

*University of Louisville*  
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee  
***Policies and Procedures***  
**Prolonged Physical Restraint**

**Policy:** The use of prolonged physical restraint for animals used in research and teaching should be avoided whenever possible. IACUC approval for prolonged physical restraint will be granted based on the justification and the use of whatever means available to reduce associated distress.

**Rationale:** The *Guide* states, “Physical restraint is the use of manual or mechanical means to limit some or all of an animal's normal movement for the purpose of examination, collection of samples, drug administration, therapy, or experimental manipulation... Animals can be physically restrained briefly either manually or with restraint devices. Restraint devices should be suitable in size, design, and operation to minimize discomfort or injury to the animal... Prolonged restraint should be avoided unless it is essential for achieving research objectives and is approved by the IACUC.” Accordingly, the UofL IACUC has adopted the following guidelines.

**Procedures, Guidelines, and Exceptions:**

1. The use of restraint devices should be minimized. Time periods for physical restraint should be the minimum required. *Prolonged restraint is defined as over 15 minutes for rodents and over 30 minutes for non-rodent mammals.*
2. Prolonged restraint should not be used as a standard method of housing or for convenience.
3. When prolonged restraint is employed, animals should be acclimated and/or trained to restraint devices whenever possible. Animals must be observed as much as possible at intervals approved by the IACUC.
4. *Proposals* requesting prolonged restraint should address:
  - a. The nature of the device to be employed and its duration of use.
  - b. Details regarding plans for acclimating, training and monitoring animals during restraint, including observation intervals.
  - c. Thorough justification detailing the necessity and the duration of restraint. The justification should establish why the restraint is necessary to accomplish research objectives and include an assurance that it will occur for the shortest possible time.
  - d. Documented consideration of less restrictive or less distressful systems and the reasons why such alternatives were not selected.
5. Evidence of distress or behavioral change must be reported to the IACUC, which may necessitate the temporary or permanent removal from restraint. Animals that fail to adapt to restraint will be removed from the study.

**Original Approval:** 15 March 2007

**Revised:** 6 November 2018

**Latest Approval:** 15 November 2018