I. Purpose

This policy provides guidance to investigators and other personnel concerning the adoption of biomedical research animals owned by Montana State University.

II. Background

Although euthanasia is the primary means for the disposition of biomedical research animals at the end of a study, in some special cases animals may be adopted. The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) supports institutions considering adoption when safe and appropriate.

III. Policy

An animal that participated in research or teaching may be adopted provided the animal is in good health, has an expectation for a normal quality of life, and meets the Suitability Criteria described in Section IV. Adoption privileges are granted only with the approval of the Attending Veterinarian or designee. Once the animal has left the University, it cannot return.

IV. Suitability Criteria

1. Some animals are not available for adoption because policies or regulations prohibit private ownership or donation of some species. Examples include, but are not limited to,
2. nonhuman primates,
3. transgenic animals,
4. animals requiring a Department of Fish and Wildlife Permit,
5. livestock with a deemed value.
6. Biomedical research animals meeting the criteria listed below are ineligible for adoption.
7. Animals that have been exposed to any of the following:
8. radioisotopes
9. biological hazards/pathogens
10. hazardous chemicals
11. recombinant DNA
12. Animals that have been administered any drugs other than FDA-approved human or veterinary drugs or food supplements or pharmaceutically compounded veterinary drugs.
13. Transgenic or immune-suppressed animals
14. Animals that have undergone survival surgery as part of the experimental protocol.

V. Procedure

1. The typical mechanism for adoption is initiated by an individual who wishes to adopt and assume permanent ownership of the animal. The AV or designee must be contacted for the assessment of the suitability of the animal for adoption as well as the person requesting to adopt the animal. Only animals that have been examined by the AV or his/her designee and found free of any physical abnormalities or infectious disease that might affect its well-being or the well-being of other animals will be candidate for adoption. Animals may not be used for any commercial purpose, including but not limited to breeding and exhibiting. The adopted animals must not be sold or used for food (human or animal consumption). The adopter must be able to provide evidence of suitable housing, husbandry, companionship, and veterinary care to the animal. Persons requesting ownership assume full responsibility for the adopted animal. The individual or agency representative requesting to adopt the animal must sign an Animal Adoption Agreement (see Appendix A).
2. If the animal is a USDA regulated species, the appropriate USDA transfer form must be completed by the investigator or designee.

Appendix A: Animal Adoption Agreement

Date:

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , am adopting the animal described below from Montana State University and agree to be fully responsible for its future care, treatment, actions, and well-being.

The animal described below has been examined by Montana State University Attending Veterinarian or designee. The animal has been determined to be both clinically healthy and suitable as a companion animal. I acknowledge and agree that this does not guarantee that the animal to be adopted has no health issues, but that none are known based upon that examination.

I attest that I understand the terms under which I take ownership of this animal and agree to fully comply with all the conditions of adoption. Additionally, I have had an opportunity to ask any health and husbandry-related questions, and each question has been answered to my full satisfaction. In accepting this animal, I agree to care for it in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations of my and/or the animal’s place of residence, including but not limited to having the animal spayed or neutered if applicable, vaccinated against rabies and registering the animal with local animal control officials as required. I further agree not to use this animal as a food source or religious object or for any commercial purpose, including but not limited to breeding and exhibiting. I will not sell this animal. If I am subsequently unable or unwilling to care for this animal, I will notify the Montana State University Attending Veterinarian or delegate prior to making other arrangements for its care. By signing this agreement, I acknowledge that I hereby release and indemnify Montana State University, its trustees, officers, employees, and agents from all liability and expenses resulting from this adoption. I understand that Montana State University accepts no liability for the animal’s continuing care or veterinary treatment, or for any damages arising from my ownership of the animal once it has been removed from the University facility.

Animal Description: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

New Owner

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Print Name

Montana State University Veterinarian or Designee

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Signature Print Name