

## OUTCOMES FOR ANIMALS AT THE END OF SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

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These frequently asked questions (FAQs) are intended to assist investigators, instructors, and members of animal care committees in the implementation of the [CCAC guidelines: Outcomes for animals at the end of scientific activities](#) (CCAC, 2026). FAQs provide general responses to comments and questions received by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) during the external reviews of this guidelines document.

If you do not find the answer to your question here, do not hesitate to [contact the CCAC](#) and we will be pleased to provide assistance.

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#### **1. Do outcomes for animals at the end of a scientific activity need to be approved by an animal care committee?**

Yes. As noted in the [CCAC policy statement on: terms of reference for animal care committees](#) (CCAC, 2006), animal use protocols must include “a description of the fate of the animals if they are not to be [humanely killed], including the length of time that they are to be held” (p.7).

#### **2. When are outcomes for animals at the end of a scientific activity determined?**

Information on the outcomes for animals must be included in the animal use protocol submitted to the animal care committee ([CCAC policy statement on: terms of reference for animal care committees](#) (CCAC, 2006)). Available options will depend on the relevant government regulations and factors such as the species, age, and history of the individual animal. The animal’s outcome must be informed by their current welfare status and a cumulative endpoints assessment (see the [CCAC guidelines: Animal welfare assessment](#) (CCAC, 2021) and the [CCAC guidelines: Identification of scientific endpoints, humane intervention points, and cumulative endpoints](#) (CCAC, 2022)). Cost and convenience must not be the primary factor in decision-making.

#### **3. How is the outcome for an animal determined?**

In every instance of scientific animal use, decisions must be made regarding what will happen to the animals once the scientific activity is complete. Information on the outcomes for animals must be included in the animal use protocol submitted to the animal care committee ([CCAC policy statement on: terms of reference for animal care committees](#) (CCAC, 2006)). Available options will depend on the relevant government regulations and factors such as the species, age, and history of the individual animal. The animal’s outcome must be informed by their current welfare status and a cumulative endpoints assessment (see the [CCAC guidelines: Animal welfare assessment](#) (CCAC, 2021) and the [CCAC guidelines: Identification of scientific endpoints, humane intervention points, and cumulative endpoints](#) (CCAC, 2022)). Cost and convenience must not be the primary factor in decision-making.

#### **4. What should be addressed in the institution’s standard operating procedures on rehoming?**

The institution releasing the animal for rehoming must evaluate the rehoming situation and assess any potential compromise of the animal’s welfare. Each institution that intends to rehome animals must document a process describing the conditions that must be fulfilled, and the documentation required before releasing an animal to the care of another party. Institutions should also take steps to prepare animals for rehoming during their use in scientific activities (e.g., desensitize animals to noises they will be exposed to in the new setting, and train animals to facilitate their transition). See Section 2.1, “Rehome”, of the guidelines for more details.