



CCAC
CCPA

The Essentials: Outcomes for animals at the end of scientific activities

CCAC Guidelines Overview



March 2026

Guidelines' Objectives

The *CCAC guidelines: Outcomes for animals at the end of scientific activities* provides general guidance for the ethical care of all animals used in scientific activities to help facilitate improvement in both the care given to animals and the manner in which scientific activities are carried out.

These guidelines have a one-year implementation period and take effect in March 2027.

The outcomes for animals guidelines are closely tied to the CCAC's animal welfare assessment guidelines, endpoint guidelines, and ethics principles.

They emphasize that decisions about outcomes for animals need to be based on the welfare of those animals and be guided by ethics.



Links to Other CCAC Standards



CCAC policy statement on: terms of reference for animal care committees

“Require all animal users to complete an animal use protocol form and ensure that the information therein includes.....a description of the fate of the animals if they are not to be euthanized”



CCAC Ethics Principles for Animal Use in Science

“Animals are to be given the opportunity to enjoy a life after their scientific use”

“Killing an animal, even using a method not intended to involve any pain or distress, is to be considered as a harm to that animal”

The outcomes for animals guidelines apply to animals that are alive at the completion of a scientific activity.

They do not apply to:

- ◆ animals that are killed as a necessary component of a protocol that has been reviewed and approved by the animal care committee
- ◆ the death of an animal due to a spontaneous condition unrelated to the scientific activity
- ◆ wild animals that are captured, undergo short procedures, and are immediately released at the same location

Guidelines Statements

Guideline 1

Decisions regarding the outcome for an animal at the completion of a scientific activity must include assessment of the animal's welfare and be based on the principles of respect for animals and not causing harm.

Guidelines Statements

Guideline 2

Prior to terminating an animal's life, all other possible outcomes must first be ruled out, with the primary consideration being what is best for the animal.

Options for Animals at the Completion of a Scientific Activity

Rehome

moving an animal to a non-scientific environment, such as a private residence, an animal sanctuary, or, in the case of farm animals, an agricultural farm

Transfer

assigning animals to additional protocols when appropriate and approved by the animal care committee

Holding Protocol

animals approved by an animal care committee to be maintained within a facility

Release to Wild

animal released to the wild (prior to release, there must be an evaluation of the benefits and risks to the animal, and to other animals and to the ecological conditions of the release site)

Return to Owner

returned to the owner at the end of the scientific activity

Connect with us



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LinkedIn

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