

## 1. Purpose

Western University's MAPP 7.12 – *Animal Ethics and Care Program (AECW)* requires that the university to establish committees and working groups necessary to ensure coordinated oversight of the AECW and compliance with federal and provincial regulations. In alignment with these requirements, the Animal Ethics and Care Program Working Group (AECW-WG) provides coordinated, city-wide operational oversight for Western University's AECW. The group ensures consistent processes, alignment with regulatory requirements, and coordinated preparation for CCAC assessments across Western and its affiliated institutions.

## 2. Responsibilities and Authority

The AECW-WG functions as the operational decision-making body for the city-wide AECW. Its core responsibilities include:

- 1.1. Ensure operational alignment with regulatory requirements across the city-wide program
- 1.2. Apply operational ACC policies and directives
- 1.3. Review and approve requests for space repurposing involving live animals used in research and teaching at Western and affiliates, per the *Animal Spaces (POL-025)* policy.
- 1.4. Coordinate city-wide preparation for CCAC (Canadian Council on Animal Care) assessments.

## 3. Membership

3.1. Membership will consist of the following positions (or their delegates, where applicable):

- 3.1.1. Associate Vice-President (Research) – Co Chair
- 3.1.2. University Veterinarian – Co Chair
- 3.1.3. Affiliate hospital leadership
- 3.1.4. ACC Chair
- 3.1.5. ACC Vice Chairs
- 3.1.6. Institutional Veterinarians (Compliance Assurance and one Clinical representative)
- 3.1.7. Director of Research Ethics and Compliance
- 3.1.8. Office of the ACC
- 3.1.9. Facilities Operations Supervisors (Western and affiliate hospitals)

## 4. Terms of Office

4.1. Members serve by virtue of their role. The term of office aligns with the duration of their appointment or employment in that role.

## 5. Meetings

- 5.1. The AECW-WG may conduct its business through in-person meetings, videoconference, teleconference, or electronic communication. A Co-Chair may call a meeting to be held entirely by videoconference or teleconference, provided that all members have received the necessary materials in advance and that quorum is established.
- 5.2. Meetings will occur regularly and no less than once per month, unless otherwise determined by a Co-Chair.
- 5.3. Guests may attend meetings at the discretion of a Co-Chair. All guests must sign a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Agreement prior to participating.



- 5.4. Meetings will address agenda items that fall within the Working Group's mandate and responsibilities.
- 5.5. Members may propose agenda items by submitting requests to the Co-Chairs through electronic communication prior to the meeting.
- 5.6. Meeting minutes will be taken and made available to AECW members.
- 5.7. Members must declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting.

## **6. Decision Making**

- 6.1. The Working Group will make decisions by consensus whenever possible.
- 6.2. If consensus cannot be reached, a Co-Chair may call for a vote. A decision will be carried by a simple majority of members present, provided quorum is met.
- 6.3. If the Co-Chairs disagree on how to proceed following the vote, or if a procedural or governance dispute prevents a decision from being finalized, the matter will be escalated to the Vice-President, Research (VPR), who will serve as the final decision-making authority. The VPR's determination will be binding.

## **7. Quorum**

- 7.1. Quorum is met when at least one representative from each of the following groups is present:
  - A Co-Chair
  - The University Veterinarian or delegate
  - The ACC Chair or a Vice Chair
  - Affiliate hospital leadership or delegate
  - Director of Research Ethics and Compliance
  - A representative from the Office of the ACC
  - A Facilities Operations Supervisor

If quorum is not met, discussion may proceed but decisions must be deferred.

## **8. Reporting Structure**

- 8.1. The AECW-WG reports to the VPR. Recommendations requiring institutional approval or policy-level endorsement will be forwarded through the VPR.

## **9. Secretariat / Administrative Support**

- 9.1. Administrative support, including agenda preparation, meeting coordination, and minute-taking, will be provided by the Office of the ACC.

## **10. Amendments**

- 10.1. Amendments to these Terms of Reference require the approval of the VPR.