

IBC
APPENDIX P
BIOSECURITY:
ZOO NOTIC DISEASES SOP

APPLICATIONS

- Working with or conducting research on farm animals
- Research labs that use animals, animal tissues or animal-derived materials
- Classes or field research involving wild animals

- If you work with animals, you must be enrolled in the University's IACUC Health and Safety program.
<https://web.uri.edu/research-admin/office-of-research-integrity/iacuc/health-and-safety-program/>

- Visit the URI Research Occupational Health web page to learn about services that are available.
<https://web.uri.edu/research-admin/office-of-research-integrity/research-occupational-health/>

Definition: Zoonosis

Any disease or infection that is naturally transmissible from vertebrate animals to humans.

- Live animals, fresh animal tissues, blood, body fluids and animal wastes are all potential sources of zoonotic disease pathogens.

- If you handle potentially infectious materials, you are at risk of an occupational exposure. Handle every animal and fresh material derived from animals as though infectious, even though it may not be; wear gloves.

General information

- Some medications are known to suppress the immune system. If you are on long-term medication with one of these drugs and work with animals, consult with an Occupational Health Provider for guidance before beginning work.

- Tetanus immunization is recommended and offered. Rabies vaccination/titer is recommended and offered as determined by an Occupational Health Provider.

- Do not eat, drink, smoke, use tobacco products, apply cosmetics or lip balm, or handle contact lenses in the animal facility, in the lab, or around potentially infectious materials at Peckham Farm or in the field.

- Report any exposure or injury to your supervisor immediately. Students should also call the Triage Nurse at Health Services, (401) 874-2246, for guidance if you have a parenteral, mucous membrane, non-intact skin exposure to potentially infectious materials or an animal bite. During the semester Health Services is open 8 am – 8 pm Monday to Friday and 10 am – 4 pm on weekends. Summer hours are 8 am – 3:30 pm Monday through Friday. Closed on weekends and holidays.

IBC
APPENDIX P
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On the Farm

- Use the boot bath at the farm's entrance if you have pets or livestock at home or have come from another farm.
- Use a hand sanitizer or wash your hands frequently when running water is available. If using running water, turn the tap off using a paper towel so you don't re-contaminate your hands.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke or use tobacco products around animals.
- Use the Hierarchy of Controls to prevent an exposure: Eliminate hazards or substitute for less hazardous materials when possible; use Engineering Controls and Administrative Controls to manage risk; wear proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when working with animals.
- Hand washing stations, safety needles and sharps containers are examples of Engineering Controls.
- Use safety needles for injections and drawing blood to reduce the risk of a needle stick and a possible exposure. Dispose used needles/syringes directly into a sharps container. Do not re-cap needles.
- Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for working with potentially infectious animals/materials includes the following: a lab coat, gown, surgical scrubs, overalls, rubber boots. A mask and safety glasses should also be worn when a splash is possible.
- Work practice controls also help prevent exposures and other injuries. Examples include not re-capping needles, washing hands between glove changes (farm policy) and being calm and deliberate when working with animals. To prevent an injury, always leave yourself an "out" when working with animals in close quarters.
- Change disposable gloves when grossly soiled. Wash hands in between each glove change. Do not wash or re-use disposable gloves. Decontaminate heavy duty utility gloves between uses if they are still intact and not cracked or torn.
- Wash your hands before leaving the farm and use the boot bath on your way out.

In the Research Lab

- Handle all animal-derived material as though it is infectious and wear gloves.
- For work with wild animal tissues or fluids, complete BBP + Biosafety training and Zoonotic Diseases training (Administrative controls) in Brightspace to minimize your risk of an occupational exposure.

IBC
APPENDIX P
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ZOO NOTIC DISEASES SOP

- Use Engineering controls such as biosafety cabinets, micro pipettors and centrifuge safety buckets to reduce your risk of an exposure.
- Conduct all procedures in a way that minimizes splashing, spraying, splattering, and generating aerosols or droplets of potentially infectious materials.
- Work in a biosafety cabinet when there is the risk of generating an aerosol; includes when pipetting, centrifuging or vortexing.
- To prevent an eye exposure, wear safety glasses with side shields, goggles, or a face shield when spray or splatter may occur.
- If you wear contact lenses, wear safety glasses or a face shield when working with potentially infectious materials.
- Use centrifuge safety buckets when centrifuging potentially infectious material to reduce the likelihood of an exposure.
- When centrifuging animal blood, do not fill the tubes more than 70% full. Allow sufficient headroom for the level to rise as the samples spin.
- An aerosol will form during centrifugation. Wait 15 minutes after the cycle has finished before opening to allow aerosols to settle. If you think a tube leaked because it was overfilled and you weren't using centrifuge safety buckets, an aerosol may have been released inside the centrifuge. Waiting 30 minutes before opening will reduce your risk of an exposure. Decontaminate the centrifuge. See Appendix D: Safe Use of Centrifuges SOP.
<https://web.uri.edu/ehs/wp-content/uploads/sites/2063/2025-APPENDIX-D-Safe-Use-of-Centrifuges-FINAL.pdf>
- Wash your hands after handling animals or other potentially infectious material, after removing gloves, before leaving the animal facility or the laboratory, and after returning from field research.
- Use care when handling sharp instruments or needles. Dispose used needles/syringes and scalpels directly into a sharps container. Do not recap needles. Do not overfill sharps containers.
- When full, dispose full sharps containers as biohazardous (regulated medical) waste in a biowaste box.

IBC
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- Dispose of solid infectious waste in a red bag. Large, unfixed animal tissues may need to be frozen pending pick-up for disposal through the University's Regulated Medical Waste Program. Decontaminate potentially infectious liquids with 10% bleach and dispose as chemical hazardous waste through EHS if the pH is outside the pH 5-9 window.
- Designate areas where biohazards are to be used and label with the biohazard symbol. Label lab equipment used with biohazards and decontaminate with a hospital grade disinfectant after each use.
- Clean and disinfect your work area when you are finished or at the end of the workday. An EPA-registered hospital grade disinfectant is preferred over 10% bleach for this application.

Class Work or Field Research with Wild Animals

- To minimize the risk of exposure for students, the Professor leading the class usually handles birds or mammals. If there is a pandemic such as for Avian Influenza or a local epidemic, gloves and an N95 respirator should be worn to limit the risk for an exposure.
- If you are doing Field Research, wear gloves, safety glasses and an N95 respirator when handling birds or mammals, or when there is the potential for exposure to fecal material or saliva. Participation in the University's Respiratory Protection Program is required to wear a respirator.