NIH Intramural Research Program
Animal Program Disaster Plan Overview

FINAL VERSION – 5/27/21
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Introduction

Purpose
The purpose of these Overview and Template documents is to serve as a resource of emergency management information applicable to NIH Institutes and Centers (IC) developing their animal care and use program's site-specific disaster and emergency response and recovery plans.

Objectives
The objective of the NIH Intramural Research Program (IRP) Animal Program Disaster Plan is to:
1. Ensure IC Animal Program disaster and emergency response activities minimize personnel injury, property damage, and animal loss; and maximize the continuation of mission critical activities.
2. Maximize animal care and use staff member awareness of communication procedures used by NIH emergency response personnel during emergencies.
3. Provide emergency event specific guidance to IC Animal Programs preparing their IC-specific animal program disaster plans through the provision of emergency response templates and information resources.

The intent of this Overview document is to inform members of the NIH IRP Animal Programs of the standardized communication links and procedures used by NIH Emergency and COOP personnel during emergency responses. This Overview document discusses: the communication relationships between NIH Emergency Response Personnel and IC elements during emergency events; the components and structure of the NIH Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP); the Animal Resources Team structure and function; the IC Crisis Response Teams (CRT) structure, function, and communication processes; and the NIH policies pertaining to emergency/disaster plans.

The Template document provides: proposed outlines of the specific emergency/disaster plans addressed in an IC animal program’s emergency/disaster plan, general emergency response guidance, and links to emergency response websites and references.

Regulatory Requirements
Emergency response and recovery plans are required by the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide). The NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and the Guide indicate specific considerations that must be made and incorporated into the plan. Excerpts from these documents can be found in Appendix 1.

IC Disaster Plans
Each IC is responsible for developing and implementing a plan which ensures the continuation of the IC mission critical functions during an emergency event. All NIH ICs have the same basic Crisis Response Team structure shown in Figure 1. The IC Emergency Coordinator is responsible for coordinating all emergency response and recovery activities within the IC, and is the main IC point of contact for the COOP/Disaster Recovery Coordinator when the COOP is activated. The IC Emergency Coordinator functions as a conduit between the IC Leadership Team, the IC Crisis Response Team (CRT), and the NIH Disaster Recovery Coordinator. The NIH Disaster Recovery Coordinator manages the COOP.

IC Animal Program Disaster Plans
An IC animal program disaster response plan must be established in addition to the IC plan. The IC animal program plan should be developed with the overall IC disaster plan structure in mind, and the IC EC should be provided with a copy of the animal program plan. It may be necessary to develop individual plans for each IC primary and satellite animal facility. Each IC should conduct an individual vulnerability assessment for each of its animal facilities to identify the impact of potential hazards, threats, and adverse events on facility operations before issuing an individual facility plan. The Template documents address common scenario issues in specific emergency events. The IC animal program should develop their own preparedness, response, and recovery plan for events identified in their vulnerability assessments if they are not addressed in the IRP Animal Program Disaster Plan Templates.
Responsibility Allocation
Each IC Animal Program Director should identify primary and secondary personnel to organize their animal program’s emergency response and recovery efforts. The appointed individuals should have an in-depth knowledge of the animal program and an understanding of the NIH COOP process, the overall IC emergency plan, and the IC animal program disaster plan. These individuals must have authority to make decisions for the animal program during an emergency situation. Key IC animal program individuals should be members of the SendWordNow NIH-Animal Contact list so they receive immediate notification through AlertNIH of emergency events that may impact their animal program in addition to the NIH ACU program.

