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Purpose/Scope

The primary purpose of this document is to outline Western University and its affiliate institutions requirements for non-affiliated ‘Visitors’ to any space used in animal-based science. These requirements fall under the Vice President, Research (VPR) portfolio and are established in alignment with with Western’s MAPP 7.12 – *Animal Ethics and Care Program (AECF)*, which mandates the structures and controls necessary to ensure compliant, safe, and coordinated oversight of all animal-based activities at Western and its affiliated institutions.

‘Visitors’ refers to individuals who are not directly affiliated by employment or other formal agreement with the institution whose animal-based science is under the authority of Western University’s Animal Care Committee (ACC).

‘Animals’ refers to live animals involved in animal-based research, teaching, and training. This definition aligns with the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) certification framework and the Ontario *Animals in Research Act*, ensuring consistent applicability across research, teaching and training activities.

‘Animal Spaces’ include purpose-built Laboratory Animal Facilities as well as extra-vivarial spaces where Animals are held and/or used for animal-based science.

Rationale

This document establishes the core requirements for managing visitor access to Animal Spaces in a manner that supports transparency with the public and with inter-institutional collaborators, while upholding high standards of Animal Care, maintaining effective Animal Space operations, and ensuring the safety of institutional personnel. Clear expectations for Visitors are a key component of Western university’s broader compliance obligations under MAPP 7.12 and relevant regulatory frameworks.



Requirements

General

For each Visitor or Visitor Group, an appropriate Area Supervisor must be notified in advance, and an affiliated individual (Area Supervisor, Principal Investigator, Institutional Veterinarian) must assume responsibility for ensuring:

- alignment with these requirements as well as institution- and area-specific policies and practices, and
- the appropriate degree of oversight of the Visitor(s) based on the intended scope of the visit.

Supervisors of the Animal Space to be visited, or the overseeing veterinarian must be notified in advance of any visit by a Visitor.

Institutional support must be provided by security personnel upon request of the Area Supervisor.

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Visitor Requests and Approvals

Each facility or area-level supervisor is responsible for establishing and maintaining a Visitor request and approval process that is determined to be appropriate for their site(s) by the AECF Team and/or department leadership and aligned with other applicable institutional policies.

- Minimum records for each visitor must include:
 - Visitor's full name
 - Name of facility affiliate to accompany the Visitor.
 - Visit Date
- Depending on the context, site-specific Visitor requests and record-keeping may require:
 - Visitor affiliation(s) and contact information
 - Purpose of the visit
 - Visit timeframe (start and end times)
 - Specific location(s) to be visited
 - Species to be visited
 - Affiliated personnel directly responsible for the visitors during their visit
 - Associated Animal Use Protocol(s), as applicable
 - Animal-related activities to be viewed and/or undertaken
 - Associated medical information, as applicable
 - Whether photos/videos may be recorded and how these will be managed after the visit
 - If the space is a CL2 or higher space, please consult with the Institutional Biological Safety Officer and area supervisor.
 - If the space contains X-ray, Laser or radiological hazards please consult with the Institutional Radiation Safety Officer
 - Site appropriate health clearance if required— e.g. proof of negative TB test.
 - Confidentiality form, as applicable

If a facility does not have its own visitor request and record-keeping process, the [“Request for Visitors to Areas Involving Animal-Based Science at Western or Affiliates”](#) form may be used to document the visit.

Associated records must be centrally maintained by the area supervisor and made readily accessible to responsible Western and its affiliate’s institutional personnel upon request.

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Visitor Responsibilities

Visitors must receive approval in advance from the appropriate institutional authority prior to entering an Animal Space. Approval must be obtained from facility leadership (or their delegate) and the area supervisor or PI, as applicable. To ensure proper tracking, a visitor management process should be in place (e.g., sign in and out, wear a visitor badge, and be escorted unless specifically exempted under documented controls for certain vendor or contractor categories).

Visitors must follow area-specific standard operating procedures as laid out by the Animal Space supervisor, including but not limited to entry, exit, animal health, safety (i.e. personal protective equipment), and containment requirements. Visitors will also be subject to screening measures (e.g., recent contact with rodents or other relevant species) as outlined in site-specific SOPs to prevent cross-contamination and ensure animal health biosecurity.

Visitors must adhere to institutional requirements with respect to any information obtained during the Visit, including but not limited to the Animal(s), the associated AUP, and/or Animal Space(s) visited, e.g., capture, storage and distribution of images and/or documents and/or information.

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Visitors Directly Involved in Live Animal Procedures

Affiliated Principal Investigators (PIs) wishing to involve non-affiliated persons in direct hands-on live animal procedures must include these individuals in the associated Animal Use Protocol (AUP) and must receive Animal Care Committee approval prior to the Visitor’s involvement in hands-on animal procedures.

Visitors must have demonstrated competency prior to performing an animal procedure.

Visitors must either complete related Institutional Animal User Training Program (IAUTP) courses (didactic and hands-on) or provide equivalent certification(s) from an accredited institution and pass an IAUTP competency assessment.

Visitors must have completed Institutional Biohazard Training from Western University or an affiliated institution prior to being approved on an AUP.

An institutional veterinarian must review and preapprove requests where the Visitor is expected to be involved in hands-on live Animal procedures.

Visitors who are part of a recognized internship program for animal health professional designations must be overseen by and accountable to an institutional veterinarian during their visit.

- The accountable institutional veterinarian will notify impacted area supervisors.



Visitors must follow the approved Animal Use Protocols (AUP) and veterinary best practices when undertaking Animal procedures.

References

Site-specific Visitors procedural documents

Public Health Agency of Canada

- [Canadian Biosafety Standard, 3rd Edition](#)
- [Canadian Biosafety Handbook, 2nd Edition](#)
- [Canadian Biosafety Guideline, Containment Level 1 Physical Design and Operational Practice](#)

Lawson Research Institute

- Lawson Research Institute Visitors Procedure
- Radiation (Isotope) Safety Program and Policies for St. Joseph’s Health Care London and the Lawson Research Institute of St. Joseph’s
- Research Biosafety Manual

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Revision History

Version	Date dd-mm- yyyy	Description of Changes	Author
026-001	13-03-2026	New document	LT, KK, EB, SD, AA