



## Purdue University Laboratory Animal Program Standards of Care

### Title: Husbandry Care of Birds

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I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the minimum standards of care for birds excluding raptors, poultry, and waterfowl.

II. Policy:

Birds used in research and teaching must meet the requirements in the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (*Guide*) and the USDA Animal Welfare Regulations (AWR) if wild-caught or used for exhibition. Deviations or exceptions must be approved by the Attending Veterinarian and the IACUC.

III. Procedure:

**Daily (365 days a year without exception):**

- Observe each animal and check for health concerns (*Guide* pg. 112).
- Ensure adequate feed and potable water is available (*Guide* pg. 65-68).
- Record sick and dead animals, and report findings to LAP veterinary staff or designated clinical veterinarian per standard operating procedure for reporting sick or dead animals.
- Record minimum and maximum temperatures and humidity.
  - Temperature range for birds is species-dependent.
  - Humidity range for birds is 30% to 70% (*Guide* pg. 44).
- Spot clean excessively soiled or flooded areas of housing (*Guide* pg. 70).
- Clean and organize room, anterooms, and surrounding premises (*Guide* pg. 72).
- Record daily completion of each task, initial each task, and date the log.

**Weekly (not to exceed 7 days):**

- Clean cages, feeders and waterers (*Guide* pg. 70).
- Replace bedding for animals in solid-bottom caging/housing.

**As needed:**

- Each facility will develop their own best practices for sanitization at least every 6 months, whenever there is a change in species, or more frequently if needed.
  - Disinfect the animal room including walls, floors, and ceilings (if possible) (*Guide* pg. 72).
- Clean and sanitize feed storage containers (*Guide* pg. 67). Remove and replace worn or damaged equipment from primary enclosures and surrounding facility (*Guide* pg. 72).
- Chow must be discarded after 6 months of the milling date unless manufacturer guidelines recommend a shorter or longer expiration date (*Guide* pg. 66).



- Trim excessively long toenails and beaks per facility SOPs.
- Each facility will develop their own best practices with sanitization typically occurring every 6 months or whenever there is a change in species but may vary with facility.

**Environmental Enrichment:**

- Refer to SOP # 305 - Social and Environmental Enrichment Program for Research and Teaching Animals

**Facilities:**

- Temperature alarms must be installed in all temperature-controlled rooms housing birds (*Guide* pg. 143).
- Adequate ventilation must be provided for the health and comfort of the animal at all times.
  - A minimum of 10-15 fresh room air exchanges per hour shall be provided in animal housing areas (*Guide* pg. 46).
- Floors shall be moisture-resistant, non-absorbent, impact-resistant, and relatively smooth (*Guide* pg. 137).

**Housing:**

- Whenever possible, birds should be socially housed in compatible groups (*Guide* pg. 51).
- Floor space taken up by food bowls, water containers, and enrichment devices should not be considered part of the floor space (*Guide* pg. 56).

Space requirements for pigeons, and recommended for other birds:		
Weight (kg)	Floor Area/Animal (ft <sup>2</sup> )	Height (in)
--	0.8	Cage height should be sufficient for the animals to comfortably stand erect with their feet on the floor.
( <i>Guide</i> pg. 60)		