

Document Name	Policy on Reporting Animal Welfare Concerns
Document Number	ACC.POL.015
Origin	Research Office Committee on Animal Use and Welfare (CAUW)
Authority	Vice-President Academic and Provost
Effective Date	March 2025
Review/Retirement Date	2028
Responsibility for Revision	Research Ethics and Compliance Officer
Responsibility for Implementation	Associate Vice-President Research

1) Purpose & Responsibilities

As a certified institution of the [Canadian Council on Animal Care](#) (CCAC), Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) is required to have a policy for the reporting and escalation of animal welfare concerns.

The Policy for Reporting Animal Welfare Concerns is ultimately the responsibility of the Vice-President Academic and Provost (VPAP) at MSVU. The VPAP has designated day-to-day responsibility for the Policy to the MSVU Associate Vice-President Research (AVPR). The AVPR has authorized the Saint Mary's University's (SMU) Animal Care Committee (SMU ACC), and, in particular, the Chair of the Committee, the Animal Care Coordinator, and the Animal Care Veterinarian to manage the reporting and resolution of animal welfare incidents, to review it annually, and make recommendations on any changes to the AVPR.

2) Animal Welfare Concerns

MSVU has developed and deployed a mechanism for people to report concerns with animal welfare in an anonymous way, with an option for self-identification should the

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person reporting wish to be contacted. This is separate from the required reporting of animal welfare incidents as outlined in [ACC.POL.014](#).

3) Guidelines for Reporting Animal Welfare Concerns

The procedure for reporting animal welfare incidents are as follows:

- a) The report form is located on the Animal Ethics website and publicly available at [Research Ethics - Animals \(msvu.ca\)](#). The form is under the “Report an Animal Care Concern.”
 - See **Appendix A** for a copy of the form.
- b) No identifying information is collected. The notice at the beginning provides a method for a concerned person to contact ethics@msvu.ca if they wish to provide information directly to personnel not directly involved in the research. The concerned person can provide contact details if they wish to be informed of the outcome of the investigation but are not obligated to do so.
- c) The Animal Welfare Concern Form is sent electronically to ethics@msvu.ca.
- d) Upon receipt and review, the MSVU Research Ethics Coordinator will contact the Joint MSVU/SMU ACC Coordinator to discuss the concern.
- e) The Joint MSVU/SMU ACC Veterinarian will assess the urgency and impact of the concern and initiate actions as appropriate (i.e., medical care, procedures, etc.).
- f) The Joint MSVU/SMU ACC Coordinator Veterinarian will determine whether the reported concern is a responsible allegation and if yes, contact the Joint MSVU/SMU ACC Chair and Consulting Veterinarian.
 - If the reported concern is determined to not be responsible, no further action will be taken beyond notifying the PI of the report and the resulting determination.
- g) The Joint MSVU/SMU ACC Chair, Coordinator and Veterinarian will determine whether the information requires further investigation to determine the cause of the incident if appropriate and ensure compliance with Joint MSVU/SMU ACC and CCAC guidelines. If required, the Policy on Reporting Animal Welfare Incidents shall be invoked - See [ACC.POL.014](#).

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4) References

The following documents have been used to inform this policy.

- CCAC Certification of Animal Ethics and Care Programs FAQ: [CCAC frequently asked questions: Certification of animal ethics and care programs](#) (Retrieved March 2025)

5) Document Modification History

Policy Number	Key Changes	Effective Date
ACC.POL.015	Administrative Review; Formatting for accessibility; updated hyperlinks	March 2025
ACC.POL.015	Original Version	August 2023

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Research Concerns - Anonymous Reporting

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* Required

Submission Information

If you wish to report a concern or issue with regards to the welfare of animals involved in research at Mount Saint Vincent University, and wish to notify someone not directly involved in the research study, you may complete this report form and submit it anonymously. **Please ensure that you are not submitting confidential or sensitive information.

Alternatively, you are invited to contact the MSVU Research Ethics Coordinator at 457-6350 or via e-mail at ethics@msvu.ca to discuss your concerns. Your identity will be kept confidential.

Please provide as much information as possible when submitting your report. The REB Coordinator will review the report and ensure that the Animal Care Committee (ACC) Chair and/or the ACC Veterinarian are notified as soon as possible.

1. Research Study Lead - Full Name (optional) 

Enter your answer


2. Animal Use Protocol Number (optional) 

Enter your answer

3. Date animal welfare concern was Identified * 



Please input date (M/d/yyyy)



4. Species / Animal(s) involved or affected by incident * 

Enter your answer

5. Sex of A

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- Female
- Male
- Both
- Unknown

6. Age of Animal(s) (optional) 


Enter your answer

7. Number of animals/cages/tanks involved * 


Enter your answer

8. Building Room Number where the incident occurred * 

Enter your answer

9. Please describe the incident that led to your concern for the welfare of animals in research at MSVU, providing as much detail as possible. Please indicate the cause of the incident if known. * 

Enter your answer

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