Emergency Animal Care Resources
A centralized resource list is posted on the Office of Animal Care and Use SharePoint site (http://www.od.nih.gov/OACU/ACR). This list helps the ART Coordinator (ART-C) determine during an emergency event where animal program-related emergency response resources may be available. ICs are responsible for entering and maintaining the information for their program. It should be updated as needed, and reviewed annually for accuracy. Items such as the following should be included:

- Climate Control Equipment – Chillers, Heaters, Dehumidifiers
- Communication – 2-way radios, CB radio
- Extension Cords, Batteries
- Light Sources – Flashlights, Headlamps, Light Trees
- Transportation – Vehicles, Electric Mules
- Euthanasia – Equipment, CO2, Drugs
- Capture – Nets, Tranquilizer Darts/Guns
- Personal Protective Equipment – Tyvek, Masks, Gloves, Shoe Covers, Goggles
- Animal Food, Bedding, & Water Supplies
- Shelter-in-Place – Food, Cots, Blankets

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<th>Model</th>
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NIH Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Overview
Overview

The NIH COOP is designed to ensure continuity of the NIH mission essential functions, based on an all-hazards approach, which also addresses the need to maintain the health and safety of the NIH employees, patients, and the visitor community. It is an overarching strategy aimed at managing and recovering from situations or events that have a direct adverse impact on the operations of NIH.

Figure 1 below illustrates the COOP organizational structure. The NIH Continuity of Operations Program is managed by the NIH Division of Emergency Coordination and Preparedness (DEPC), and COOP operations are directed by the Disaster Recovery Coordinator (DRC). DRC is the focal communication point for the COOP components. The NIH Director is responsible for determining whether an event requires a COOP activation. The DRC can determine whether an event warrants a COOP response and initiate AlertNIH SendWordNow notifications.

The nine NIH COOP Emergency Support Teams (EST), each with a distinct role and responsibility, respond during COOP operations and coordinate NIH resources in such a manner as to ensure the continuance of NIH essential functions. The nine NIH COOP ESTs are:

- **Animal Resources Team**: comprised of key members of the NIH Office of Animal Care and Use (OACU) staff and experienced NIH animal program managers and veterinarians. The ART’s main functions are to organize and coordinate animal program resource requests/needs, coordinate communications among animal programs and share I/C animal program status reports. The ART is not a substitute for IC animal program facility personnel in responding to an emergency event. Each IC is expected to support its animals with adequate numbers of skilled and experienced animal care staff during emergency/disaster events such as snowstorms, power outages, floods, etc. or when there is the threat of an emergency to the NIH. The ART is activated any time there is a disruption of mission essential functions (e.g., power, HVAC or water disruptions). The principal and standing communication pattern is a daily 10am conference call, (866)703-2103, Participant Passcode: 336-4863, until the event has resolved.

- **Administrative Support Team**: provides administrative support, information processing, and financial support operations.

- **Clinical Center Team**: provides medical expertise and triage support, and response personal wellness services.

- **Facilities Team**: provides consultation, support and resources relating to the NIH infrastructure and facilities.

- **Information Technology Team**: provides IT equipment and infrastructure support and services.

- **Logistics Team**: provides services and materials related to transportation, food and water, requests for specialized equipment, etc.

- **Public Information Team**: coordinates all public information communicated to groups and/or individuals inside and outside the NIH.

- **Public Safety Team**: the initial responders to emergencies where there is an immediate threat to life and/or property.

- **Safety Team**: provides consultation and direct support activities relating to the safety and health.

Each IC has identified an Emergency Coordinator to administer the IC emergency plan and coordinate the IC Crisis Response Teams (CRT). This person is also the primary IC point of contact during a COOP event. The IC CRT should be provided with a copy of the IC animal program emergency response and recovery plan.
NIH Emergency Response and Recovery Decision Making Process

The following flowchart illustrates who has authority to make certain types of decisions and how the decision making process flows during an emergency event. Further information on NIH building closures and staff dismissals can be found in the following Delegations of Authority:


Communication during an Emergency Event

The following flowchart illustrates the communication flow from the time an event occurs through the recovery and resolution phases. It is important to note that the IC animal program must maintain a dialog with both the IC CRT and the ART during the response and recovery process.

