

Animal Program Policy

Title: **Euthanasia – Policy Statement**
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The Forsyth Institute IACUC requires compliance with the 2020 AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia. All methods of euthanasia used must comply with these guidelines. Below are the recommended procedures to be used in the Forsyth Institute Animal Facility.

Rats and Mice

Rats and Mice generally should be euthanized using carbon dioxide. In compliance with PHS Policy, the Forsyth Institute Animal Facility maintains a standard operating procedure (“SOP”) for sacrificing small groups of rodents in a carbon dioxide chamber. Personnel who work with animals are trained in and must follow the rodent euthanasia SOP and consult animal care staff for guidance when needed.

There are some instances in which it is advisable to follow different procedures than those in the referenced SOP, because use of the CO₂ chamber is either impractical or not allowed. Below is a list of rare yet possible anticipated events and corresponding euthanasia procedures for rodents:

- Disaster/Emergency – if large numbers of animals need to be euthanized in case of an extreme emergency, such as flood or environmental degradation.
- Wild animals caught in humane traps.
- Mice in quarantine that require euthanasia due to illness, injury or other conditions.

In these cases, mice (or rats) will be euthanized using Euthasol (150 mg/kg) if available or an overdose of ketamine/xylazine (200/20 mg/kg).

Neonatal mice and rats should be decapitated using sharp scissors.

Other methods of euthanasia are allowed when scientifically justified, performed by appropriately trained personnel, and compliant with AVMA guidelines. These will be evaluated by the IACUC at the time of protocol submission.

Rabbits and guinea pigs

These species should be euthanized using Euthasol, 150 mg/kg, unless an alternative method is scientifically justified and approved by the Forsyth IACUC. When euthasol is to be used, it should be kept on site at all times when these species are housed in the facility.

Exceptions

In case of an emergency evacuation of the animal facility, approved exceptions to these euthanasia guidelines are detailed in the [“Evacuation of the Animal Facility” policy](#) which supersedes this policy statement in an emergency scenario.