



DEPARTMENT POLICY

Policy Name: Vivarium Space Management Policy

Approval Authority: Senior Vice President for Research

Responsible Executive: Attending Veterinarian – Rutgers Animal Care (RUAC)

Responsible Office: Rutgers Animal Care

Adopted: May 24, 2023

Reviewed: November 20, 2025

Policy Statement: Rutgers Animal Care (RUAC) is responsible for managing the animal facilities, animal husbandry, and veterinary care for animals housed and used for research at all Rutgers University campuses -Newark, New Brunswick, and Camden - supporting the innovative research of faculty from all four Chancellor units. This policy outlines the processes, structures, and guiding principles for allocating vivarium space across all facilities managed by RUAC. This policy is intended to provide guidelines for the effective utilization, efficiency, and productivity of limited vivarium space across all Chancellor-led Units (CLUs). This policy will provide guidance on animal housing space, procedure space, research equipment housed within the facility, as well as the temporary storage of unutilized research equipment within the animal facility. This policy **supersedes** any prior space arrangements currently in place. Management of space at IACUC-approved satellite locations within faculty labs is the responsibility of the faculty member in charge of the lab and is outside the scope of this policy.

All vivarium space on the campuses has been assigned by the Chancellors to the Office for Research, although RCM cost pool allocation to support the space is not provided to the Office for Research. The Senior Vice President for Research (SVPR) has delegated to RUAC the responsibility of managing the animal facilities due to the unit's expertise in veterinary care, animal husbandry, animal welfare, and facility management. Space allocation can change over time due to the evolving needs of research, new faculty recruitments, or changing research priorities within the Institution. RUAC will make every effort to accommodate the needs of faculty researchers based on the availability of space, research needs, and other priorities within RUAC-managed space.

2. Reason for Policy: Vivarium space is a specialized research space, has limited availability, is expensive to manage and maintain to the high standards required by Federal & local laws and accreditation bodies. Having a clear set of guidelines on how

space is allocated and reviewed will ensure transparency, equity, and help balance the priorities of the research enterprise.

3. Who Should Read This Policy: All RU administrators, faculty, staff, principal investigators, co-investigators, and personnel who conduct research with animal models

4. Resources:

Animal Welfare Act

PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals,

Guide for the Care & Use of Laboratory Animals.

5. The Policy: Guiding principles for space allocation within RUAC-managed animal facilities:

- 1) Animal housing rooms are shared spaces.
- 2) Space assignment considerations:
 - Housing needs by species and population.
 - Risk assessment performed by REHS and RUAC for human and animal pathogens, respectively.
 - Access to specialized core facilities
 - Access to procedure spaces/ testing rooms.
 - Availability of space for equipment.
 - Collaborations.
 - Animal health, including stress and biosecurity status.
 - Nature of animal experiments – breeding vs. non-breeding, high traffic, etc.
 - Maximize space utilization to benefit the most research/users.
 - IACUC-approved protocol.
- 3) The building location of the PI's wet lab space may be considered, but it is not a primary consideration for space assignments.
- 4) The procedure space within the vivarium is very limited. Therefore, all procedure rooms within the facility are shared procedure rooms and cannot be allocated to a single investigator.
- 5) Assignments of vivarium spaces are not permanent and will be reviewed by RUAC at least annually. They will be reassigned with the goals of enhancing productivity, promoting strategic priorities, limiting underutilization and overutilization, allowing our most productive faculty to expand their space, and accommodating renovations and facility upgrades as necessary.
- 6) The Attending Veterinarian will make space allocation decisions in consultation with the dean or associate deans of the respective schools.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- A. The Attending Veterinarian (AV) of RUAC is the primary steward for managing the vivarium space and will work closely with deans, associate deans, directors, and unit leaders to ensure a fair, transparent, and equitable allocation of space based on research needs and availability.
- B. Faculty/Researchers are the primary users of vivarium facilities. They will inform the AV or facility supervisor about any changes to their research that will result in the need for more or less space.
- C. Facility husbandry Supervisors manage the space inside the vivarium on a daily basis, ensuring the space is kept clean and meets the regulatory standards for accreditation. Supervisors will develop monthly reports on cage census/per investigator and monitor the productive use of the space. Supervisors will notify the AV about any changes in space utilization that are apparent from the monthly reports.