

Office of Animal Research Support (OARS)



Announcements & Reminders

[2025-2026 IACUC Deadlines and Meeting Dates](#)

[Research Liaison Department Assignments](#)

Investigators are encouraged to submit protocols that are due for 3-year renewal early to allow time for pre-review by the research liaisons and veterinarians. Early submission helps expedite protocol review and approval. Should you have any questions, please contact [OARS](#).



Upcoming Facility Inspections

July: LSOG1, LSOG2, LSOG4, LSOG5, LSOGB, LSOGSB, MEC, SHM4, SHMIG/BG, TAC, WWW and YSB.

Please contact [Shannon Denison](#) if you need further information. Please check your spaces regularly to meet IACUC expectations. Use the [Inspection Checklist](#) for common findings.

IMPORTANT: Cabinets, drawers, or containers with drugs or materials with expiration dates must be accessible for inspection. If you cannot leave these unlocked (e.g., controlled substances), you must be ready to open them. Contact [Shannon Denison](#) to provide your contact information and the relevant areas.

Biosafety Cabinet Grille Compliance

This fall, Yale welcomed representatives from the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care ([AAALAC](#)) International as part of the re-accreditation process for the university's animal care and use program. During their visit, the inspectors observed a recurring issue that requires immediate attention: the front grilles of biosafety cabinets on campus are frequently blocked, compromising the safety and sterility these cabinets are designed to provide.

Items such as laptop computers, notebooks, animal cages, pens, markers, pipette wrappers, and paper towels were found placed on areas of the cabinet that must remain clear. Inspectors noted that researchers placed pads, such as Chux, on the front grille and conducted procedures on animals directly above it.

It is critical that the airflow grilles always remain unobstructed. To address this issue, Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) has launched an educational campaign to reinforce proper techniques for the effective use of biosafety cabinets. We encourage you to review [this information](#) to better understand how biosafety cabinets function and what practices can interfere with their proper operation.

Using biosafety cabinets correctly is not only a regulatory requirement but also essential for protecting yourself and others from exposure to biohazards and animal allergens, as well as safeguarding your research from adventitious contamination. As part of this campaign, EHS will be placing "Do Not Block the Front Air Grilles of the Biosafety Cabinet" stickers (pictured below) on all biosafety cabinets in animal facilities.



Use of Air Fresheners

Do **not** use air fresheners to mask odors in animal areas. These agents may:

- Obscure sanitation issues
- Introduce volatile compounds that could **affect research variables**

USDA Site Visit

The USDA conducted an unannounced inspection from Jan 21–23, 2025 as a follow-up to a prior critical noncompliant incident. Unfortunately, another citation was issued—this time for food storage violations, including:

- Open grapes on a cart
- Nearby floor cleaner bottle with an open cap
- Proximity to a Sharps container

This incident restarts the 18-month enhanced monitoring period. Consequences include:

- Minimum 3 USDA inspections/year
- Public inspection reports likely to draw attention from groups like PETA, HSUS, SAEN
- Added strain on OARS, YARC, VCS, and IACUC resources

Let's work together to avoid future findings and keep public attention on Yale's outstanding research—not compliance issues.

The USDA visited Yale again on April 1–3, 2025. The inspection resulted in **no findings!** Thank you to all who contributed. Great job!

Live Cephalopods and IACUC protocols

Cephalopods (e.g., octopuses, squids, cuttlefish) have been integral to scientific research for over a century. Their complex nervous systems and advanced behaviors have provided valuable insights into learning, memory, motion and movement, and neurobiology. Studies utilizing cephalopods have deepened our understanding of neural pathways and have informed research on visual processing and behavior. Although cephalopods are not currently covered by PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals or the Animal Welfare Act and Regulations, oversight of *live* cephalopod research and teaching is a condition of Yale University's AAALAC accreditation. Institutions using cephalopods are now expected to provide appropriate husbandry and veterinary care by employing research, husbandry, veterinary care, and physical plant staff with qualifications and training relevant to the species being used, as determined by the IACUC or other oversight body. Currently, only procured cephalopod tissue is used for research at Yale. However, if your research involves live cephalopods or you're submitting a grant that may include them, contact iacuc@yale.edu to confirm if a protocol is required.

****Reminder: Communicating with VCS and the Clinical Veterinarians**

There have been recent incidents where veterinary orders have not been followed, leading to animal suffering or death. This is a serious noncompliance issue that must be reported to NIH-OLAW and AAALAC.

*Clinical veterinarians have the final authority regarding euthanasia decisions and timing. We cannot be clearer on this regulatory requirement. There will be considerably less tolerance for future noncompliance regarding failing to communicate with and comply with directives from the veterinary group. Noncompliance may lead to **loss of animal work privileges and revoked access** to animal facilities.*

***Reminder: Colony Management**

- As previously communicated, please be cognizant of YARC practices concerning non-compliant breeding cages. If weanlings are still present in the cage on the indicated “wean by” date, YARC will separate them. All non-compliant cages (e.g., double litters, harems with litters) will be separated by YARC upon identification. YARC will also intervene on a fee for service basis when:
 - Mouse litter is ≥ 29 days old
 - Rat litter is ≥ 22 days old
 - Cage exceeds density limits without proper documentation
 - Double litters or harems with litters are found

To assist with colony management, a software program from [Transnetyx](#) called Colony is available to researchers who *pay rodent services to manage their colonies*. Utilizing streamlined communication and convenient task management, this software allows you to keep track of your breeding cages using the Colony website or the Colony iOS app, thus facilitating efficient colony management. Further, if you use Transnetyx for genotyping, results will be automatically applied to animal data as soon as they are available. The Transnetyx team will help you every step of the way in getting you set up and started in Colony. Contact Yale’s representative, please contact Kristin Uyl (kuyl@transnetyx.com), for assistance in getting started.

Effective management involves careful planning, recordkeeping, and adherence to best practices and regulations. This not only benefits the animals but supports the goals of research, conservation, and ethical responsibility.

****Reminder: Euthanasia Cages**

YARC has reported overcrowded euthanasia cages lacking food/water. When using euthanasia racks, ensure:

1. Water bottle or bag is at least 2/3 full
2. Adequate food:
 - 3–4 pellets per mouse
 - 6–8 pellets per rat
3. Dry bedding covers over two-thirds of the cage
4. Cage density meets policy standards

A visual aid can be found here: [Mouse Euthanasia Requirements](#)

More Info:

- [4483.2 Housing Policy](#)
- [4420 Mouse Housing](#)
- [4421 Rat Housing](#)

For questions, contact IACUC@yale.edu.

****Reminder: Reporting Animal Welfare Concerns**

Through the “[Yale University Institutional Standards of Conduct](#)” policy, Yale University ensures that no individual will be discriminated against or be subject to any reprisal for raising a concern or reporting violations to any regulation or standard.

A concern or report can be made anonymously. Whether or not made anonymously, all reviews and investigations will be dealt with confidentially to the extent possible. Anonymous reports can be made through the University Hotline at 1-877-360-YALE (1-877-360-9253) <https://app.mycompliancereport.com/report>.

Observations made by the research community are important supplements to YARC, IACUC, and OARS observations and help us all assure that we are providing the best care for our research and teaching animals. Please refer to [Reporting Animal Care and Use Concerns](#) for more information.

As always, please contact [OARS](#) with any questions, suggestions, or concerns.

Happy Spring, Everyone!

~OARS Team