

CONFIDENTIALITY OF ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

DATE OF REVISION: July 2019

In order to foster frank and open discussions of all animal ethics and care issues by assessment panel members and institutional representatives, all information related to individual institutional animal ethics and care programs, including institutional animal data and assessment information, must be treated as confidential, unless it is explicitly identified by the institution as being publicly available information. Assessment information includes pre-assessment documentation, information obtained during the assessment process, assessment reports, and all post-assessment documentation.

1. Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) interpretation of the term “confidential”:
 - 1.1 “Confidential” does not imply “secret” since assessment information is discussed freely by institutional and assessment panel members, the CCAC Secretariat staff, and members of the CCAC Assessment and Certification Committee prior to submission of an assessment report to an institution.
 - 1.2 “Confidential” means “restricted to those authorized to have access”, in that assessment reports and other CCAC documents related to a specific institution may not be quoted in public, transcribed, or disseminated, in full or in part, to individuals, groups, or others, **except by decision of the institution concerned**.

Prior written notification of public release must be sent to the CCAC by the senior administrator responsible for the animal ethics and care program. The CCAC reserves the right to correct any misinformation, or to clarify any information released by the institution. The names of panel members who conducted the visit must not be released.
2. The CCAC assures institutions participating in its programs that all information provided to the CCAC, and all CCAC letters and reports concerning the institution, remain in confidence according to the definitions in point 1. The only exceptions to this are:
 - 2.1 Pooled annual animal data presented on a national basis.
 - 2.2 Notification sent to the federal granting agencies (in cases where the institution is eligible for granting agency funding) when the institution is no longer certified (see the [CCAC policy: Certification of animal ethics and care programs](#)).
 - 2.3 The list of names of certified institutions (certificate holders) on the CCAC website, published with their permission.
3. If, for any reason and at any time, a panel member cannot comply with the *CCAC policy: Confidentiality of assessment information*, the individual must withdraw from the panel.

4. The following statement is included in CCAC assessment reports:

“The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) treats as confidential all matters relating to the assessment and the report. Nonetheless, the assessed institution is free to release the assessment report, or part thereof, to the public; the CCAC must be advised in writing prior to any release.”