

Vivaria Break Room Policy

First Issued: 12/4/15, Revised:

IACUC Approved: 1/21/16

IBC Approved:

Occupational Health Professional Name and Date Approved:

Policy and Rationale:

This policy identifies potential hazards and ways to mitigate human health risks that may be associated with the Animal and Veterinary Services (AVS) personnel break rooms at the JABSOM Kakaako and Biomedical Sciences Building (Biomed) vivaria. There may be potential for the AVS staff to carry allergens, such as animal dander, on their uniforms and into the break rooms.

This policy is also meant to mitigate potential risks of cross-contaminating resident animals in the vivarium. There may be potential for those in street clothes bringing contaminants (such as rodent pathogens) on their clothing from the outside into the break rooms. These contaminants might then be carried on AVS staffs' uniforms into specific-pathogen-free (SPF) areas of the vivarium, risking cross-contaminating the resident animals.

Scope:

This policy covers the following individuals: AVS personnel dressed in facility-dedicated uniforms who regularly enter the break rooms for rest/water breaks, meals, meetings, and computer or telephone correspondence. Other AVS-associated personnel, who enter the break rooms include the veterinary staff, business office staff, interns, students, and volunteers. Occasionally individuals from the public must enter the break rooms. These non-AVS personnel include, but are not limited to, (1) speakers/vendors who educate the AVS staff, (2) individuals requesting access into the vivarium and who receive training by AVS personnel, (3) site visitors such as accreditors, architects, engineers and planners engaged in facilities projects in the vivarium, and (4) the UH Emergency Response Team (ERT).

Procedures:

1. The staff break rooms are designated as Transition Zones, restricted to AVS-authorized individuals only. Programmable proximity card access (at Kakaako) and PIN code authentication (at Biomed) are used to secure the break room from unauthorized access.
2. All persons requiring entrance into the break rooms will be pre-approved by AVS for access. All personnel will be educated on the potential hazards associated with the room (allergens, potential hazards that may be inadvertently carried into the room from the vivarium, etc.). They will be offered additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to mitigate these risks, but have the option to decline in writing the use of additional PPE offered to them when in room. Acknowledgement of receiving education about the hazards and the offer of additional PPE will be signed and dated. All individuals actively accessing AVS break rooms will receive updated information and documented training for any new potential hazards identified in these areas. AVS Operations Manager will keep these signed acknowledgements on file. A disclaimer as to the potential hazards will also be posted on entry doors to the break rooms.
3. The following plan identifies potential hazards associated with the break rooms, provides a risk assessment, and specifies preventive measures and interventions. It also includes ways to mitigate risks of cross-contaminating SPF animals in the vivarium by AVS staff who co-mingle with those wearing street clothes (potentially contaminated clothes and shoes) in the AVS break rooms.

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Potential Hazard	Risk Assessment	Preventive Measures and Interventions
Allergens (ie: animal dander on scrubs)	Minimal risk. Mice and a few rats are the only animals used, thus the dose of allergens in the environment and on uniforms is minimal.	1) AVS staff working in the vivarium wear gloves when opening cages. 2) They remove gloves before exiting the room and wash their hands before existing the locker rooms. 3) AVS staff always open cages under an Animal Transfer Station (ATS). 4) 99% of the rodents are housed in individually ventilated cages. 5) Appropriate cage change schedules are adhered to which reduces ammonia and dander build-up. 6) Appropriate room air changes and pressure differentials minimize the spread of allergens in the immediate environment.
Chemical and Biological Hazards	Minimal risk of AVS staff or researchers carrying chemical or biological hazards on their uniforms after working with hazard animals.	1) Appropriate additional PPE is worn over AVS-dedicated uniforms or researcher's lab coats. Outer PPE is discarded upon leaving the room where hazards are used. 2) Staff utilize Biosafety cabinets and/or fume hoods when opening cages and/or working with hazard animals, and do not come in direct contact with the hazards.
Contaminants from Outside the Facility	Minimal risk of cross-contamination of AVS staff in dedicated uniforms co-mingling with individuals in street clothes in the break room.	1) AVS staff don shoe covers over AVS-issued shoes when leaving the break area and entering the vivarium proper to prevent contamination in the facility. 2) AVS staff don gloves and work in an ATS when opening cages and handling animals. 3) AVS staff "shower-in" and don additional, sterile PPE on top of scrubs when working with immune-compromised animals. 4) The break room areas are cleaned regularly.