

***INSTITUTE OF
BIOSCIENCES AND
TECHNOLOGY
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM HEALTH SCIENCE
CENTER***

***PROGRAM
FOR
ANIMAL RESOURCES***

**DAILY
OPERATIONS HANDBOOK**

Revised March 2009

PROGRAM FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES ORIENTATION PACKET

INTRODUCTION

All PAR employees must be united in a common purpose: To provide the very best care to the animals, to provide superior support to investigators, to maintain clean and neat facilities, and to have an efficient operation, both in procedures and cost. Each time a decision is made, it must be made with these goals in mind.

This Daily Operations Handbook has been developed for personnel assigned to the Program for Animal Resources (PAR), Animal Facilities. The purpose of this manual is to acquaint new personnel with the Program, to provide guidelines for consistency in performance, and to guide personnel in making decisions regarding work habits.

The Program for Animal Resources expects its employees to exhibit responsibility, cooperation, positive attitudes, good personal hygiene and appearance, and harmonious interaction with fellow workers and investigative personnel. Employees are expected to come to work when scheduled, to learn their duties thoroughly, to perform those duties to the best of their ability, and to schedule time-off in accordance with policies mentioned in this manual.

Evaluations are administered according to PAR schedule. Employees are encouraged to listen closely to instructions provided by the appropriate orientator and ask questions when or if they do not understand a certain procedure.

Employee input is encouraged! The Daily Operations Handbook will continuously be revised so that it may best serve both individual staff members and the Program as a whole.

STANDARD OPERATING POLICIES

Activities within the Program for Animal Resources are dictated by the Standard Operating Policies (SOPs) which define how various tasks are to be performed. Many of the tasks performed in the PAR are mandated by federal law or other agencies and must be strictly adhered to. Research requires standardization, which means the job must be performed in the same way regardless of who performs the work or where it is performed. Non-uniform performance of duties introduces a “variable” into research and can adversely affect results.

As Standards are developed, each employee will attend a training session to learn the procedures. Re-training of all personnel will occur when there is a change in procedures and/or one year from the date the Standard was adopted. All training will be documented and individual records will be maintained for all personnel in the supervisor’s office.

Employee participation in the development of these Standards is encouraged. If an employee determines that a Standard is inappropriate for any reason, a written request to change the procedures may be submitted.

ANIMAL INCIDENTS

Humane care and use is essential to responsible animal experimentation. Individuals who have concerns about animals receiving proper treatment or care or about personnel being adequately trained are encouraged to share these concerns with the supervisors; the Program Manager, Program for Animal Resources; or any member of the IBT Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

The IACUC; Institutional Veterinarian, Dr. David Brammer, DVM; the Manager, Maya Justilian; and the Supervisor, Philip Shirley, of the Program for Animal Resources have the authority to stop any and all animal procedures suspected of questionable practices until the incident can be fully investigated by the IACUC.

All concerns are to be reported in writing on the Animal Incident Report Form. All inquiries will be treated confidentially. These forms will be maintained in the supervisor's office along with copies in each procedure room.

PERSONNEL ISSUES

Workweek:

The PAR work week runs Thursday through Wednesday. New employees are to complete the Human Resources Action Form in advance so that it may be submitted by Tuesday of the same week, with employment beginning on Thursday.

New employees are to report to the Human Resources Office by 8:00 a.m. on Thursday for orientation. The payroll periods for each month end on Wednesdays, every two weeks. Payroll checks are issued the following week on Friday.

Classified Employees:

Classified Employees are paid compensatory overtime at a rate of one and one-half times the regular hourly pay rate when the employee has worked over forty (40) hours in a single pay week. Questions regarding the hourly or overtime rate should be addressed to the Manager. Overtime must be approved by the Supervisor or Manager prior to being accrued. Overtime should be documented on the Biweekly Time Report under the Hours Worked column. In addition, an Overtime Request form must be completed and turned in to the Supervisor along with the time sheet. (Classified Employees are support staff personnel.)

Non-Classified Employees:

Non-classified Employees do not receive compensatory overtime pay for extra work resulting from duties requiring work beyond forty (40) hours. (Non-Classified Employees are administrative positions, i.e. salaried employees.)

Entering / Exiting the Animal Facility:

The only entrance that is to be used by PAR Staff for entering and exiting the PAR animal facility is the break room exterior door. All doors are monitored by security cameras and alarms and should be used for work purposes or emergency use only. This applies to all other entrances/exits, specifically – the doors on the loading docks and the second floor pass-through.

