University of Southern California
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
Private Vehicle Rodent Transportation

A. Background

To establish standardized procedures for the safe, humane, and compliant transportation of rodents for IACUC approved activities utilizing private vehicles between USC facilities and laboratories (between HSC and UPC campuses).

B. Definitions

Rodent**:** Rat within the genus Rattus and mice within the genus Mus.

Private vehicle**:** A four-wheeled motor vehicle, such as a car, owned by a private person.

DAR**:** Department of Animal Resources.

C. Applicability

All USC researchers intending to transport animals between facilities or campuses must adhere to this policy. This policy is established to ensure the welfare of animals, minimize transportation-related stress, and maintain compliance with the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* 8th edition.

This policy does not apply to the transportation of rodents from either USC HSC or UPC facilities and laboratories to other distant USC campuses, airports, or external institutions. Such transportation must be conducted exclusively through an approved professional courier service or DAR service.

Public transportation, or other modes of transportation such as motorcycles, open bed trucks, scooters, bicycles, or others, is prohibited.

D. Policy

Transportation must be:

- For IACUC approved activities
- Completed by IACUC approved personnel

- Inside the passenger cabin and not in trunk or otherwise unrestrained
- Completed in a timely manner to minimize transit time
- Completed by direct route, without stopping for any other purpose

Vehicle Requirements for Approval

- Be clean and free of obvious debris
- Have a functioning climate control system that can cool and/or heat as needed.
- Fill out the Private Transportation Request form and be signed off from the Veterinarian or Veterinarian designee and sent to the IACUC office
- Secure enclosures to prevent movement and remain upright

Transport containers

- Be structurally sound and escape-proof
- Provide adequate ventilation (no stacking of containers)
- Labeled “live animals”
- Using DAR provided white opaque transport containers
- Must **not** be shoebox style home cages
- Secured within cabin of vehicle in a safe manner
- Not be visible to the public

Handling and Care

- Provided with bedding, food and a water source
- Not overcrowded and adhering to IACUC housing policy
- Handled in a manner that prevents trauma, injury, or distress
- Not left in vehicle unattended
- Have USC animal resources emergency contact sheet in the vehicle during the transport (contact sheet to be handed out at vehicle inspection)
- In case of any automobile accident or animal morbidity and mortality, please report the incident to the IACUC as soon as possible.

Environmental conditions

- Temperatures within the vehicle must remain between **68-79°** Fahrenheit
- Animals protected from extreme heat or cold
- Protected from direct sunlight

E. References

National Research Council. (2011). Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals: Eighth Edition. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press

F. Appendix

1. Private Vehicle Transportation Request form

IACUC Approved on 5/20/2026

Private Transportation Request Form

After hours or weekends call when on or near campus: HSC Public Safety (213) 740-4321 or UPC Public Safety (213) 740-6000.

Name of Driver (print): _____

Principal Investigator(s): _____

Contact number: _____

Make, model, and color of vehicle: _____

License Plate No.: _____ **Climate control** ☐

USC Animal Resources Emergency Contact Sheet handed out ☐

I confirm that I understand all the requirements for transporting animals in my personal vehicle, as well as the risks involved. By signing this form, I accept these risks and agree to comply with all stated requirements. I acknowledge that any violations may result in revocation of approval and/or actions by the IACUC.

Driver (Print)	(Signature)	Date

Inspector (Print)	(Signature)	Date