

# IACUC Guidelines for Safety in the Field

*Last Review Date: 4/2022*

*Revision History:*

## MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

**1. PPE** (e.g., gloves, mucous membrane protection, respirator, outer protective clothing, boots or closed-toe shoes)

### **2. First Aid Kit**

Contents must include:

Antiseptic or antiseptic impregnated sterile pads

Sterile gauze pads

Adhesive medical tape

Bandages

Protective gloves (e.g., latex, vinyl, or nitrile)

**3. Communication:** Locator Devices for emergency communication (e.g., cellular phone, radio, walkie-talkie, satellite phone, GPS)

**4. Hand hygiene products**

**5. Insect repellents and supplies/** clothing to prevent contact with biting insects

## PROCEDURES

### **1. PPE**

Put on proper PPE before beginning fieldwork.

Wear protective gloves for direct handling of any animal that presents a significant health risk to the handler, either because of the animal itself or the health condition of the handler.

Utilize greater levels of PPE when there is a higher potential of exposure to zoonotic agents. For example, use mucous membrane protection (e.g., safety glasses or a full-face mask) when there is a risk of hazardous fluid contact with eyes, nose, or mouth.

When done with applicable procedures, remove PPE in a manner that minimizes the chance of self- contamination (e.g., take off gloves only after removing other

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contaminated PPE).

Use safety equipment under extenuating circumstances (e.g., leather gloves for fractious or aggressive animals, helmets in applicable situations, snake-proof caps or leggings in regions with high venomous snake concentrations).

**NOTE:** Gear that is brought to multiple field sites can transmit pathogens to native populations. As such, equipment used on multiple locations should be cleaned and disinfected prior to transport.

## **2. Hygiene Practices**

Practice proper hand hygiene after handling animals or other items that are contaminated with their dander, feces, or body fluids.

Clean and sanitize hands thoroughly before eating, drinking, using tobacco products or applying makeup/ contact lenses, and especially after working with animals and equipment in the field.

## **3. Injuries**

Encourage all personnel to be trained in basic first aid techniques.

Maintain a fully stocked first aid kit at all times when in the field setting.

The PI or their designee is responsible for maintaining the first-aid kit and assuring that none of the items are expired.

If any injury occurs, pursue a medical evaluation and care at the nearest medical facility. Additionally, ensure that the PI is made aware of any injuries.

## **4. Communication**

Provide a detailed schedule and travel plans to a secondary responsible party prior to performing fieldwork.

Maintain open lines of communication via communication devices with the secondary responsible party while in the field.

Work with a partner in the field whenever possible.

Have local emergency numbers readily available.

## **5. Zoonotic Diseases**

Zoonotic diseases are a concern when working in any field setting.

Consult the Travel Medicine Clinics at Ascension or Froedert for information on immunizations requirements as well as other health education resources for domestic and international travel.

Consult human health professionals immediately if any zoonotic disease exposure is suspected.

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Refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions Rabies web page for specific rabies information.

**6. Vector-Borne Disease**

Vector-Borne diseases are a concern when working in any field setting. Arthropods such as ticks, mosquitoes, and fleas can carry pathogens that cause disease such as Lyme disease, West Nile Virus, malaria, and plague. Vaccines, antibiotics, and/ or cures are not available for many diseases, so bite prevention is critical.

Refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Diseases and Conditions A-Z index page for specific disease information.

Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, socks, and shoes to prevent insect bites and consider a hat with a mosquito net over it to prevent facial and neck bites. Consider wearing insect repellent and follow all recommendations on the product labels, especially if using one that contains DEET.

Check your body for ticks.

Contact your physician if you experience any signs or symptoms such as rash, flu-like illness, fever, or headaches at any time during, or upon return from, your field study.