



THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

SUBJECT: **Acclimation Guidelines**

DATE: August 21, 2024

University of Toledo Guidelines on Acclimation of Animals

1. Introduction

The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (8th edition) states, “newly received animals should be given a period for physiologic, behavioral, and nutritional acclimation before their use.” Acclimation is an important component of animal welfare, animal wellbeing, and stable research outcomes. The acclimation period will depend on multiple factors. External factors such as the type and duration of transportation must be considered as animals that have travelled farther and endured adverse weather conditions will need a longer acclimation period. The species of animal is also important. Typically, larger animals require a longer acclimation period than smaller ones such as rodents. Finally, the intended use of the animals must be considered. For example, blood pressure, stress, and behavior status may be abnormal upon arrival and this can affect research data. The goal of acclimation is to stabilize animal wellbeing and promote stable research outcomes.

2. Principles

All newly received animals require a species-specific acclimation period, which begins at the time the animal arrives at the UToledo facility. No experimental manipulations or breeding may be performed during the acclimation period. Listed below are the minimum acclimation periods for newly received animals. Investigators are strongly encouraged to allow additional time for animals to stabilize to their new environment. Exceptions to this guideline must be described and justified in the study protocol and approved by the IACUC. Failure to allow animals to acclimatize properly could adversely impact animal health and research data.

3. Acclimation Periods

Species	Minimum Acclimation*
Rodents (Rats, mice)	3 days
Aquatics used in biomedical research	3 days
USDA covered species (rabbits, voles, birds, etc.)	7 days

**Exceptions must be described and justified in the study protocol and approved by the IACUC.*