

**Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
Standard Operating Procedure**

Effective Date: 07/21/2026
Revised Date:
Version: 1

TITLE:
**IACUC SOP #9: IACUC Exempt
Activities and Exemption Review
Process**

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A. PURPOSE

This SOP outlines which activities involving animals are subject to Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) oversight and which activities are exempt. The exemption request and review process for Principal Investigators (PI) is also described.

B. ACTIVITIES REQUIRING IACUC APPROVAL

In accordance with the Animal Welfare Act, *Public Health Policy on the Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS Policy)*, UT Policy RE0203 Use of Vertebrate Animals (TBD), and The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) IACUC bylaws, all research, instructional, and/or testing activities conducted at, or in association with UTC that use animals must be reviewed and approved by the IACUC.

Privately Owned Animals: Privately owned animals are those owned by a private individual or organization rather than UTC. Privately owned animals may not be used by UTC faculty, staff or students in research, instructional and/or testing activities without prior approval by the IACUC.

C. ACTIVITIES THAT MAY BE EXEMPT FROM STANDARD IACUC REVIEW PROCESSES

Certain activities may not require IACUC review and approval; however, the activities must first be reviewed by the IACUC to determine whether the proposed activity is exempt from UTC's standard IACUC review and approval process.

Standard IACUC review and approval processes may not be required for animal use activities that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Non-cephalopod invertebrates, such as insects
- Purely observational activities that are unlikely to alter or influence the biology, behavior or ecology of the study animals or other species (e.g. collection of fecal droppings, observations of a zoo exhibit)
- Activities with the eggs of avian or other egg-laying vertebrate species (e.g. fish, amphibians, reptiles) prior to hatching
- Animal tissues or organs collected from animals euthanized under an existing IACUC approved protocol
- Animal tissues or organs acquired from commercial sources (i.e. grocery stores, scientific supply companies)
- Animal tissues and organs from colleagues with approved animal protocols in place at their facilities

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- Animal tissues and organs collected with approved animal protocols at prior institutions and brought to UTC by the PI.

D. EXEMPTION REQUEST PROCESS

PIs who are unsure or believe their activity may be exempt from the IACUC review and approval process should complete the IACUC Exemption Application Form and submit it to iacuc@utc.edu. Not only is it best practice to receive a formal determination from the IACUC exempting activities from IACUC oversight, but some scientific journals may also require an exemption letter prior to publishing studies that did not undergo a standard IACUC review and approval.

The following steps are required to request an exemption from IACUC review and approval. No activities may begin until a determination letter has been issued to the PI. A separate IACUC Exemption Application Form must be submitted for each separate activity (e.g. different courses taught by the same PI).

1. PI downloads (from the IACUC website), completes, and submits the IACUC Exemption Application Form to iacuc@utc.edu.
2. The exemption request will be reviewed by the IACUC Chair or Vice-Chair to determine qualification for exemption. Potential determinations could include:
 - a. Approve the IACUC Exemption
 - b. Request clarifications from the PI to secure IACUC Exemption
 - c. IACUC Exemption denied and a full IACUC protocol application is required
3. A determination letter or action form will be sent to the PI outlining the IACUC's determination.

If the PI changes or modifies the activity, it is subject to a new review by the IACUC. The PI must submit a new IACUC Exemption Application Form and receive an exemption determination letter prior to the initiation of the changes.

E. CONTACT

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F. REFERENCES

The IACUC Handbook, 4th Edition. Ed. Mark A. Suckow, Sreekant Murthy, Julie M. Sharp and Troy Hallman. CRC Press.2026.

[NIH OLAW Notice: NOT-OD-23-119](#)

UT Policy RE0203 Use of Vertebrate Animals (pending approval as of 7/30/2026).

[USDA Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations](#)

[Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#)