



**WAKE FOREST**  
UNIVERSITY

**Department of Environmental Health and Safety**  
**P. O. Box 7286**  
**Winston-Salem, NC 27109**

## **Animal Welfare Program**

The goal of the Animal Welfare Program is to ensure that animals at Wake Forest are always treated ethically and humanely. It is comprised of several components: the Institutional Official, the Attending Veterinarian and care program, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, training in the care of laboratory animals, and the Animal Research Oversight unit. The Animal Welfare Program is also monitored externally by three main agencies.

### **Our Commitment to Animal Welfare** **Institutional Oversight of Animal Research and Teaching Policy**

Wake Forest University and the Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center conducts research with the expressed aim of improving human and animal health. In coordination with other cutting edge research technologies, we use animals in research because it is necessary to advance our understanding and treatment of disease.

Our animal research program is fully accredited by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International, which upholds the highest standards of welfare for research animals and is the gold standard for programs like ours. We were among the first organizations to receive accreditation in the 1960s, and have been fully accredited for more than half a century. Our researchers and educators work tirelessly in their vital research to incorporate the 3 Rs of reducing animal numbers, replacing animal studies with alternatives, and refining techniques to be the safest.

Over the years, Wake Forest has conducted research in a host of areas from obesity and cardiovascular disease to cancer and regenerative medicine to emergency medicine and sports safety to cognition and addiction. In that pursuit, we have made our commitment to animal welfare an integral part of our value system and priorities.

The Wake Forest Animal Welfare Program, which ensures proper care of our animals, is comprised of several components: the Institutional Official, the Attending Veterinarian and care program, and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, training in the care of laboratory animals, and the Animal Research Oversight unit. Together they promote ethical standards, perform clinical veterinary care, train researchers and animal care workers, supply regulatory oversight, and offer general assistance to researchers and teachers working with animals. The goal of the program is to ensure that animals at Wake Forest are always treated ethically and humanely.

### **Institutional Official for Animal Research**

The Institutional Official for Animal Research is responsible for the welfare of the animals and the quality of the program.

§ The health and well-being of our research animals are guaranteed by fostering a culture of compassion and care and by maintaining state-of-the-art facilities. At Wake Forest, our scientists



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apply the highest ethical standards in the performance of their world-class research. The Attending Veterinarian, and Director of the Animal Resources Program (ARP), is responsible for the programs of veterinary care and animal husbandry.

§ The Attending Veterinarian retains the ultimate authority about the care and handling of our animals.

§ Veterinary medical care is immediately available to our animals 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

§ There are at least 4 full-time veterinarians dedicated to clinical care and more than 100 husbandry and care staff.

§ The vast majority of the animals at Wake Forest are rats and mice, which make up about 95 percent of the total. The remaining five percent are used judiciously and model specific conditions that are essential to our research. This distribution follows the national and international distribution. All animals are obtained from registered and fully-documented providers.

## **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)**

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) is responsible for the review and approval of animal activities in research and teaching. It is made up of veterinarians, scientists, lay persons and representatives from our local community. It oversees activity in about 150 animal research labs staffed by 750 highly-trained researchers.

§ The IACUC ensures the numbers of animals are minimal, the procedures meet or exceed current veterinary standards, and that all of the appropriate steps are taken to prevent, minimize or eliminate risks to our animals.

§ The IACUC ensures that research staff are adequately trained and protected from safety risks.

§ The IACUC also gives regulatory guidance to research staff, conducts facility inspections, reviews the program twice each year, and provides extensive reports to federal agencies.

A dedicated Laboratory Animal Training Coordinator assembles training programs and provides direct training to laboratory, teaching and husbandry staff on how to handle animals and on procedures, such as specimen collection and aseptic surgery.

## **The Oversight & Outreach**

The unit is responsible for quality assurance. This unit conducts post-approval monitoring of ongoing research and provides targeted training. In conjunction with the attending veterinarian and the IACUC, it directs the assessment of any unanticipated adverse events in animals, non-compliance, or complaints that may occur.

Finally, it may be helpful to point out that in addition to Wake Forest's genuine dedication to our animals, we are regulated by and conform to the requirements set forth by the U.S. Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, the National Research Council's Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Animal Welfare Act & Regulations. As part of our compliance with Animal Welfare



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Act Regulations, the Medical Center is subject to random, unannounced inspections by USDA veterinarians.