

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY Policy on Animal Welfare Concerns	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Vice President Research & Innovation	<i>Approval Date:</i> April 27, 2026
	<i>Responsible Unit:</i> Animal Ethics	<i>Amendments:</i>

- A. Background & Purpose: Dalhousie University strives to foster a culture of embracing positive animal welfare principles and requirements that ensure animals, whether used in research, teaching, testing and assistance or service / support animals are healthy, productive, treated with kindness and respect, and maintained in a species-appropriate, safe and secure environment.

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that all good faith concerns regarding animal care and welfare, and complaints regarding animal mistreatment will be received and investigated without fear of reprisal or retaliation of any kind.

- B. Application: This Policy applies to the conduct of all Members of the University Community and Visitors towards all animals that are in the care and control of the University.

- C. Definitions:

“Animal Welfare Concern or Complaint Form” refers to an incident form that is used by Members of the University Community and Visitors (by name or anonymously) who witness an alleged incident of animal mistreatment, or by the University Veterinarian if they become aware of an alleged incident, to report that mistreatment. The form is available through communication with the office of the University Veterinarian.

“Major Complaint” refers to a complaint that concerns any action that could endanger the physical well-being or welfare of the animal.

“Member(s) of the University Community” refers to faculty, staff and students of Dalhousie University and others engaged in activities under the auspices of Dalhousie University.

“Minor Complaint” refers to a complaint that concerns an action that is perceived as inappropriate but does not endanger the physical well-being or welfare of the animal.

“UCLA” refers to the Halifax campuses University Committee on Laboratory Animals, and “ACUC” refers to the Truro Campus Animal Care and Use Committee, which comprise scientists, technicians, veterinarians, students, and members of the public, and other members as mandated by the Canadian Council on Animal Care. These committees report to the Vice President Research & Innovation. The role

of the UCLA/ACUC is to oversee the care and use of all vertebrate and invertebrate animals on Dalhousie campuses.

“Visitors” refers to persons who are not Members of the University community, who are engaged in activities on Dalhousie University’s property or with Members of the University community and includes, but is not limited to, contractors, agents, vendors, alumni, donors and visiting scholars.

D. Policy:

1. Dalhousie University is committed to the provision of a high quality care and protecting the welfare of animals under our care. This commitment is discharged, in part, through the creation of a mechanism to bring forward good faith concerns of animal mistreatment without fear of reprisal or retaliation.
2. No Member of the University Community or Visitor shall commit any act of animal mistreatment.

E. Administrative Structure:

1. Authority: This Policy falls under the authority of the Vice President Research and Innovation.
2. Responsible Unit: Animal Ethics is the unit responsible for the administration of this Policy.
3. Review: This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years or earlier if deemed necessary by the Vice President Research and Innovation.

F. Procedures:

1. Major Complaints and Minor Complaints will be addressed in accordance with the Protocol set out in Schedule A.
 2. If the University Veterinarian is the subject of, or otherwise implicated in, the Major Complaint or Minor Complaint, the Vice President Research and Innovation will reassign responsibility for those duties under the Protocol.
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Schedule A

Protocol for the Handling of Major Complaints and Minor Complaints of Animal Mistreatment

1. Submission of complaint

- a. Any Member of the University Community or Visitor can consult with the University Veterinarian at any time to discuss a concern of animal mistreatment.
- b. A Member of the University Community or Visitor who wants to report an alleged incident of animal mistreatment shall submit an Animal Welfare or Concern Complaint Form to the office of the University Veterinarian to begin the formal complaint process.
- c. The University Veterinarian will confirm receipt of the Animal Welfare or Concern Form and outline any further involvement the Member of the University Community or Visitor can expect to have in the matter.
- d. If a Member of the University Community or Visitor wishes to submit concerns of animal mistreatment anonymously, they can do so. However, depending on the nature of the concern shared, there may be limitations on the action that can be taken.
- e. The University Veterinarian may refer all or part of the allegation to other appropriate bodies or authorities, internal or external to the University.

2. Investigation

- a. The University Veterinarian will review the complaint and classify it as a Minor Complaint or Major Complaint, and follow any reporting obligations required by the Canadian Council on Animal Care.
- b. Depending on the party(ies) implicated in the complaint and whether or not the allegation relates to research activities, the investigation will be conducted following the procedures set out in the UCLA/ACUC Non-Compliance Process and may also be treated as a breach of the University's Research Integrity Policy.

3. Decision and Outcomes

- a. If the investigation results in a finding of animal mistreatment, any further action or outcomes will be in accordance with procedures set out in the UCLA/ACUC Non-Compliance Process, and may also result in further actions under the Code of Student Conduct, or the University's Research Integrity Policy, or collective agreements or other employee group manuals, as applicable.