Normal Working Hours:

PAR employees work one of two shifts. The first, which is 7:00 am - 3:30 pm with a half hour lunch, is the shift the majority of the employees will work. The second, which is 8:00 am - 5:00 pm with an hour lunch, is only available upon assignment by the manager or supervisor. Both shifts are from Thursday through Wednesday, with weekends worked on a rotational schedule (more about this further in this text).

Time Clock:

There is a time clock located in the PAR break room (Rm 126). If you are in the building to work, you are required to use this time clock. If you forget to punch in, then you must find the supervisor or manager to sign in for you. Blanks on the time cards will be considered as time not worked. You are also not to punch anyone else in or out, or have anyone punch you in or out. This constitutes falsifying documents and is grounds for termination!

AM Clock In:

You are to punch in promptly at the start of your shift (7:00 am or 8:00 am). You will have 5 minutes in which to dress into scrubs and get to work in your assigned area.

Clocking In / Out for Lunch:

You are required to punch out at 12:00 pm for the start of your lunch break. Alternative lunch periods may be taken upon approval by the supervisor or manager. You may leave your assigned work area to begin to prepare for lunch, i.e. changing back into street clothes to leave the building, at 11:50 am, and no sooner.

At the end of your lunch period (12:30 pm or 1:00 pm) you are expected to punch back in for work. Once again, you will be given 5 minutes in which to prepare yourself for work and to get to your assigned work station.

PM Clock Out:

At the end of the day (beginning no sooner than 3:20 pm or 4:50 pm) you may leave your work station and head to the break room to change into your street clothes. You are not to clock out sooner than the end of your shift (3:30 pm or 5:00 pm). You are expected to leave the IBT premises once you have clocked out.

Weekends:

Weekends are worked in the PAR department on a rotational basis. You are required to punch in and out on weekends you are scheduled to work. Each day you should work at least four (4) hours. You will be given compensatory overtime (1.5 times regular pay) for any time **physically worked** over 40 hours. During weekend work, it is expected that each cage of animals will be counted and checked for food, water, overall health, and deaths. Any animals left to be SACed should be euthanized and other tasks assigned by the Supervisor, such as laundry and general cleaning will be accomplished.

If, for any reason, you believe that you must leave early or stay late while working the weekend you should contact either the manager or supervisor. Permission must be obtained before deviating from the scheduled work times. Contact numbers for the manager and supervisor can be found throughout the facility on the Emergency Contact list.

Use of the Phone:

There is a phone located in the supervisor's office (rm. 105) for use by PAR employees. This phone is to be used only during breaks and lunch and only with the supervisor's permission. Keep in mind that, even during breaks/lunch, the supervisor's office is a work environment. As such, all calls should be kept to a minimum and you should always be aware of any distractions you might cause, either by the volume of your voice or the content of your conversation. Should you need to make a personal call during working hours, you must first ask permission from either the Supervisor or the Manager. Once permission is obtained, you will be allowed to make your call from the phone located in the Supervisor's office. Cell phones are not permitted within the animal facility at this time. The use of cell phones should be limited to break and lunch times.

Break Times:

You are permitted one break, for NO MORE THAN 15 minutes, in the morning. This break is to be taken between 10:00 am and 10:15 am. Alternative break times may be allowed with approval of the supervisor or manager. According to federal FLSA laws, these breaks are a courtesy. An employer does not have to provide them; so, if abused or misused, they can be taken away. If you leave the animal facility at break time, the 15 minutes allotted includes the time taken to change out of and back into your work clothes. You are not to leave your assigned work area for break before 10:00 am and should be returning to your assigned work area at 10:15 am.

***If you are caught in the break room *at any time* other than that listed above, without consent from the supervisor or manager, disciplinary action will be taken.**

Overtime:

Any Overtime must have approval from the Supervisor or Manager prior to the time being accrued. If more than forty (40) hours are physically worked during a payroll week – due to scheduled weekend duties or providing coverage for animal areas -- the excess time will be issued in compensatory time at a rate of 1.5 times regular time to be used at a later date.

