Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Policy

LIVE EMBRYONATED EGGS AND LARVAL FORMS OF AMPHIBIANS AND FISH

1. Background

The purpose of this document is to describe when avian and other egg-laying vertebrate species are covered by the Public Health Service Policy (PHS) on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and require an Institutional Animal Care and Use protocol.

2. Policy

Although avian and other egg-laying vertebrate species develop backbones prior to hatching, OLAW interprets the PHS Policy as applicable to their offspring only after hatching.

Larval forms of fish and amphibians have vertebrae and are covered by the PHS Policy. Zebrafish larvae typically hatch 3 days post-fertilization after which time the PHS policy would apply.

If an investigator wants to allow embryonated eggs to hatch for research, teaching or testing purposes an IACUC protocol must be in place for animals use. An IACUC protocol is not required for research, teaching or testing that is conducted on embryonated eggs prior to hatching. However, animals that hatch unexpectedly should be euthanized utilizing an American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) approved euthanasia method for that species.

3. References and Regulations

3. OLAW FAQs https://olaw.nih.gov/guidance/faqs

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