when applicable, with notification to the lab and veterinary staff. Any animal found alive, outside of a bag, or improperly disposed must be reported immediately to CM management for escalation as needed.

- **Small Animal Carcass:** The body of a deceased laboratory animal requiring disposal in accordance with EH&S biological waste procedures.
- **Universal Precautions:** Safety practices assuming all animal tissues/fluids may be potentially infectious; includes appropriate PPE and hand hygiene.
- **Secondary Method of Death Confirmation:** An additional method used after euthanasia to ensure death has occurred, per IACUC policy (e.g., bilateral thoracotomy, decapitation, etc. as appropriate).
- **Carcass Disposal Bag:** Approved leak-resistant bag used to contain animal remains; must be sealed prior to storage.
- **Carcass Label/Sticker:** Identification label applied to the bag (e.g., species, date, PI/lab information) to support tracking and compliance.
- **Carcass Storage Unit:** Designated refrigerator/freezer used exclusively for carcass storage pending EH&S pickup; must be appropriately labeled as biohazard and “No Food/Drink.”
- **Improper Disposal:** Any carcass not bagged/sealed/labeled correctly, carcasses stored in non-designated units, leakage not addressed, or any animal placed in disposal areas while still alive.

### IV. Materials & Equipment

The following materials and equipment are required for small animal carcass disposal:

- Approved carcass disposal bags (leak-resistant)
- Carcass labels/stickers and permanent marker/pen
- Disposable gloves (appropriate sizes)
- Additional PPE as needed (e.g., lab coat/gown, mask, eye protection for splash risk)
- Designated **biohazard carcass refrigerator and/or freezer**
- Biohazard signage and labeling for storage units:
  - “**Biohazardous Waste**”
  - “**No Food or Drink – For Laboratory Use Only**”
- Approved disinfectant and cleaning supplies for leakage cleanup:
  - paper towels/wipes
  - spray bottle or pre-saturated disinfectant wipes
- Waste receptacles:
  - regular trash (for non-biohazard items as allowed)
  - biohazard waste container (as required by EH&S/institutional policy)
- EH&S pickup request: <https://fau.bioraft.com/>



## V. Procedure

### 1. Verify Death

- a) Confirm the animal is deceased prior to disposal.
  - b) If the animal was euthanized, death must be confirmed using an approved secondary method per IACUC Policy 10.4.11: Euthanasia Methods.
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### 2. Bagging and Labeling

- a) Don gloves (use additional PPE as needed).
  - b) Place the carcass into an approved carcass disposal bag.
  - c) Seal the bag by tying a secure knot or rolling the top down and sealing with the bag sticker/closure.
  - d) Complete the carcass label/sticker information.
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### 3. Storage in Designated Carcass Areas

Place the sealed/labeled carcass bag into the designated carcass refrigerator/freezer storage location for that facility:

- Vivarium 71: dirty hallway carcass unit
  - Vivarium 12: Room 507A
  - Vivarium MC17 & MC19: MC17 hallway
  - MC22: Room 126 (necropsy) or Room 122 (receiving)
  - Ensure carcasses are stored in an organized manner and remain easily accessible for EH&S pickup.
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### 4. Special Case: Animal Found Dead (Tissue Collection / Necropsy Option)

- a) If an animal is found dead, visually assess for abnormalities (e.g., fight wounds, abnormal body condition, misaligned teeth).
  - b) Place the carcass in a refrigerator (not freezer) for up to 24 hours.
  - c) Notify lab personnel by email to allow time for tissue collection if needed.
  - d) CC veterinary staff in case necropsy is warranted.
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### 5. Cleanup and Disinfection

- a) Clean any fluid leakage from carcass disposal/storage areas using appropriate PPE.
  - b) Disinfect the affected surface using an approved disinfectant per facility practice.
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### 6. EH&S Pickup Request

- a) When the freezer begins getting full (or as needed), request pickup by:
    - a. notifying the Vivarium Operations Manager (OVM) or
    - b. submitting a request via <https://fau.bioraft.com/>
  - b) Copy the FM on written communications regarding carcass pickups.
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### 7. Noncompliance / Serious Incident Response

- a) Any animals found alive, outside of carcass bags, or improperly disposed must be reported immediately to CM Management.
- b) CM Management will initiate follow-up actions, including notifying the Attending Veterinarian (or designee) and IACUC as required.
- c) CM Management will locate the open bag in the freezer to determine identity via carcass labeling.



- d) Any live animal will be euthanized promptly and death confirmed using a secondary method.

### VI. Health & Safety

Use universal precautions when handling carcasses and wear appropriate PPE (minimum gloves). Clean and disinfect any leakage immediately to prevent contamination and exposure. Store carcasses only in designated biohazard refrigerators/freezers and maintain required signage (no food/drink). Report any animal found alive or improperly disposed immediately to CM management and the AV.

### VII. References & Attachments

- *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*
- FAU Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) Biological Waste Program requirements.
- *FAU IACUC Policy 10.4.11: Euthanasia Methods.*

### VIII. Revision History

Revision Date	Revision Number	Summary of Changes
12/16/2019	105.2	Changed the EH&S pick-up request information
03/23/2023	105.3	Changed to Rodent and add Building 12 and MC-22 vivaria
03/01/2026	105.4	Updated formatting, ensured ADA compliance

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