Holidays:

PAR Staff are considered “Essential Personnel” within the IBT, therefore the state/federal Holidays are worked differently within this department. Unless told otherwise by the Supervisor, you are expected to work all state/federal Holidays. If there is a Holiday that you wish to take off, a leave request must be submitted, to the Supervisor, through the Leave-Traq system. All the policies mentioned above regarding shift times and time clock procedures apply to Holidays. You will be expected to be on time, adhere to break and lunch times, and clock out at the end of your shift. Should something arise that prevents you from making it to work as scheduled, the same call in policies as mentioned below apply. In addition to the eight (8) hours of Holiday pay, PAR staff will be paid straight time for hours worked on Holidays.

Calling In to Work:

If you find you are unable to report on time or are unable to come into work, you are required to call at the start of your shift on the morning in question. You should call first the supervisor at 713-677-7471 and / or then the manager at 713-677-7452. ***Leaving a voice mail message is not acceptable!*** You must keep calling until you actually speak with someone at one of these telephone numbers and explain, in detail, why you will not be in, when you will be expecting to return to work, and you must leave a number where you can be reached.

Personnel scheduled to work a weekend or holiday must work as scheduled, except in the direst circumstances. Dire circumstances include serious personal illness or injury, or death in the scheduled person's immediate family. If the emergency occurs before the weekend or holiday, the Supervisor will designate another employee to work. If the emergency occurs on the weekend, or holiday, the employee will follow the instructions, as stated above, for contacting the Supervisor. The Supervisor will then make arrangements for all work to be completed.

If an employee must be absent from work on a weekend or holiday, the Supervisor or Manager must be notified no later than 7:45 a.m., on the day the employee is scheduled to work. The employee should report the absence by either calling as instructed above or through the pager system. All pager numbers will be posted in the break room (rm. 126) and the PAR supervisor's office (rm. 105). A copy of the list will be distributed to each employee. Reporting an absence by leaving a message on voice mail is unacceptable and will be counted as an unauthorized absence.

Scheduling Time Off:

An unauthorized absence occurs when time off has not been requested properly, or when adequate proof of an absence is not furnished upon request. An employee's pay may be docked as a result of an unauthorized absence. Subtraction of pay (docking) for time missed due to an unauthorized absence will appear during the pay period following the pay period in which the unauthorized absence occurred.

Planned absences include vacations, personal time, compensatory time, scheduled medical/dental appointments, jury duty, and other prearranged personal appointments. Requests for leave must be submitted, using the

Leave-Traq system, at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance. The employee should verbally inform the Supervisor of their leave request, preferably on the day the request is submitted.

It is strongly encouraged that time be taken on, or before, Wednesdays and as late in the day as possible. Leave requests submitted without proper advance notice, such as those for “forgotten appointments”, may not be approved!

Under normal circumstances, no more than one (1) person will be granted leave on a given day. When the request has been approved, the Supervisor will place the employee’s name on the Personnel Calendar in the break room (Rm 126). Vacation and Personal Leave requests are granted on a “first come, first served” basis. The Personnel Calendar in the break room (Rm 126) should be checked before time off is requested to make sure there is no conflict with other requests.

Leave-Traq System:

A Request for Leave should be completed for all absences, including tardiness, early departure, jury duty, vacation and sick leave. This request should be made prior to the time being missed whenever possible. Employees should understand that leave requests submitted without the proper advance notice may be denied by the Supervisor. Leave-Traq requests for unscheduled absences (illness, emergencies, etc.) must be completed by the end of the first day the employee returns to work. Failure to handle this in a timely manner will be treated as a disciplinary problem. Any questions regarding the use of the Leave-Traq system should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

Exception to Scheduled Working Hours:

Normal working hours and break times may be changed by the Manager or Supervisor to accommodate work schedules to ensure that animals receive proper care. Permission must be obtained from the supervisor for overtime to finish work not completed or to complete a heavy workload for that day, prior to starting work or staying after normal hours. Any other deviation from these work, break and lunch times must be cleared ahead of time with the supervisor.

In the event an employee must leave work early, approval must be obtained as early as possible from the Supervisor or the Manager. If approval for an unplanned absence is not granted and the employee is directed to report to work, the employee must come to work immediately. If approval is granted, documentation of the purpose of the absence may be requested. Failure by the employee to report to work as directed and/or provide documentation upon request is considered insubordination and is grounds for dismissal.

