



Animal Program Policy

Title: Virtual IACUC Meetings
Date Created: 04/22/2020
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In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing requirements at the federal, state, and local levels, the NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) has released guidance on flexibilities in the Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals regarding conduct of IACUC business during this unprecedented time.

OLAW notice number [NOT-OD-06-052](#) “provides guidance to Public Health Service (PHS) awardee institutions and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUCs) concerning the use of telecommunications when a convened meeting of a quorum of the IACUC is required under the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.” The USDA concurs with the guidelines and requirements of this notice.

Forsyth IACUC meetings that must be held virtually will fulfill the following criteria outlined by OLAW notice number NOT-OD-06-052:

- All members are given notice of the meeting.
- Documents normally provided to members during a physically-convened meeting are provided to all members in advance of the meeting.
- All members have access to the documents and the technology necessary to fully participate.
- A quorum of voting members is convened when required by PHS Policy.
- The forum allows for real time verbal interaction equivalent to that occurring in a physically-convened meeting (i.e., members can actively and equally participate and there is simultaneous communication).
- If a vote is called for, the vote occurs during the meeting and is taken in a manner that ensures an accurate count of the vote. A mail ballot or individual telephone polling cannot substitute for a convened meeting.
- Opinions of absent members that are transmitted by mail, telephone, fax or e-mail may be considered by the convened IACUC members but may not be counted as votes or considered as part of the quorum.
- Written minutes of the meeting are maintained in accord with the PHS Policy, IV.E.1.b.

The Forsyth IACUC will use institutional licenses for WebEx or Zoom for virtual meetings. Meetings will require a passcode for entry. When an IACUC member would normally leave the room to be recused from discussion on a protocol or amendment, the IACUC Coordinator will use a “waiting room” function in the virtual meeting space so that the member cannot see or hear the other members during the discussion. When signatures are required, the signatures will be obtained after social distancing measures are lifted and it is safe to convene in person; the IACUC coordinator will note in the meeting minutes any relevant paperwork that will be signed at a later time.