

What Questions Could the AAALAC Site Visitors Ask?

Key Questions & Answers to Review for AAALAC 2026
For SMPH PIs, Laboratory Staff & Facility Personnel (Non-NHP Species)

Oversight & Communication

Q. Who is the research animal veterinarian for the area where your animals live?

- A. **Dr. Andrew Jefcoat:** Senior Program Veterinarian: 608-220-8714 or 608-262-3009
Dr. Emma Sweet: Veterinarian: 608-896-3692
Dr. Amanda Kress: Veterinarian: 608-893-2716
Dr. Brigitte Raabe: Veterinarian: 608-438-4658
Dr. Ryan Stoffel: Attending Veterinarian for All Campus: 608-893-8526 or 608-265-2695

Note: For additional contacts, Login at www.rarc.wisc.edu and click “Contacts”

Q. How often do you see the RARC veterinary staff (vets or vet techs) and/or talk to them?

Answer:

- If your lab **does** check in regularly with veterinary staff: be prepared to say how often
 - Example: “I talk to my vet weekly over the phone”.
- If your lab **does not** check in regularly with veterinary staff:
 - Example: “I do not typically contact the vet staff because there has not been a need to”.

Sick or Dead Animal Communication

Q. What is the chain of communication for reporting that an animal is sick or dead? What is the follow-through process?

Sick Animals

For rodents, aquatics, and USDA covered species:

1. An Animal Care Technician (ACT) or laboratory staff place a “Notice-Sick Animal” green card on the cage/tank. See an example.

2. The person who placed the green card reports to RARC veterinary staff via the “Sick Animal” report in Vet Management Module (VMM).
 - a. VMM is located at: <https://vets.research.wisc.edu/VMM/Dashboard>

3. An email is sent to RARC veterinary staff containing essential information.
4. An open clinical case is created within the Vet Management Module (VMM).
5. The veterinary staff examines the animal.
 - a. Depending on outcome of examination by veterinary staff, the animal is euthanized, treated, monitored, or placed on normal husbandry, and appropriate entries are made in the VMM.
6. The PI/research staff are notified of the outcome and additional required actions.
7. "Notice-Sick Animal" green cards are dated and initialed for all checks/treatments. They are kept on cages/tanks until the vet staff determines that the animal has recovered in response to treatment, or the animal is euthanized.
8. Notice-Sick Animal" card is removed from the primary enclosure, a picture of it is taken and added into the medical record before resolving it.

Dead Animals

For Rodents and aquatics:

1. Cages are marked with a tag stating, "Dead Animal Found".
2. The technician then enters a report online using the "Dead Animal Reporting" on the [VMM](#) website.
3. An email is generated and laboratory staff is notified.
 - a. If deaths occur under **unusual circumstances**, (i.e., sentinel/quarantine, multiple or unexpected deaths, food/water missing, etc.), the RARC veterinary staff is called.
4. The carcass is placed in a designated refrigerator or freezer for pick-up or disposal.

If RARC veterinarians or the lab want a necropsy: Carcasses are sent to RARC for necropsy.

Animal Emergencies

During standard business hours:

- SMPH ACT or PI/research staff call RARC Veterinary staff until someone is reached.
 - Veterinary staff contact sheets are located throughout the vivarium.

During non-standard business hours:

- This is weekends, holidays or between the hours of 4:00 PM and 8:00 AM.
- Emergencies and USDA-covered species deaths are reported by ACTs or lab staff through the **RARC veterinary on-call service** at 608-262-2122.

Protocol Compliance

Q. Who has read the protocol?

A. Everyone listed on the protocol.

Note: We recommend that PIs/labs maintain documentation that all lab members have **read** and **understand** the protocol. Please reach out to the Animal Program Assessment Specialists if you need a training log template.

Q. What do you monitor for before euthanizing?

A. For ARROW protocols, the IACUC-approved endpoints and methods of euthanasia are described in the “Euthanasia” portion of the “Species Details” section of the approved protocol.

Q. What method of euthanasia do you use? Please explain how the method is conducted.

A. This answer will vary for each lab. Review the “Euthanasia” portion of your protocol(s) and be prepared to explain your approved euthanasia methods.

Q. Can you show me your logbook/records for procedures conducted on animals?

A. Answer will vary by lab and/or facility. Medical, surgical, & anesthetic records **must** be maintained for all species and be readily available for review upon request.

See https://www.rarc.wisc.edu/animal_health/medical_records.html.

Q. Can you show me in your records how many animals have been used on your protocol to date?

A. Answer will vary by lab and/or facility.

Q. How do you ensure that aseptic techniques are used?

A. Aseptic technique is required for all survival surgeries and should be described in the “Surgery and Post Surgery Summary” portion and in the “Species Details” section in the approved ARROW protocol.

Non-survival surgeries may not require aseptic technique, however, at a minimum the surgeon should wear gloves, the surgical site should be clipped, and the instruments and surrounding area should be clean.