When an emergency event occurs, the NIH Disaster Recovery Coordinator (DRC) will determine if the COOP Emergency Support Teams (EST), IC Emergency Coordinators (EC), and NIH Animal Contacts list need to be notified. The notification is distributed via the AlertNIH SendWordNow notification system. The message will be sent to the phone numbers and email addresses that are listed in NIH Enterprise Directory (NED). Further information on the Alert NIH system can be found in the Emergency Alert Notification Systems section.
Emergency response and recovery plans are required by the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide). The NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and the Guide indicate specific considerations that must be made and incorporated into the plan.

The following excerpts are taken from the OLAW FAQ webpage and the 2011 Guide.

**NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare FAQ page**
http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/faqs.htm#instresp_3:

Do awardee institutions need animal facility disaster plans?

The *Guide* requires that institutions develop disaster plans that take into account both the well-being of animals and consideration of personnel during unexpected events that compromise ongoing animal care. (*Guide* pages 35, 74-75) The plan should define the actions necessary to prevent animal pain, distress and deaths. Such plans should consider failure of critical systems including HVAC and alarm malfunctions, as well as failures in primary and emergency power sources, mechanisms for maintaining appropriate temperatures and ventilation, and a scheme for relocating or euthanizing animals when power cannot be restored or repairs effected promptly. Designations of responsibilities and personnel training in the disaster response, consideration of significant personnel absences, training, and institutional policies and procedures are important aspects of a disaster plan.

OLAW provides a [Disaster Planning and Response Resources](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/faqs.htm#instresp_3) webpage to assist institutions in planning and responding to natural and other disasters affecting animal facilities.

**Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 2011:**

Page 35 - Animal facilities may be subject to unexpected conditions that result in the catastrophic failure of critical systems or significant personnel absenteeism, or other unexpected events that severely compromise ongoing animal care and well-being (ILAR 2010). Facilities must therefore have a disaster plan. The plan should define the actions necessary to **prevent animal pain, distress, and deaths due to loss of systems** such as those that control ventilation, cooling, heating, or provision of potable water. If possible the plan should **describe how the facility will preserve animals** that are necessary for critical research activities or are irreplaceable. Knowledge of the geographic locale may provide guidance as to the probability of a particular type of disaster.

Disaster plans should be established in conjunction with the responsible investigator(s), **taking into consideration both the priorities for triaging animal populations and the institutional needs and resources.** Animals that cannot be relocated or protected from the consequences of the disaster must be humanely euthanized. The disaster plan should **identify essential personnel who should be trained in advance** in its implementation. Efforts should be taken to ensure personnel safety and provide access to essential personnel during or immediately after a disaster. Such plans should be approved by the institution and be part of the overall institutional disaster response plan that is coordinated by the IO or another senior-level administrator. Law enforcement and emergency personnel should be provided with a copy of the plan for comment and integration into broader, area-wide planning (Vogelweid 1998).

Page 74 – 75 **Emergency, Weekend, and holiday Care** Animals should be cared for by qualified personnel every day, including weekends and holidays, both to safeguard their well-being and to
satisfy research requirements. Emergency veterinary care must be available after work hours, on
weekends, and on holidays.
In the event of an emergency, institutional security personnel and fire or police officials should be
able to reach people responsible for the animals. Notification can be enhanced by prominently
posting emergency procedures, names, or telephone numbers in animal facilities or by placing
them in the security department or telephone center. **Emergency procedures for handling
special facilities or operations should be prominently posted and personnel trained in
emergency procedures for these areas.** A disaster plan that takes into account both
personnel and animals should be prepared as part of the overall safety plan for the animal
facility. The colony manager or veterinarian responsible for the animals should be a member of
the appropriate safety committee at the institution, an “official responder” in the institution, and a
participant in the response to a disaster (Vogelweid 1998).
APPENDIX 2
Acronyms & Definitions

**AlertNIH** - The NIH emergency alert notification system. Messages are distributed through SendWordNow, and the contact information is pulled from the NIH Enterprise Directory (NED). Employees must “opt-in” to this system.