Vacation Time:

One must be employed at least six (6) months before vacation leave with pay may be taken. Time-off taken before this initial period has been completed will be recorded as Leave Without Pay. Vacation cannot be granted before it is earned. Each employee's leave will be recorded and monitored on the Leave-Traq system. **It is each employee's responsibility to monitor their vacation and personal leave balance for correctness.** In the event an employee has exhausted paid vacation and personal time hours and an absence becomes necessary, the time off will be recorded as Authorized Leave Without Pay (if approved by the Manager) or Unauthorized Leave Without Pay. Authorized Leave Without Pay will be granted only for emergencies and will not be requested, or granted, on a routine basis.

If employment is terminated for any reason after six (6) continuous months, all accrued vacation time will be paid on departure. Vacation time is not considered as time worked in computing terminal pay. Vacation eligibility continues to accrue during a military or medical leave of absence.

Sick Leave:

Sick Leave provides for the continuation of an eligible employee's salary while absent from work due to illness or injury. Regular employees begin to earn sick leave on the first day of employment. Full-time employees start earning sick leave at the rate of eight (8) hours per month and sick leave accumulates without a maximum. If work must be missed due to illness, the employee must directly notify the Supervisor or the Manager, prior to the start of their shift, on the day to be missed. As part of the TAMHSC-IBT Occupational Health and Safety monitoring program, and for the employee's protection, any employee or third party reporting an illness for an employee will be asked for a brief description of the illness, i.e.,

vomiting, fever, diarrhea, etc. This precautionary measure has been put in place to help insure that employees receive the proper care, and to insure that all documentation has been properly completed, in case of transmission/infection from one of the research projects.

Any absence due to illness, injury or medical/dental appointments is deducted from accrued sick leave. If an absence due to illness exceeds the amount of sick leave, the employee may elect to use paid vacation time for the remaining absence(s). After earned vacation is exhausted, the employee will not be paid for further absences due to illness. In the event of extended absence due to illness, the employee may request a Medical Leave of Absence or a Personal Leave of Absence. Vacation eligibility and seniority will continue to accrue during paid sick leave. Sick leave taken for doctor's appointments can only be used for the amount of time taken to get to the doctor's appointment, the time for the appointment itself, and the time it takes to return. In other words, it is not acceptable to take a full 8 hours of sick leave for a doctor's appointment.

When an employee is out due to illness, it is the employee's responsibility to keep the Supervisor and Manager informed of the employee's medical status and expected time of return to work. Depending on circumstances, it may be necessary for the employee to call each day to keep the Management informed. This may not be necessary for serious illnesses and/or hospital stays. Absences of three (3) days or more require a physician's statement verifying that the employee was under his/her care, or will be under his/her care, during the period of absence. If an employee misses three or more consecutive days of work due to illness/injury, he/she will not be allowed to return to work without a physician's statement.

If an employee becomes disabled due to sickness or accident while on vacation, his/her vacation period will continue as scheduled. If unable to return to work at the end of the scheduled vacation, the employee will be placed on sick leave beginning with the day he/she was scheduled to return to work.

If requests for sick leave occur too often, or there appears to be a pattern to absences, the employee may be requested to bring a physician's statement each succeeding time they call in sick, regardless of the duration of the absence (*See more under Absenteeism*). Such notice will be

provided to the employee in writing and will cover a specified period of time, usually thirty (30) to ninety (90) days.

Authority: All decisions of the Texas A&M University System Health Science Center, I.B.T., Human Relations Department are final and conclusive with respect to interpretation or administration of leave policies. These policies may be terminated or modified at any time by the University, and no claim shall arise against the University from any such action.

Other Authorized Paid Absences:

Other authorized paid absences allowed by TAMHSC, I.B.T., Program for Animal Resources are:

Family Death - (immediate family means father, mother, spouse, in-laws, sister, brother, children) - three (3) days.

Jury Duty – you will need to bring a note from the court stating that you were attending jury duty, and the specific dates covered.

Personal Business or Family Illness - If it is necessary for an employee to be absent to tend to personal business that cannot be handled outside normal working hours, or if the employee must be absent because of an illness in the family, time off with pay may be approved at the discretion of the Manager. Paid time allowed may not exceed that accrued by the employee.

Biweekly Time Report:

For nonexempt employees, the Biweekly Time Reports are to be submitted via TimeTraq by the employee. Time Reports will then be submitted to the Supervisor for review, and verification. A schedule of the Biweekly Pay Period will be posted in the Animal Facility noting days when Time Reports are due. Failure to turn in Reports will result in a paycheck not being received for that pay period. Deliberate falsification of Time Reports will result in immediate dismissal of the individual(s) responsible for the act. If an employee feels there has been an error in the way time was documented, the Manager should be notified of the discrepancy. The Biweekly Time Reports may be submitted from any computer with internet access at <https://sso.tamus.edu>

(Biweekly Time Report enclosed, Appendix B)

Tardiness:

Tardiness is defined as arriving after the work shift begins. In the case of the PAR department, you must be clocked in within 2 to 3 minutes from the start of your shift. Anything else will be considered tardy. Habitual tardiness will result in disciplinary action.

