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# The Essentials: Dogs



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# Scope



- Builds on the CCAC's general guidelines as part of its suite of animal-specific guidelines
- Does not address specific ethical questions about the use of dogs in science (see instead the *CCAC Ethics Principles for Animal Use in Science*)
- Applies to all scientific activities using dogs in which the protocol author is affiliated with a CCAC-certified institution, regardless of whether the dogs reside outside of a facility, or are brought into a facility for short or long-term periods

# Special Considerations

- Dogs are companion animals and are unique in terms of public concern and their needs for human interaction
- Implications of working with companion animals:
  - better recognition of, and ability to respond to, affective states in the animals
  - opportunities for refinement through training, companionship with people, and rehoming
  - potential for stronger emotional experiences for personnel

# Important Welfare Considerations

- Able to learn and integrate information
- Have complex emotional lives and can experience a variety of negative and positive emotions
- Require social interaction with humans and other dogs, play, chewing, scent marking, exploration, etc.
- Socialization and habituation are important for minimizing stress, facilitating handling, and rehoming
- Sensitive to sound and scent
- There are differences due to breed, previous history, and individual characteristics
- Statements in the guidelines are general, and some practices that commonly contribute to positive welfare for dogs may not be perceived as positive by all dogs

# Facilities

- Sound control should be incorporated into facility design to mitigate negative impacts of excessive noise
- Appendix provides an assessment tool to assist with evaluating behaviours and elements that are key to determining enclosure size and design

## Guideline 1

Facility designs for housing dogs should provide spaces that promote good welfare, which includes physical and emotional health. These spaces should allow dogs to express behaviours that fulfill their behavioural needs and provide positive affect, positive social interactions, and some degree of choice and control over how they interact with other dogs, people, and features of the environment.

# Facility Management and Personnel

- Light should mimic natural conditions
- Temperatures should be optimal for the particular dogs
- Sound levels should be minimized through management
- Competent personnel must be available

## **Guideline 2**

Facility management practices must ensure that the macroenvironment (room) and microenvironment (enclosures) maintain good welfare of both the animals and personnel.

# Procurement

- **Purpose bred dogs:** well-defined life history and health status; more experience with laboratory housing and care practices
- **Non purpose-bred dogs:** all other sources (shelters, surplus to other activities, other breeders, etc.); more variability
- **Client-owned dogs:** not procured; owners are informed and give consent

## Guideline 3

Purpose-bred dogs should be sourced.

# Procurement

- Standard operating procedures in place for evaluating dogs upon arrival; includes a physical and behavioural assessment
- Quarantine to be determined by the veterinarian; conditions should replicate regular housing and husbandry as closely as possible

## **Guideline 4**

Institutions must only procure non-purpose-bred dogs from owners or organizations with which they have a well-defined arrangement that has been approved by the animal care committee.

# Care of Puppies

- Puppies should not be separated from their mother until eight weeks old



## Guideline 6

Facilities raising puppies must develop a systematic socialization program aimed at the dogs' current and long-term physiological and behavioural development.

# Husbandry

- Must be specifically and systematically observed at least twice daily
- Establish compatible pairs or groups
- Must be provided with stimulation and engage in daily physical activity
- Should have regular physical activity outside of their primary enclosure
- Must provide a robust environmental enrichment program that addresses the individual dogs' needs and aligns with the scientific activity

## **Guideline 8**

In addition to routine daily interactions, each dog must receive varied, positive human contact.

# Training and Restraint

## Guideline 9

Training methods that are stress-, fear- and force-free must be used.

## Guideline 10

A flexible training program should be developed for each dog, tailored to individual differences in learning.

## Guideline 11

Personnel conducting training must be competent, with demonstrated expertise in the handling and training of dogs using positive methods, or be under the supervision of someone with such competence.

## Guideline 12

Dogs should be trained to cooperate during procedures to minimize the need to apply physical restraint.

# Welfare Assessment

- Behaviours and coping styles vary among dogs, and welfare indicators cannot be applied universally
- Document includes a table of behaviours associated with positive affective states and a table of behaviours associated with negative affective states

# Health and Disease Control

- Health programs must be tailored to the individual dogs and their life stage
- Sections of the document are similar to those for other species, however differences include:
  - immunizations
  - routine coat care, nail trimming, and dental care
  - routine physical exams by a veterinarian at least once per year

# Humane Killing

- General guidance is similar to other species
- Measures must be taken to make the animal's death as distress-free and painless as possible
- IV injection of barbiturates or barbituric acid derivatives should be used

## **Guideline 28**

Sedation should be used prior to humane killing to reduce stress, keep the dog comfortable, and reduce the need for handling and restraint.

# Outcomes for Animals

- **Rehoming:** Inform and evaluate prospective new owners and prepare dogs for rehoming
- **Transfer between protocols or facilities:** Apply cumulative endpoints

## Guideline 29

Whenever possible, institutions should rehome dogs used in scientific activities with individuals who have the knowledge and ability to provide care that meets those animals' needs.

# Connect with us



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