**Animal Facility (AF)**

**Animal Program (AP)**

**Animal Program Director (APD)**

**Animal Resources Team (ART)** - The ART is staffed by members of the Office of Animal Care and Use and led by the OACU Associate Director for Education and Emergency Preparedness. The ART is one of nine ESTs within the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and COOP team and is prepared to respond to any disaster situations affecting research animals.

**Animal Resources Team Conference Call Line** - The standing conference call line for events of NIH-wide concern and/or events affecting mission critical functions of any animal program portion thereof, is (866)703-2103, Participant Passcode: 336-4863. Call begins at 10am daily and continues until resolution of the event.

**Animal Research Facility Emergency Points of Contact Roster** - This is a list of emergency points of contact for each NIH animal facility. The list is maintained on a secured SharePoint site. Each IC animal program is responsible for updating and maintaining the information maintained on the site. For more information on access or making roster changes, contact Don Bordine, OACU.

**Automated External Defibrillator (AED)**

**Blue Light Emergency Phone System** - An analog phone system for reporting emergency and non-emergency events to the NIH Emergency Communications Center. These phones are located outside and near entrances to NIH buildings. The Office of Animal Care and Use also maintains a non-powered land in the OACU office in building 31.

**Building Automation Systems (BAS)**

**Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)**

**Center for Information Technology (CIT)**

**Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan** - The NIH plan for ensuring maintenance of mission critical activities during emergency events. It is a recovery activity, not an emergency response initiative. All federal government agencies are required to have a COOP. The NIH Division of Emergency Preparedness and Coordination (DEPC) is responsible for developing and implementing the NIH plan. Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans are required at both the Institute/Center (IC) and animal program levels.

**Crisis Management Center (CMC)** - This is the predetermined location where the IC Crisis Response Team and IC Leadership Team will convene to assess the event, determine the best immediate action plan, and coordinate the execution of the plan.

**Crisis Response Team (CRT)** - Each IC CRT is comprised of the IC Emergency Coordinator (EC), IC Leadership Team, IC Support Section, and IC Functional Section. The IC CRTs become operational during emergencies that directly affect an IC. The EC is the main IC point of contact when an emergency event occurs.
**Division of Emergency Management (DEM)** - DEM is responsible for coordinating NIH resources essential to emergency planning and preparedness functions.

**Division of Occupational Health & Safety (DOHS)**

**Division of Personnel Security & Access Control (DPSAC)** - Division responsible for issuing NIH Identification Badges.

**Disaster Recovery Coordinator (DRC)** - The DRC coordinates the activities and communications of the COOP. This role resides within the DEPC.

**Disaster Response Animal Advisory Committee (DRAAC)** – The NIH DRAAC develops information, tools, and other resources to enable each animal program to have an effective emergency response and recovery plan. The DRAAC is comprised of representative personnel from each IC animal program.

**Division of Radiation Safety (DRS)**

**Emergency Coordinator (EC)** - Each IC has an Emergency Coordinator appointed as the primary IC point of contact for emergency response and recovery. The IC EC coordinates the activities of the IC Crisis Response Team (CRT). The CRT is composed of a Leadership Section, Support Section, and Functional Section.

**Emergency Communications Center (ECC)** - The ECC is the NIH dispatcher for the Emergency Responders (NIH Police, Fire, Rescue,…).

**Emergency Operations Command Center (EOCC)** - The EOCC is a centralized location for the DRC, EST, and other COOP operational personnel to meet during an emergency situation. The ECC is outfitted with NIH computer access, various communication devices, and other resources for each COOP EST.

**Emergency Preparedness Handbook** – A resource that assists NIH employees to increase their awareness and improve emergency preparedness both at work and at home.

