Purpose / Scope
The purpose of this policy is to outline Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) and institutional requirements for Animal Care Committee (ACC) site visits to all animal holding and use laboratory areas associated with animal-based science activities identified within ACC-approved Animal Use Protocols.

ACC Site Visits are intended to:

- better understand work being undertaken as well as area- and research-specific challenges, e.g., sufficiency of facilities, equipment and human resources,
- consider animal care and welfare implications,
- meet with those working directly in these areas to discuss their needs,
- identify any deficiencies in the spaces, and
- facilitate communication between the ACC, animal-based scientists, and area supervisors, and forward any recommendations or commendations to area supervisors and associated animal-based scientists.

Rationale
In its Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees (2006), the CCAC outlines requirements for the ACC to regularly visit all areas where animals are held and/or used in animal-based science.

Policy Statements
ACC Site Visits must be undertaken at minimum annually.

ACC Site Visits must be announced and organized in advance of each visit to ensure availability of related stakeholders, as applicable.

A minimum of three ACC members must participate in every ACC Site Visit to include a site visit leader and two other ACC members.

- Areas where animals are held beyond 12 hours and spaces involving invasive procedures will involve an Institutional Veterinarian; the veterinarian will perform a review of animal records and provide a report to be appended to the ACC Site Visit Report.

All ACC members must actively participate in, or at least volunteer for, a minimum of three site visits per year.

Site Visits will be comprised of three elements: 1) an In-Person Walk-Through of the site, 2) animal records review by a veterinarian, and 3) a Zoom Virtual Site Visit.

1) In-Person Walk-Throughs will involve at minimum the area supervisor and the Site Visit Leader, or their designates. These visits will focus primarily upon infrastructure, e.g., physical characteristics, equipment, supplies, and associated area maintenance. During these visits, ACC...
participants will relay evidence-based, specific feedback via verbal and written documentation using the ACC Site Visit Checklist (PROC-019-Appendix 1, Sect. 2).

2) In areas where animals are held beyond 12 hours or are involved in invasive procedures, a veterinarian will undertake a review of animal records.

3) Zoom Virtual Site Visits will involve area supervisors, animal-based scientists and their team members and ACC members. Virtual tours will be facilitated by area supervisors or their designates using a Zoom-compatible device and focused upon understanding:
   a. the ‘big picture view’ of the space (purpose, major functions, operations),
   b. the research goals, and how animal-based science activities contribute to these goals,
   c. an animal’s experience from arrival to endpoint,
   d. the effectiveness of Animal Ethics and Care Program support services, and
   e. elements of the ACC Site Visit Checklist (PROC-019-Appendix 1) not covered during the in-person walk-through, as applicable to the space.

Area supervisors must make themselves, or a knowledgeable designate, available during the in-person walk-through of the area. Area supervisors and animal-based scientists who use the area(s) being visited must make themselves, or a knowledgeable designate, available to participate in the Virtual Site Visit. Extra-vivarial space re-certification may be facilitated through the annual ACC Site Visit process.

ACC Site Visit Reports must be completed using an ACC Site Visit Report Template (Appendix 2). Reports arising from steps 1) and 2) will be incorporated into the final ACC Site Visit Report. ACC Site Visit Reports will be forwarded to the ACC Executive for review and follow-up. Closed reports will be forwarded to the full ACC.

References

Guidance for Animal Care Committee Members Conducting Annual Site Visits (2018).

Revision History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of Changes</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00</td>
<td>08-10-2020</td>
<td>New stand-alone policy; previously embedded in POL-005 PAM Program</td>
<td>LT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>09-12-2021</td>
<td>Reformat; update ‘Purpose’ to align with CCAC expectations; update and provide greater detail for the three-pronged approach to site visits.</td>
<td>LT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>