

UH IACUC Policy on Social Housing for Biomedical and Neurobehavioral Studies in AVS-Operated Vivaria
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Policy

The University of Hawaii (UH) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) adheres to the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition*¹ (or later editions), and encourages animals used for biomedical and neurobehavioral studies to be housed in compatible social groups.

When necessary, single housing of social animals should be limited to the minimum period necessary and where possible other ways of mimicking the social experience, such as, use of environmental enrichment, should be provided. Consideration by the UH IACUC for exemptions for singly house species include the following reasons:

- Social Incompatibility. The social behavior of some species, stains and/or sex of the animals may preclude social housing.
- Experimental reasons that require singly housing animals.
 - E.g. behavioral research.
 - E.g. the last cohort in the cage, if singly housed more than seven consecutive days.
 - E.g. a male animal waiting for a breeding group, if singly housed more than seven consecutive days.

Implementation

- Singly housing of animals should be described in the IACUC protocol. Exemptions to social housing should be justified by the Principal Investigator (PI), and reviewed and approved by the UH IACUC.
- Singly housing may be implemented without prior IACUC approval for the following reasons:
 - Veterinary care, including but not limited to, separating sick or injured animals under a veterinarian's care, or to separate an aggressive cohort from inflicting further injury to its cage mates. If animals are separated due to aggression, the veterinary staff will notify the PI that the aggressor must be separated in a specified time frame, or the Animal and Veterinary Services (AVS) staff will separate them.
 - Last cohort in cage, if singly housed 7 consecutive days or less.
 - A male waiting for a breeding group, if singly housed 7 consecutive days or less.
 - In cases of the last cohort or male waiting for breeding group without prior IACUC approval, the PI will be responsible for tagging the cage(s) with the date(s) the animal(s) were singly housed and ensuring that the animal(s) are singly housed for 7 days or less. Otherwise the UH IACUC will consider this a noncompliance and be handled as such.

¹ The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition, NRC, Washington DC