Absenteeism:

Absenteeism is defined as repeated tardiness or absence, absence without proper notification to the supervisor, absence without satisfactory reason, abuse of sick leave or other leaves of absence. In the case of the PAR department it will be considered a case of absenteeism and result in disciplinary action if you are out more than three (3) days, or 6 half days, etc., during a thirty (30) day period without:

- Prior written approval obtained forty-eight (48) hours in advance (i.e. an approved LeaveTraq request)
- Verification/documentation as to where you were. This can include, but is not limited to:
 - Doctor's excuse
 - Obituary from funeral
 - Jury Summons

If patterns of absence emerge, with sick leave for example, the same verification will be asked, even if it has only been one day.

DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

Employees who fail to adhere to the PAR and TAMHSC, I.B.T. policies and procedures are subject to disciplinary action. The purpose of disciplinary action is to point out unacceptable behavior or performance so that it may be corrected.

Disciplinary action is not intended as, nor should it be taken as, a personal attack. Each employee has a responsibility to make every effort to improve in that aspect of their behavior or performance when it is addressed.

Causes for immediate dismissal include, but are not limited to the following:

- Dishonesty, theft, or unacceptable conduct
- Willful neglect of duty or refusal to perform assigned work
- Falsifying documents, including, but not limited to: employment records, time sheets, other PAR documents relating to personnel, or federally mandated reports
- Fighting or verbal threats
- Abuse to animals
- Chronic absenteeism or tardiness (See definitions of each in above text)
- Drinking on the job, use of illegal drugs on the job, or reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Insubordination
- Gambling on the job
- Misconduct on or off the job that is injurious to I.B.T.
- Continuous violation of Texas Medical Center parking regulations
- Deliberate damage or destruction to I.B.T. property
- Neglect of duties or procedures that result in endangerment of life or limb of self or others

Written notations will be made by the supervisor documenting any reprimand or warning given to any employee. Copies will be forwarded to the Manager and to the I.B.T. Human Resources Department for a permanent record. In the event a witness is necessary, the I.B.T. Human Resources Manager will perform this function. The sequence of reprimands will normally be as follows:

Oral Reprimand:

Oral reprimands are administered in response to minor offenses or performance/behavior problems that have been addressed informally but not yet corrected. The problem or behavior is discussed with the employee and a follow-up memorandum is sent to the Manager to be filed in the employee's departmental record.

Written Reprimand:

Written reprimands are administered in response to a serious problem that has occurred once, or a performance/behavior problem continuing in spite

of formal or informal oral reprimand(s). The employee is requested to sign the reprimand to acknowledge receipt; however, the signature is not an acknowledgment of guilt by the employee. If an employee refuses to sign the reprimand, then a witness will sign the reprimand after it is administered. A copy of the reprimand is given to the employee. Copies are then sent to the Manager to be filed in the employee's departmental record, and to the I.B.T. Human Resources Department.

Termination:

Termination will result if an employee fails to correct performance and/or behavior problems that have been addressed by oral and/or written reprimands. Upon termination, the employee must return keys, keycard, uniforms, training manuals, and any other I.B.T. property in their possession.

Any employee who feels he/she has been treated unfairly has the right to complain through the TAMHSC, I.B.T. Human Resources Department.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Probationary Performance Evaluations:

All new employees are allowed a six (6) month probationary period. During this period an employee is subject to separation if services rendered are unsatisfactory.

An initial Performance Evaluation will be made after thirty (30), and sixty (60) days. This will allow the supervisor and employee to review and evaluate the employee's progress.

Most job-related problems are resolvable when discussed with one's immediate supervisor; however, TAES and TAMU have an Employee Complaint and Appeal Procedure available to employees who have completed their probationary period for the resolution of very serious problems.

