

The following standards are conditions of all protocols approved by Georgia Aquarium's IACUC. All Principal Investigators and their research teams are expected to abide by these standards. Failure to comply with these standards is likely to result in further action, including (but not limited to) withdrawal of all present and future support. All requested notifications and documentations must be sent to iacuc@georgiaaquarium.org.

COMPLIANCE

1. All activities conducted must be done so under a protocol approved by the IACUC and be conducted in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations.
2. Georgia Aquarium's Attending Veterinarian of Record must be contacted immediately if unanticipated pain or distress, unexpected morbidity, or unanticipated mortality occurs.
3. The IACUC must be notified of unanticipated outcomes of animal use, including protocol and non-protocol disease or injury. Unanticipated outcomes are generally defined as negative impacts to animal welfare or well-being. This includes animals at GAI or animals funded by GAI but residing at collaborating institutions.
4. Any requested changes to the approved protocol must be submitted to the IACUC using the proper forms and approval must be given prior to any activity being changed or implemented under the protocol.

TRAINING AND OVERSIGHT

5. All personnel engaging in the handling or treatment of animals related to the approved protocol may only be those listed and approved under the protocol with a completed Section G form.
6. All training required by the IACUC must be completed prior to the start of the protocol's activities and documentation of such must be sent and on file with the IACUC. All Principal Investigators are required to have **Working with the IACUC** training and all personnel on the research team must have **Research Laws and Policies** training (or equivalent). Any specialized training required is noted on the approval letter and must also be completed prior to the start of any activities. Training is valid for 5 years.
7. All other secondary personnel indirectly involved in the protocol (e.g., vessel operators, net holders, etc.) must sign a **Liability Waiver**. These Liability Waivers must be attached by the Principal Investigator to their Section Q Annual Update and/or Section R Project Completion Update Form (whichever comes first).

POST-APPROVAL MONITORING

8. The IACUC must be notified when the activities under the protocol are to begin and have completed. Principal Investigators must complete and submit a Section Q Annual Update Form by **November 1st** of each year through the duration of their project.
9. Following the completion of any protocol, the Principal Investigator must submit a Section R Project Completion Form to the IACUC within 60 days of the protocol's completion.
10. All protocols, research areas, research personnel, and study animals are all subject to inspections by the Compliance Officer at any time, including field studies. The Principal Investigator will be notified if the Compliance Officer will be attending a scheduled activity and what information, or materials need to be prepared for discussion or review.

DE NOVO (THIRD YEAR) REVIEW

11. All on-going protocols must be re-submitted to the IACUC after three years for a new review and granting of approval. All submitted application documents must be reviewed, updated, and re-submitted. The Principal Investigator must also complete a new literature search, if applicable.
12. De Novo protocols must be submitted to the IACUC with sufficient time to obtain continuing approval of the protocol before its expiration date. The IACUC will try to send out reminders to the Principal Investigator and research team, but it is ultimately their responsibility to stay compliant with continuing reviews.
13. Failure of the Principal Investigator to submit a de novo protocol and receive a continuing approval from the IACUC will result in the expiration of their protocol, in which all animal use activities must stop immediately.

PROTOCOL CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

14. A tiered approach will be taken to address any non-compliant issues identified during an inspection or reported to the IACUC.
15. A first offense will result in a notice being issued by the IACUC Chair to the individual who committed the infraction. If that person is a staff member of Georgia Aquarium, their supervisor will also be copied. This individual will be required to take follow up training and then have a final meeting with the IACUC Chair and Compliance Officer prior to resuming their responsibilities within the protocol.
16. Subsequent offenses of the same individual may result in sanctions, such as additional training, higher level supervisory advisement, meeting with senior members of the Aquarium, restricted animal use privileges, termination of animal use privileges, protocol termination, and/or recommendations to the organization for employment termination.
17. Any non-compliant items that are identified in which animal safety and/or health is at risk will be immediately addressed in real-time by the Compliance Officer. The Compliance Officer may also work with the investigators to address the non-compliant items right there, including approving a protocol amendment which includes changes that would qualify an amendment for an Administrative Review.

RESEARCH PUBLICATION POLICY

18. Any activities which include publications, presentations, conferences, educational materials, or similar works must be reviewed and approved by Georgia Aquarium's Research and Conservation Department. The Research and Conservation Department can be reached at GAlresearch@georgiaaquarium.org.
19. Any use of photography or videography obtained while conducting research at Georgia Aquarium must be reviewed and approved by Georgia Aquarium's Marketing Department prior to use. The Marketing Department can be reached at digitalmedia@georgiaaquarium.org and media@georgiaaquarium.org.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

20. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable staff, volunteers, research colleagues, the general public, or members of the IACUC to raise serious concerns internally so that Georgia Aquarium's IACUC can address and correct deviations or suspected deviations from approved research protocols and Animal Welfare Regulations. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, research colleagues, and IACUC members to report concerns about deviations or suspected deviations from approved research protocols and Animal Welfare Regulations.
21. It is contrary to the values of Georgia Aquarium for anyone to retaliate against any staff, volunteers, research colleagues, the general public, or members of the IACUC who in good faith reports a deviation or suspected deviation of any regulation or policy governing Georgia Aquarium's Animal Care and Use Program. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a deviation in good faith may be subjected to the penalties outlined in Georgia Aquarium's Employee Handbook as a violation of Georgia Aquarium's Code of Conduct.
22. Georgia Aquarium's IACUC has an open door policy and suggests that staff, volunteers, and research colleagues share their questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints with the IACUC Compliance Officer. The IACUC Compliance Officer is available for in-person discussion, telephone, or electronic communications. If you are not comfortable speaking directly to the IACUC Compliance Officer, reports can be made anonymously through IACUC's [online reporting system](#).
23. The IACUC only oversees and investigates concerns related to deviations from approved protocols or miscellaneous activities. Any concerns regarding animal welfare should be submitted directly to the Animal Welfare Committee Chair (Eric Gaglione, Vice President of Zoological Operations, egaglione@georgiaaquarium.org), or anonymously to the Animal Welfare Committee (complete form and put in box near HR).
24. The IACUC Compliance Officer, in collaboration with the IACUC and Animal Welfare Committee, is responsible for ensuring that all complains about deviations from approved research protocols, animal welfare, and/or miscellaneous activities are investigated and resolved. The IACUC Compliance Officer will advise the IACUC and/or the Animal Welfare Committee of any complaints and their resolution will be reported at the next IACUC meeting following said resolution.
25. Anyone filing a written complaint concerning a deviation or suspected deviation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a deviation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false may be subjected to penalties outlined in Georgia Aquarium's Employee Handbook as a violation of Georgia Aquarium's Code of Conduct.
26. Deviations or suspected deviations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of deviations or suspected deviations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. Personal information of all whistleblowers will be redacted before being presented to the IACUC.
27. The IACUC Compliance Officer will notify the person who submitted a complaint (unless submitted anonymously) and acknowledge receipt of the reported deviation or suspected deviation. All reports will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.