**Emergency Responders** - Police, Fire Department, and other emergency services that respond to an emergency situation.

**Emergency Support Teams (ESTs)** - The ESTs become operational during emergencies that impact multiple ICs or areas. There are nine ESTs: Administrative Support Team, Animal Resources Team (ART), Clinical Center Team, Facilities Team, Information Technology Team, Logistics Team, Public Information Team, Public Safety Team, and Safety Team.

**Environmental Monitoring (EM)**

**Facility Access Control Network (FACNet)** - An integral component within the Building Automation Systems, including card key access, lighting, elevators, and HVAC control systems.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

**Floor Team Coordinator (FTC)** – Assists Occupant Evacuation Coordinator (OEC) with staff evacuation of a floor within a building.

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)** – For more info see: NIH FOIA Office

**Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)** – A National Communications System that can be used by national security and emergency response personnel to make priority cellular calls.
Guide for the Care & Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide)

Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning (HVAC)

IC Animal Program Disaster Plan Templates (Template) - An NIH Animal Program document that provides a proposed structure for IC animal programs to develop their individual emergency response and recovery plans.

Institute/Center (IC) - The 30 individual components that make up the National Institutes of Health. Twenty-four of the 30 ICs use animals in their intramural research programs.

Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) - The NIH digital telephone system.

Intramural Research Program (IRP)

Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) - Homeland Security alert system for potential terrorist threats.

NIH Enterprise Directory (NED) - The NIH employee directory. This system is also used for “opting-in” to the SendWordNow AlertNIH system.

NIH Intramural Research Program Animal Program Disaster Plan Overview (Overview) - An NIH Animal Program document that discusses the communication flow during an emergency event, the components and structure of the NIH Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan, the Animal Resources Team, and IC Crisis Response Teams (CRT), and also provides general information and guidance for developing a plan.

NIH Radio Station – AM 1660 - The NIH radio station is utilized to broadcast emergency and traffic-related information to the NIH community.

Occupational Medical Service (OMS)

Occupant Emergency Coordinator (OEC) - Coordinates staff evacuation from an assigned building.

Office of Animal Care & Use (OACU) - The NIH office with authority to act on behalf of the Institutional Official to ensure that NIH animal programs and facilities for animal care and use are in compliance with the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, the PHS Policy, and the Animal Welfare Act Regulations. This authority is exercised by the Director, OACU. The Director, OACU serves as the ART-Coordinator; the Deputy Director and Associate Director serve as alternate ART-Coordinators and members of the ART to assist with COOP events.

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) - NIH Office of Extramural Research regulatory office that provides guidance and interpretation of the Public Health Service Policy, and monitors compliance of PHS Assured institutions.

Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Office of Personnel Management Operating Status – Current federal government operating status (i.e., early dismissal, closure, etc.).

Office of Research Facilities (ORF)
Office of Research Services (ORS)

Officer in Charge (OIC)

Pandemic Flu Resources – Resources for planning for a pandemic influenza event.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Red Emergency Phone System – These phones are to be used in the event that the NIH telephone system is not working. The phones are located throughout the NIH campus, and phones may be requested for key NIH emergency response personnel by their IC Administrative Officers. Red Phones are on a separate analog network with a “214” exchange. To reach other NIH phone numbers, 9 must be dialed first.

SendWordNow (SWN) - is a web-based system that NIH utilizes to disseminate information to various emergency response groups such as the NIH Continuity of Operations Emergency Support Teams, (including the Animal Resources Team), and other key animal program staff. The SWN NIH Animal Contact (NIH-AC) list is used to promptly notify key IC animal program staff of emergency events. Messages are disseminated via email and phone. Individuals must be added to a SWN list and also “opt-in” through the NIH Enterprise Directory (NED) in order to receive messages on their personal devices. Submit membership changes to the NIH-AC list to Don Bordine, OACU.