Between the third month, ninety (90) days, and the fourth month, one-hundred and twenty (120) days, of the probationary period the Probationary Employee Performance Appraisal will be completed by the

supervisor. At this time, job performance will be evaluated and discussed. This evaluation will address areas of satisfactory and, if applicable, unsatisfactory performance with specific written guidance as to the means by which performance can be improved. The evaluation will:

- 1.) Ensure that the supervisor has taken reasonable steps to inform the employee of what is expected and how it should be done, and
- 2.) Provide the employee with ample opportunity to correct any job-related problems before the end of the probation period. (Probationary Employee Performance Appraisal Form enclosed, Appendix C)

Yearly Performance Evaluations:

On a yearly basis, the performance of all classified employees is evaluated as directed in the TAMHSC, I.B.T., Policy and Procedures Manual. The Classified Employee Performance Rating Form is an instrument by which the supervisor and employee can review areas for improvement and career growth. It is also an opportunity for the supervisor and employee to recognize as well as document accomplishments made by the employee over the past year. The Employee Performance Ratings will consist of three elements:

- Evaluation of the employee's Performance by the immediate supervisor.
- A planned, private discussion between the rating supervisor and the employee. This discussion will assure that the employee thoroughly understands assigned duties, in detail, and the performance standards established. It will seek to identify and record actions which both the employee and supervisor agree will be taken to improve areas in which standards have not been met or in which improvement should be made.
- Review by Program Manager to assure that actions for improvement are adequate, realistic, and appropriate and follow up to assure resources for accomplishment are available and that the actions are carried out.

(Classified Employee Performance Rating Form enclosed, Appendix D).

SECURITY ISSUES

ID Badges:

ID badges must be worn at all times in the PAR animal facility. Badges need to be visible while traveling through the premises of the Texas A&M University System Health Science Center, Institute of Biosciences and Technology building.

Security Access Cards / Keys:

Security Access Cards to animal rooms are issued to all PAR employees, research faculty and staff working with animals, physical plant personnel, and security personnel. Keys to support areas in PAR will be issued to the supervisor of the animal care staff.

If a security access card or key(s) is lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the Manager so that the card may be deactivated, and another issued. When leaving a procedure room or animal housing area, the door must always be locked. The employee may be responsible for the cost to replace lost cards or keys.

Entry Requests:

If a person requests entrance to the facility, or an animal room, the person should be told to obtain a temporary card from security. PAR employees are not to allow anyone access to the facility or an animal room. Suspicious activity and/or persons should be reported to a supervisor immediately.

All people entering the PAR facility will be required to change into a scrub suit or place a lab coat/disposable gown over their existing clothes. Individuals not possessing a PAR access card are prohibited from entering the animal facility unless prior authorization has been obtained from the Supervisor or Program Manager.

Children under the age of sixteen are not allowed in the PAR facility. Visits by relatives or friends are discouraged. When necessary, arrangements should be made to meet these visitors outside the PAR during break, lunchtime, or after hours.

SAFETY

As with any other profession, there are hazards which can be encountered; however, observing proper procedures will significantly reduce the risk of an incident occurring.

It is each employee's legal right to know what he/she is working with and under what conditions. No employee will be asked to work in any area without adequate training, or in any area where an obvious safety risk exists.

An employee will only be directed to work in a hazardous area after all of the following conditions have been met:

- Adequate training has been administered
- Safety precautions and procedures have been pointed out
- Any obvious risk has been removed

Once these conditions have been met, the employee is expected to carry out his/her duties as instructed.

There are three basic areas of safety that PAR employees need to be aware of: BIOLOGICAL, CHEMICAL, and PHYSICAL.

Biological:

All employees of the PAR work with animals that may have diseases natural to the species, or which have been infected with a disease as part of a research study.

Some of these diseases are communicable from lower animals to man under natural conditions. This is referred to as **zoonotic**. Pregnant women and personnel with autoimmune deficiencies are at risk and should report any current health problems or conditions that may endanger their well being.

Many diseases may be transmitted from animal to animal. Animals suspected of carrying disease and new arrivals will be placed in the Quarantine Area (rm. 134A) to prevent contact with other animals.

Personnel working in this area will service this section at the end of the day and will not re-enter any other animal room.

Animals being used in biohazard studies will be housed in the Biohazard Area (rm. 137). These animals will be identified with a Biohazard Sign and Special Care Instructions that list the biohazardous agent being used and the protection required. All supplies and waste must be decontaminated by autoclaving or disinfecting before being removed from the area. Personnel assigned to work in the Biohazard Area will enter the dressing area they will put a disposable jumper over their clothing. When exiting, the jumper will be removed.

