

RUAC STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

TITLE: Internal Animal Transfers

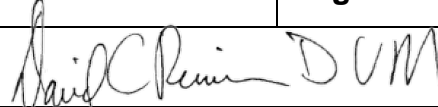
SOP Category: Import/Export

RUAC SOP #: 8.04

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Effective Date: 04/01/2025

Approval:



Revisions: 06/07/2021

SCOPE

This SOP describes the procedures when requesting and transferring rodents between Rutgers vivarium facilities. This SOP applies to all Animal Care Staff (ACS), ACS Supervisors (ACSS), Veterinary Staff (VS) and Research Staff members (RS) at the Rutgers New Brunswick, Piscataway, and Newark facilities.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this SOP is to review the following procedures for internal transfers:

- Animal Transfer Request
- Scheduling Rodent Transfers
- Labeling Cages for Transfer
- Packing Animals for Transfer
- Receiving and Quarantining Transferred Animals
- Transport Fees

RESPONSIBILITY

- RS requesting to receive a transfer are responsible for submitting the animal transfer request through the ACFC (Animal Care and Facilities Committee) website (acfc.rutgers.edu) and identifying specific individual cages for transfer. Cages for transfer should be labelled in advance with a RUAC internal transfer cage card. Transfer requests can be coordinated between the same Principal Investigator (PI) or two different PIs.
- ACSS (at both the origin/sending and destination/receiving facilities) are responsible for coordinating, confirming, and communicating the details of the scheduled transfer to all individuals involved. Supervisors at both the sending and receiving facilities are responsible for tracking the amount of time to complete all aspects of the transfer process.
- ACSS determine the compatibility of the animals to be transferred and the location for housing upon arrival at the new facility based on known originating facility and room level health status. (Quarantine or Animal/Colony Room). If there is a biosecurity concern with housing location or health status of the animals, ACSS will consult with VS for assistance.

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- ACS are responsible for collecting the cages of animals indicated for transfer, preparing the cages or shipping crates for transport, receiving the transfer and for housing the animals at the new facility.
- All PIs requesting to pack their own shipments must contact ACSS for supplies in advance and must have prior RUAC approval/training to pack animals.

PROCEDURE

- **Animal Transfer Request** – To request rodents to be transferred from one Rutgers facility to another, the recipient PI (or designated individual) must submit a request through the ACFC program.
- **Scheduling Rodent Transfers** – Once the animal transfer request has been received, the ACSS (at both current and destination facilities) coordinate the transfer based on the availability of staff and animal holding capacity. Transfer details will be forwarded to the requesting PI by the Supervisor at the facility where the animals are originally housed (sending facility). When all individuals involved agree to the arrangements made, the transfer will proceed.
- **Labeling Cages for Transfer** – RS must identify the specific cage(s) for transfer. RS must label the cages with completed RUAC internal transfer cage cards placed over the original cage card. Cage cards used specifically to indicate transfers are available through the ACSS.

A blue rectangular card with the word "TRANSFER" in bold black capital letters at the top. Below it, the following information is handwritten in blue ink: "Date: 01-01-2025", "PI: Reimer", "From Building/Room" followed by a box containing "CHI - Quarantine.", "To Building/Room" followed by a box containing "Nelson Facility.", "Initial: VC", and "Date of Transfer: 01-05-2025".

- **Packing Animals for Transfer** – Animals may be transferred in their original housing or shipping crates.
- Shipping crates are available upon request for internal transfer between Rutgers facilities.

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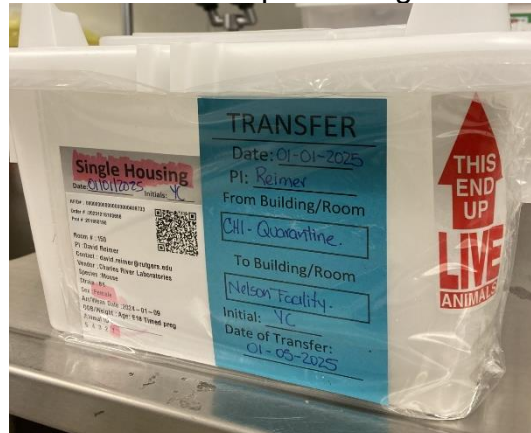
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- Upon packing, animals should be screened to ensure they are healthy for transport. Pregnant females, unweaned pups, sick or injured animals must be reported to veterinary staff (VS) and should not be transferred without receiving VS approval.
- All transfer cages and compartments must have access to a water source (Hydro gels, Hydropak, etc.) at all times.



- Packing tape must be used to secure the filter top lid onto the cage bottom.
- When shipping crates are used, ensure that the lids and dividers fit securely, and proper identification is used.
- Keep all cage ID cards with the specific cages/animals being transferred.



- All cages must be maintained in a climate-controlled area until Vivarium personnel arrive and are prepared to conduct the transfer.
- **Quarantine of Transferred Animals** – Animals that are being transferred against biosecurity traffic patterns must undergo a quarantine period of 2-3 weeks. For transfers that require a quarantine period, ACSS will notify the Shipping Coordinator(s) and VS of transfer for approval. Non-invasive samples of fecal pellets, fur swabs and oral swabs will be collected directly from the animals for PCR testing. Results must return negative for destination room or colony excluded pathogens prior to releasing the mice to their final housing destination. All results must be reviewed and approved by a veterinarian.
- **Receiving of Transferred Animals** – Vivarium personnel conduct the transfer of live research animals unless specific arrangements to the contrary are made in advance and with approval from the RUAC Associate Director or Director.

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- Animals must be transferred at the appropriate loading dock of the destination facility. Cages and/or crates must not enter buildings through public areas.
- ACS receive incoming animals and assure proper caging, food, water, and ID.
- Contingent upon the health status of the transferred animals, incoming animals are housed either in a quarantine room, or may be placed directly into the animal colony room.
- ACS MUST Keep all cage ID cards from the sending facility with the specific cages/animals received.

NOTE: Due to stress during transport and changes in diet, bedding, illumination intensity and light-cycles, all animals should be acclimated prior to use. For humane reasons and to promote reliable animal research, it is recommended that no procedures be initiated on rodents until 42hours after arrival.

- **Transfer and Transport Fees**

- The RUAC departmental van is used for animal transfers between Piscataway, New Brunswick, and Newark facilities. Exceptions will be determined by the RUAC Associate Director or ACSS.
- Transport fees are based on an hourly rate for labor plus a rate per mile between facilities. The labor charges include time for collecting cages, packing, loading/unloading the vehicle, transport and housing at destination facility.
- The current transfer fees are available through the ACSS.