



Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee

## Authority of the Attending Veterinarian Policy

### I. Purpose

Montana State University (MSU) is committed to observing Federal policies and regulations and AAALAC standards for the humane care and use of animals. This policy describes the authority of the Attending Veterinarian (AV).

### II. Scope

This policy covers all animals (excluding animals used in agricultural research, teaching or testing) on MSU premises used for biomedical research, teaching, training, breeding, and related activities hereinafter referred to collectively as “activities”, and is applicable to all persons responsible for conducting activities involving live vertebrate animals at or under the auspices of MSU.

### III. Responsibility/Authority

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of and ensuring compliance with this policy.

### IV. Process

The AV has been delegated authority to implement MSU’s veterinary care program, and to oversee the adequacy of all other aspects of animal care and use. Adequate veterinary medical care is essential to support a comprehensive animal care and use program that ensures the health and well-being of animals. In accordance with the Animal Welfare Act and the NRC Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, the University has empowered the Institutional-appointed AV with full authority to provide medical care or euthanasia, at their discretion, to animals on MSU premises. The duties of the AV may be shared or delegated to other veterinarians via communication with the AV, but ensuring program compliance with federal regulations and institutional policy remains the responsibility of the AV.

The AV (or authorized designee) has unrestricted access to all areas where animals are used or housed, including any satellite facilities not directly managed by the Animal Research Center (ARC), and is authorized to immediately stop research activities that are inconsistent with acceptable research conduct or for protocol deviations that have a negative impact on the animal. The AV will promptly communicate incidents to the IACUC for further review.

The AV (or authorized designee) will make every reasonable attempt to consult the

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Principal Investigator (PI) prior to implementing veterinary care actions. However, in emergent situations, the AV is not required to obtain approval from the PI or other parties to provide appropriate care in an expedited fashion if such actions are deemed necessary by the AV to protect the interests of the animal or the integrity of the University's animal care program. In such cases, the AV(or designee) will notify the PI as soon as reasonably practicable.

If the responsible research staff member and the AV (or authorized designee) are not in agreement regarding the need for medical treatment or euthanasia, the AV (or authorized designee) has the authority to act to protect the health and well-being of the animal and will make the final decision based on their medical judgment.