Chemical:

In the course of the workday, employees may be exposed to detergents, acids, disinfectants, and other chemical agents that may cause injury if improperly handled and/or used.

Some research studies use chemicals in diets, water, etc., that may be carcinogenic (cancer causing).

When working with concentrated chemicals or otherwise toxic agents, protective clothing must be worn and may include eye goggles, face shield, respirator, apron, sleeve protectors and nitril or other acid resistant gloves.

Appropriate instructions regarding safety measures will be placed in each area where chemical hazards are located. MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS (MSDS) are located in the Manager's office (Rm 109A). These sheets inform personnel about the nature of and precautions to use with each chemical in the area. Each employee is encouraged to read over the MSDS sheets to familiarize themselves with the chemicals they may come into contact with.

Physical:

In the normal course of work, each employee may be frequently required to manipulate equipment or supplies, which may involve pushing, pulling, stooping, and/or lifting up to fifty (50) pounds or more. Back braces will be provided to all PAR personnel who request them.

Animal handling is required and may result in bites, scratches, and/or exposure to animal body fluids and dander. Training in animal handling for the species being cared for is required before the employee will be allowed to work with that species.

Floors are frequently wet and the possibility of slipping exists. It is each employee's responsibility to clean up after himself or herself. If a floor is wet, place "Wet Floor" signs on all sides of the wet area and mop immediately. Signs must remain in place until the floor is dry.

Operation of different machines is often required in the performance of duties. Examples of machines used include, but are not limited to floor buffers, sprayers, cage washers, sanitizers and various hand tools.

To maintain a safe work environment, each employee should report any unsafe practices, ineffective safety devices, or other unsafe conditions to the appropriate supervisor. Employees will not be asked to work in any hazardous area or with animal species for which they have not received training. By following the above procedures, and wearing the proper protective clothing, exposure to hazards will be significantly reduced or eliminated.

Reporting Injuries:

Any injury occurring while on the job is covered through Worker's Compensation insurance.

In the event of an injury, exposure to a zoonotic disease, or other health related accident, the incident must be reported immediately to the Supervisor or Manager so that treatment, if necessary, may be initiated as soon as possible. If an incident is not reported within thirty days and complications develop, the employee may not be eligible for Worker's Compensation benefits.

When reporting an injury, the Supervisor will complete an Accident Report Form with the assistance of the injured employee. The Safety Officer, the Human Resources Manager or the Security Officer should be notified of any injury as soon as possible.

Any employee injured on the job has the right to go to the physician or treatment center of their choice. Depending on the severity of the injury, disease, or exposure, the employee may be required to visit a facility that is not of their choosing, if the facility is the only, or best equipped, to meet their needs. The employee has the right to see his/her private physician, if desired, at any time during the course of treatment.

All injuries will be reported to the Human Resources Department and to the IACUC Coordinator to be filed with the Occupational Health and Safety Program.

Material Safety Data Sheets:

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) contain information about chemicals used in the facility, including active ingredients, safety precautions, and emergency measures to take in event of exposure or accident. Complete lists of MSDS are located in the Manager's office (Rm 109A). Each employee is encouraged to read over the MSDS sheets to familiarize themselves with the chemicals they may come into contact with.

Hazard Communications Standard:

Compliance with the Hazard Communication Standard is mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Responsibility for complying with the Standard rests with the employee, supervisor, department, and Environmental Safety. Each employee is required to read, receive training on, and understand the Standard. Training will be given by the IBT Safety Officer during departmental orientation for newly hired employees. Upon completion of training, each employee will be required to sign a training verification document.

MISCELLANEOUS

Dress Code:

PAR Animal Technicians are provided green scrub uniforms to wear while working. In the Biohazard area, disposable jumpers will be available. If leaving the I.B.T. animal facility for break, lunch, or for another destination in the I.B.T. building, etc., street clothes must be worn.

The washer and dryer located in the PAR facilities are to be used for work related items only. Under no circumstances will work uniforms or shoes be worn home or carried to and from work.

Employees may be reimbursed, up to \$40.00, each year for work shoes. These shoes must remain at IBT for the duration of employment. If an employee wishes to purchase a more expensive pair of shoes, the employee is responsible for the difference in cost. Rubber boots will be purchased by the PAR for employees who work in wet areas on a routine basis.

At no point should you be in street clothes in the animal facility which is located beyond the 126 door.

