

University of Texas at Austin

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

IACUC Policy # 6.2

Title	The Complaint Assessment Subcommittee (CAS)		
Date of Approval	11-12-2018		
Date of Last Revision	05-11-2020	Version	1.0

The CAS (Complaint Assessment Subcommittee) is a subcommittee of IACUC members and/or other relevant parties that can be convened to review

- allegations of animal mistreatment,
- animal welfare concerns or complaints,
- noncompliant events that cannot be resolved between the IACUC and investigator, or
- any other applicable concern.

Upon receipt of a concern, the IACUC Chair will consult with the Vice Chair and veterinary staff to determine if a CAS should be convened. In situations that warrant convening a CAS, the IACUC Chair (or Vice Chair in his/her absence) will appoint members. IACUC members will be notified of the CAS and anyone who wishes to participate may do so. The CAS may meet in person, over the phone, teleconference, or via email discussion. After initial review of the complaint, the CAS will determine whether it requires further investigation and immediate action, further investigation but no immediate action, or no action. Once this decision has been made, the CAS should determine which individuals or other institutional or non-institutional offices may require notification at this time. The CAS has the option to convene an emergency IACUC meeting is needed.

If immediate action appears warranted because animal or human welfare may be compromised, the IO will be notified and should proceed accordingly. Veterinary medical intervention, suspension of a research activity by the IACUC, and/or notification of appropriate safety, occupational health, or other officials, are examples of actions that may be taken immediately to protect animal or human welfare.

6.2.1 Investigation

Should the IACUC determine that further investigation is required, the CAS should conduct the investigation and report back to the IACUC. It is important to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest in this process.

A completion date for information gathering may be imposed depending on the IACUC's determination of whether immediate remedial action may be required. The nature of the information required will vary depending on the circumstances, but often involves:

- Interviewing complainants (if known), any persons against whom allegations were directed, and pertinent program officials;
- Observing the animals and their environment; and

- Reviewing any pertinent records, (e.g., animal health records, protocol, and other documents).

The CAS should provide a report to the IACUC, which may summarize:

- The concern(s),
- The results of interview(s),
- The condition of animals and their environment, and
- The results of records and other document reviews.

The report may also contain:

- Any supporting documentation such as correspondence, reports, and animal records,
- Conclusions regarding the substance of the concerns vis-à-vis requirements of the AWRs, the PHS Policy, the Guide, and institutional policies and procedures, and
- Recommended actions, if appropriate.

6.2.2 Outcomes and Final Actions

Upon receipt and evaluation of the report, the IACUC may request further information or may find that:

- There was no evidence to support the concern or complaint,
- The concern or complaint was not sustained, but related aspects of the animal care and use program requires further review or other institutional programs may require review, or
- The concern or complaint was valid.

Approval Date	Major Change(s) Approved
05-11-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Included definition of a CAS and when it will be used