SendWordNow NIH Animal Contact List (NIH-AC) - This SWN list is used to promptly notify key IC animal program staff of emergency events. Messages are disseminated via email, text, and phone. Individuals must be added to a SWN list and also “opt-in” their personal devices through the NIH Enterprise Directory (NED). Submit membership changes to the NIH-AC list to OACU.

Short Message Service (SMS)

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Tier 1 Warning Range (Temperature, Humidity, Air Changes) - An environmental parameter alarm outside of the normal range (but not yet critical) in an NIH animal holding area. ORF personnel will respond within 15 minutes, and contact the appropriate animal facility personnel within 2-hours of the event and resolution.

Tier 2 Critical Response Alarm (Temperature, Humidity, Air Changes) – An environmental parameter alarm within a critical range in an NIH animal holding area. ORF will be on-site within 15 minutes, and to notify the appropriate animal facility personnel within 15 minutes.

Wireless Priority Service (WPS) – A National Communications Systems telecommunication system that can be used by national security and emergency response personnel to make priority landline and cellular calls.
APPENDIX 3
Emergency Alert Notification Systems

NIH Emergency Alert Systems
- An NIH communications service that is used to disseminate urgent information to NIH staff via cell phones, home phones, work phones, email, or pagers.
- Updating your AlertNIH Contact Information - http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/ser/alert/Pages/NED-Update-Instructions.aspx#personal
- Managing your AlertNIH Notifications - http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/ser/alert/Pages/NED-Update-Instructions.aspx#alertNIH

SendWordNow NIH Animal Contacts List
- This contact list is used to promptly notify key IC animal program staff of emergency events. Messages are disseminated via email, text, and phone. Individuals must be added to a SWN list by OACU and also “opt-in” their personal devices through the NIH Enterprise Directory (NED). Submit membership changes to the NIH-AC list to OACU.

Local Emergency Alert Systems
Washington DC: http://hsema.dc.gov/page/alertdc

Maryland Counties & Towns:
- Charles - http://www.charlescountymd.gov/CNS
- Frederick - https://www.frederickcountymd.gov/4727/Emergency-Alerts
- Montgomery - https://member.everbridge.net/index/1332612387832009#/login
- Prince George’s County MD - https://member.everbridge.net/index/1332612387832015#/login
- Takoma Park - https://takomaparkmd.gov/services/takoma-park-alert/

Virginia Counties:
- Arlington - https://www.arlingtonva.us/alerts/
- Fairfax - https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean/
- Fauquier - https://member.everbridge.net/index/453003085611352#/login
- Loudon - https://www.loudoun.gov/alert

National Emergency Alert Systems
US Office of Personnel Management – Operating Status & Schedules

National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS)
https://www.dhs.gov/national-terrorism-advisory-system

Emergency Radio Stations:
NIH 1660 AM – broadcasts emergency and traffic-related information to the NIH community.

WTOP 103.5 FM - broadcasts emergency and traffic-related information to the public in the Washington DC metropolitan area.
APPENDIX 4
Communication with External Entities

If communication with external entities is necessary, the ART-C is the point of contact for the NIH IRP Animal Program.

Maryland Department of Agriculture
Maryland State Veterinarian
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: 410-841-5810
Fax: 410-841-5999
AnimalHealth@mda.state.md.us

Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)
http://www.mema.state.md.us/MEMA2/index.html
5401 Rue Saint Lo Drive
Reisterstown, MD 21136
1-877-MEMA-USA (1-877-636-2872)

United States Department of Agriculture
AC Eastern Region Emergency Program Manager
920 Main Campus Drive, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27606
Phone: 919-855-7097
Fax: 919-855-7125
Cell: 919-523-0332

USDA Emergency Support Function #11 Coordinator for FEMA Region III
USDA APHIS
320 Corporate Blvd.
Robbinsville, NJ 08691
Phone: 609-259-5269
Cell: 267-340-0755
Fax: 609-259-2477

United States Department of Health and Human Services
National Veterinary Response Team
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201
FEMA Phone: 800-621-3362
DisasterAssistance.gov