Q. Who would you tell if you did something that wasn’t in your protocol?

A. 1. **Self-report** (explain what happened) to one of the of the following as soon as possible.

- SMPH IACUC Chair: Colleen McDowell
- Attending Veterinarian
- Senior RARC Veterinarian

2. Review and complete any actions that are required by the IACUC.

Q. Who approves animal care and use protocols and who has authority to suspend a research protocol?

A. Only the IACUC can approve or suspend a protocol (not RARC, not the veterinarians). The IACUC, veterinarians, or the IO can suspend activities using animals or animal use privileges per the companion [SOP](#) for the campus policy on protocol noncompliance.

Animal Research Safety Concerns

For assistance to ensure your health and safety readiness for the upcoming AAALAC visit, contact **Carrie Ensrud**, Animal Research Safety Manager/ Associate Biological Safety Officer at 608-445-4516 or carrie.ensrud@wisc.edu.

Q. Have you enrolled in the occupational health program or were you risk-assessed before beginning to work with animals?

A. The answer should be “yes”. All UW employees, whose work requires regular contact with animals and/or animal use areas, must enroll in the University’s Occupational Health Program (OHP) by filling out the Animal Contact Risk Questionnaire (ACRQ).

Link to ACRQ: <https://ehs.wisc.edu/labs-research/animal-research-safety/animal-contact/>

Animal Contact Risk Questionnaire

Animal Contact Risk Questionnaire (ACRQ) is an onboarding and *annual requirement* for employees regularly working with animals.

- Complete one-time Occupational Medicine Privacy and Consent and Authorization for Release of Occupational Health Records forms in [MyUHS](#). (view [instructions](#))
- Complete the ACRQ (view [instructions](#)).
- Occupational Medicine will send a message to the employee and employer when questionnaire review is complete and contact if follow-up is necessary.

Q. Did you receive feedback from an Occupational Medicine Services medical professional regarding this risk assessment?

A. The answer should be “yes”. A medical professional at Occupational Medicine will

- Review the questionnaire.
- Provide you with feedback regarding your level of risk on the job, and methods to minimize that risk.

For questions, call Occupational Medicine at **608-265-5610**. If you do not have regular contact with animals/use areas, you do not have to enroll.

Q. What would you or your staff do if you or one of your staff gets stuck with a needle?

A. If someone is stuck with a needle

1. **Stop** what you are doing.
2. Wash the affected area with soap and water for **15 minutes**.
3. Apply first aid if needed then **tell someone**: e.g., your supervisor, PI, an RARC veterinarian, Occupational Medicine at **608-265-5610** (during normal business hours) or the UW Hospital Emergency Room after-hours, weekends & holidays;
4. Write down what was in the needle/syringe for reference and complete the First Report at <https://ehs.wisc.edu/first-report-of-biological-exposure-or-release-event/>

Q. What if someone were bitten or scratched by an animal?

A. If someone is bitten or scratched,

1. Secure the animal
2. Wash the affected area with soap and water for **15 minutes**.
3. Apply first aid if needed then **tell someone**: e.g., your supervisor, PI, an RARC veterinarian, Occupational Medicine at **608-265-5610** (during normal business hours) or the UW Hospital Emergency Room after-hours, weekends & holidays;
 - a. If you have questions ask your supervisor to explain the procedures and work with the EH&S Animal Research Safety team to update plans, if necessary.

4. Complete the First Report <https://ehs.wisc.edu/labs-research/animal-research-safety/animal-bite-or-scratch/>

Q. Do you have hazardous chemicals or are you working with Biohazards? How would you handle a hazardous spill?

A. This will be unique to each lab –

1. Go over your lab's Chemical Hygiene Plan with all members of the lab.
2. Contact the EH&S Chemical Safety Team for assistance: <https://ehs.wisc.edu/labs-research/chemical-safety/>
3. For more information about Biohazardous spills:
 - Refer to your Biosafety Protocol
 - Visit <https://ehs.wisc.edu/labs-research/biological-safety/biological-spill-protocols/>

Q. How are sharps and biohazards disposed of?

A. This will be unique to each lab. Use the following resources to find the answers for your lab

- Refer to your laboratory's approved Biosafety Protocol,
- Contact Biosafety at **608-263-2037**, or
- Visit <https://ehs.wisc.edu/disposal-services/biological-waste-disposal/>

Q. Where do personnel take breaks?

A. Answer will vary. The important thing is that no food or drinks are allowed in research labs.

- **Examples:** don't store the coffee in the freezer with the dead mice or your lunch near containers of chemicals.

Q. What are you doing to keep people healthy and safe?

A. Be sure to remain in compliance with the "Occupational Health and Safety of Personnel" portion in "General Sections" of the approved ARROW protocol.

1. Review these sections of your IACUC protocol thoroughly.
2. **If you work with biological agents:** review the animal sections of your Biosafety Protocol - this could include working under a fume hood when working with chemicals, or using a BSC with biological hazards, wearing gloves/eye protection/lab coat, any precautions taken to inform personnel of allergy risk, etc

What if I do not know the answer to a question?

You can say: "I do not know the answer to your question, but I can find the individual that can help you."

Would you like to schedule an on-site visit before the AAALAC site visit?

Please contact the RARC **Animal Program Assessment Specialists** through email below:

Animal Program Assessment Specialists group email: apas@rarc.wisc.edu