Eating and Drinking within the Facility:

Eating and drinking is prohibited in all areas, including animal housing areas, receiving and processing areas, procedure rooms, and equipment storage areas. Food and drink is only allowed in the break room, (Rm. 126) and administration offices, (Rms. 105, 129).

Smoking Policy:

I.B.T. is a no smoking building. All smoking must be done outside of the IBT building. Smoking will only be permitted during break and lunch times, and the employee must go to the side of the building nearest the fountains. The employee must also be aware of others trying to enter the IBT facility and make every attempt to stand away from the entrances to the building.

LABORATORY ANIMAL TECHNOLOGY AS A CAREER

Career advancement is entirely up to each employee. On-the-job training to ensure effective and efficient job performance will be provided by supervisors and other trainers. In addition, there are many other aspects to training that will make each employee more effective and valuable.

Understanding animal behavior, husbandry, and other techniques such as restraint, identification, and sample collection, will add dimension to an individual's career. Opportunities to learn these and other areas of the field will be made available through lectures, textbooks, and hands-on demonstrations. The ultimate responsibility to learn, however, rests with each individual employee.

The American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS) is an organization dedicated to improving the science of laboratory animal care by sharing information. There is a national AALAS organization and a Texas Branch AALAS organization. Membership on a yearly basis in the Texas Branch AALAS or National AALAS may be purchased by the employee.

The national AALAS has developed a Certification Program that allows its members to test for three different levels of certification depending on their educational and experience level. With one year's experience, and a high school degree or G.E.D., an employee will be eligible to test at the Assistant Laboratory Animal Technician (ALAT) level. After three years, he/she is qualified to take the Laboratory Animal Technician (LAT) test. With five years experience, the employee may test at the Laboratory Animal Technologist (LATG) level. Employees passing a certification exam may be eligible for a pay increase and/or promotion.

The Program for Animal Resources has textbooks and other training aides to help in studying for these examinations. When certification preparation courses are offered, textbooks may be checked out of the PAR office for the duration of the course. The Manager should be contacted for additional information on the certification and cost to apply to take the exams.

Certification examinations are not required for employment in the PAR; however, doing so will allow career progress at a faster rate as long as other aspects of performance are satisfactory.

ANIMAL WELFARE ACT & NIH REGULATIONS

Copies of the **Animal Welfare Act Regulations** (Regulations) and the **Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals** (Guide) will be maintained in the Manager's office.

The Animal Welfare Act:

The Animal Welfare Act (AWA) is a federal law that mandates the manner in which most species are transported, housed and cared for in an animal facility. Regulations of the law pertain specifically to dogs, cats, primates, rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs, marine animals, and all wild animals, including wild caught rats and mice. The AWA covers laboratory raised rats and mice, or animals used for food or fiber. Laboratory raised rats and mice are covered by NIH regulations, described below. The AWA

Regulations are administered and enforced by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). A representative from this agency inspects IBT PAR animal facilities at least once a year. Deficiencies are a matter of public record and can cause embarrassment to the IBT and PAR. It is imperative that all employees be familiar with this legislation and provide animal care and housing as directed by law. A copy of the Animal Welfare Act Regulations is available in the Manager's office.

Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals:

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* is a set of guidelines developed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the agency which funds most research. These guidelines are designed to help animal facilities develop a complete program of animal care covering all species of animals, including those not covered in the Animal Welfare Act. The *Guide* addresses facility construction and design, occupational health programs, and many other issues common to all animal facilities. Some of its standards are similar to the Animal Welfare Act, others are not. When AWA and NIH standards are not similar, the higher of the two standards will be maintained. A copy of the *Guide* is also available in the Manager's office.

Public Health Service:

The Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals requires institutions to establish and maintain proper measures to ensure the appropriate care and use of all animals involved in research, research training, and biological testing activities conducted or supported by the PHS. The PHS endorses the "U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training" developed by the Interagency Research Animal Committee (IRAC). The Policy is intended to implement and supplement those Principles. A copy of the PHS Policy will be available in the Manager's office.

VERIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF ORIENTATION MATERIALS

I, _____, have received the Program for Animal Resources Daily Operations Handbook. I have been oriented to the Program for Animal Resources by the Facility Manager, or the designated representative. The Hazard Communication Standard has also been presented to me during orientation.

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions concerning the Daily Operations Handbook and its contents. I understand the policies presented in the Daily Operations Handbook and agree to abide by them.

Employee Signature

Date