

Purpose / Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline institutional requirements for rehoming of animals, including the adoption process, associated with Animal Care Committee (ACC) approved Animal Use Protocols (AUPs) at Western and affiliates.

Rationale

Western University is committed to promoting positive welfare outcomes for animals used in scientific activities. Consistent with the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) Guidelines: Outcomes for Animals at the End of Scientific Activities (2026), rehoming and/or adoption will be considered where it is in the best interest of the animal and can be achieved without compromising animal welfare, public or animal health, regulatory requirements, or the scientific objectives of the approved Animal Use Protocol.

Rehoming is defined as moving an animal to a non-scientific environment, such as a private residence, an animal sanctuary, or, in the case of farm animals, an agricultural farm. Rehoming of animals will be considered in situations where both the welfare of the animal and the needs of ACC-approved animal-based science can be realized.¹

Policy Statements

Rehoming of animals must be pre-approved by the Principal Investigator (PI) and an Institutional Veterinarian.

The Principal Investigator must confirm the feasibility of rehoming with respect to their AUP's scientific requirements.

- Where appropriate the AUP should be updated to include rehoming as a possible endpoint.

The Institutional Veterinarian must assess the animal's suitability for rehoming re. health status, genetic background, and experimental status.

- Only healthy animals may be considered for rehoming via veterinary advisement.
- Genetically modified animals may not be considered for rehoming.

¹ Canadian Council on Animal Care. CCAC guidelines: Outcomes for Animals at the End of Scientific Activities (2026). Retrieved 23JUL2026 from https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Guidelines/CCAC_guidelines-Outcomes_for_animals_at_the_end_of_scientific_activities.pdf

The Institutional Veterinarian must assess the suitability of the prospective adopter re. their ability to care for and house the animal(s).

The prospective adopter must be willing to follow the 'Adoption Request Procedures' (see next section).

All associated records must be maintained and readily retrievable by oversight bodies.

References

Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) Guidelines: Outcomes for Animals at the End of Scientific Activities (2026)

Journal of American Association for Laboratory Animal Science

Revision History

Version	Date dd-mm-yyyy	Description of Changes	Authors / Core Stakeholders
00	08-10-2026	New Policy & Procedures	SD, SG, ET, RV, CV, LT



Adoption Process

1. The prospective adopter (the Requestor) will submit the applicable form to the AECP Compliance Team (acc-compliance@uwo.ca) well in advance of the requested rehoming timeframe.
 - [Small Animal Adoption Request Form – Fill out form](#)
 - [Animal Adoption Request Form-Large Animal – Fill out form](#)
2. Following form submission, the AECP Compliance Team will forward the form to the associated PI and Institutional Veterinarian requesting review and feedback.
 - a. The associated Facility Supervisor will be cc'd on the email.
3. As applicable to the request, the Institutional Veterinarian will outreach to the Requestor for more information – either in person or via electronic means.
4. The PI and Institutional Veterinarian will relay their feedback to the AECP Compliance Team re. suitability of the request.
5. *If Approved* - If both the PI and Institutional Veterinarian support the request, the AECP Compliance Team will
 - a. Request the Requestor to complete the web-based *Rehoming Attestation Form* before the rehoming takes place.
 - b. The Institutional Veterinarian and Facility Supervisor will:
 - i. Outreach to the Requestor to arrange the pick-up timeframe and associated animal care details, e.g., feed, bedding, transport cart/cage, and
 - ii. Prepare the animal(s) for transport.
 - c. The AECP Compliance Team will update the ACC Executive Working Group.
6. *If Not Approved* - If either the PI or the Institutional Veterinarian do not support the request,
 - a. The AECP Compliance Team will relay the feedback to the Requestor.
 - b. The associated Facility Supervisor and Institutional Veterinarian will be cc'd on the email.