



## SOP CM #213.4 – Workflow in the Vivarium

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### I. Purpose & Scope

This SOP applies to all users and non-users of animals in Comparative Medicine managed vivaria (including research staff, students, CM staff, and any visitors) and describes the movement and traffic patterns of people and animals within and between Comparative Medicine managed vivaria.

### II. Roles & Responsibilities

#### Comparative Medicine Staff

- Ensure stocking and provision of appropriate PPE throughout the vivarium
- Train and reinforce the traffic patterns to anyone entering the vivarium
- Communicate any changes to traffic patterns approved by the Attending Veterinarian to research staff

#### Research Staff, Students, Visitors

- Adhere to signage and guidance provided by Comparative Medicine
- Inform CM staff, Director, or AV of any anticipated necessary changes based on experimental needs at least 1 week in advance
- Communicate any questions or concerns to CM staff, Director, or AV

#### CM Assistant and Associate Directors

- Provide training to all new CM and research staff on the background and importance of adhering to all posted traffic patterns
- Coordinate vivarium OWL card access once requestors are approved for entry by the IACUC
- Review OWL card access regularly, but no less than twice yearly
- Ensure signage is up-to-date and accurate
- Communicate, on behalf of the AV, any approved changes to the traffic patterns

#### CM Director and AV

- Ensure adequate supplies and PPE are available throughout the vivarium
- Determine workflow and traffic patterns based on current literature, best practices, and professional judgement
- Provide updated signage as necessary

### III. General Notes & Definitions

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Specialized clothing or equipment worn to protect themselves and to minimize the risk of transmitting contaminants, pathogens, allergens, or hazardous materials between personnel and animal populations
- **Vivarium:** A facility or space designed and maintained for the housing and care of research animals.
- **Biosecurity:** Measures taken to prevent the introduction and spread of pathogens and contaminants within and between vivarium environments.



- **Traffic/Workflow:** The directed movement of personnel, animals, equipment, and supplies through vivarium spaces to support biosecurity and operational efficiency.
- **Clean/Dirty Corridor System:** A facility layout in which personnel and materials move through designated pathways to separate clean (sterile or sanitized) areas from dirty (used or potentially contaminated) areas.
- **Quarantine:** A designated period and location for isolating incoming animals to monitor for signs of illness and prevent the introduction of disease into established colonies

#### IV. Materials & Equipment

1. PPE: lab coat or disposable gown, hair bonnet, shoe covers, gloves, CM-issued scrubs
2. OWL Card
3. Appropriate attire: pants/skirt/dress to the ankles, covered midriff, closed toe shoes

#### V. Procedure

1. Vivarium access
  - A. Any requests for OWL card access will be coordinated by CM, through FAU Public Safety
  - B. Unescorted access may be granted to the following people:
    - i. Employees of CM or Research Integrity, or staff of other FAU departments with legitimate duties and trained on entry requirements.
    - ii. Those on an approved, active IACUC protocol or amendment
    - iii. Vendors may be granted entry by CM personnel or FAU Facilities Staff, escorted to the area they will be working, and be left unattended while they work, but may not access other areas of the facility without permission.
  - C. Escorted access may be arranged for those who do not meet the criteria above:
    - i. For a tour (may enter the vivarium, but not rooms in which animal cages are being opened, nor be present for any procedures or experiments):
      - a) Must be escorted by authorized personnel
      - b) Prior to, or immediately upon, entering the vivarium the *CM Form 017 Vivarium Visitor Access* must be completed
    - ii. Students or visiting faculty (may enter housing and procedure rooms, may observe animal use, may not touch or handle animals)
      - a) Must be escorted by authorized personnel
      - b) Requires prior arrangements and approval by the AV or designee
      - c) Must complete the form *CM Form 017 Vivarium Visitor Access*
    - iii. Visitors that will handle animals or participate in laboratory procedures (i.e., non-FAU faculty or students temporarily on campus to participate in or to teach or train FAU personnel)
      - a) Must be approved by the IACUC and on an approved and active animal use protocol
      - b) Requires prior arrangements and approval by the AV or designee
      - c) Must meet FAU's Occupational Health requirements
2. Each person entering an animal housing room within a CM managed facility must abide to the workflow pattern within and between vivaria:
  - A. Quarantined areas will be accessed last in the day (in the order posted on the doors), and once a person enters the quarantined area, they cannot return to any other animal rooms unless they take a full shower.
  - B. Follow the order of health status level. The 'cleanest' level is designated as level 1, while ascending numbers are associated with dirtier health status level (see also Classifications of Facilities/Rooms <https://www.fau.edu/research-admin/comparative-medicine/animal-health-surveillance/>). Any experimental procedures including breeding and observation of animals housed in differing health status levels should be planned in advance accordingly.



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- C. There are no restrictions moving from a cleaner health status level to a dirtier health status level. Conversely, one cannot move from a dirtier health status level to a cleaner health status level without proper precautions.
  - D. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, research or animal care staff needs to enter a room/facility with a cleaner health status level after having been in a dirtier level area, clothing should be changed and shoe covers and a hair bonnet should be donned prior to entry to the cleaner room.
  - E. These health status levels are applicable for mouse and rat housing areas only.
  - F. Designated signs identifying the current health status level will be affixed to the door outside of each room/cubicle.
  - G. Additional PPE will be provided for specific rooms at the entry level and trash receptacles for removing PPE while leaving, if applicable, e.g. in BSL2 and quarantine areas.
3. Animal facility key and slide card management:
- A. Personnel must be verified to be authorized animal users before activation of OWL card access.
  - B. Twice per year, or more frequently as deemed necessary, OWL card access will be inventoried and access list(s) reviewed by CM management. Protocol or staff assignment records will be checked against current IACUC records. People no longer employed by FAU or no longer performing animal work will have their access cards turned off.
  - C. PIs managing satellite facilities are responsible for the keys/card access issued to their assigned personnel

**VI. Health & Safety**

- Information on which hazards may be present in a room will be displayed on the door, with applicable precautions.
- There is a low but possible risk of exposure to laboratory animal allergens (LAA) such as dander, fur, and bedding dust. Individuals with known allergies or respiratory sensitivities should take appropriate precautions

**VII. References & Attachments**

- [FAU IACUC Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Comparative Medicine Website](#)
- *CM Form 017: Vivarium Visitor Access*

**VIII. Revision History**

Revision Date	Revision Number	Summary of Changes
5/15/21	2	Added concise language, updated link
5/22/24	3	Minor changes, repaired links, updated with new facilities
8/11/25	4	Extensive revision: removal of shower requirement, references to static caging and modified barrier facilities; updated to reflect newly aligned pathogen exclusion lists between campuses; updated EH&S requirements for visitors; updated Visitor Access Form (CM 017)

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