

COMPARATIVE MEDICINE
LABORATORY ANIMAL FACILITIES

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
for
QUARANTINE AND HUSBANDRY OF FERRETS

- 1.0 Purpose:
This procedure outlines all aspects of quarantine and husbandry of ferrets housed at CMLAF.
- 2.0 Scope:
This procedure applies to all vendors, CMLAF and investigator staff working with ferrets.
- 3.0 Procedure:
- 3.1 Quarantine:
- A. Ferrets are purchased from approved, licensed dealers such as Marshall Farms.
 - 1. Ferrets are vaccinated against rabies and distemper.
 - B. All new ferrets are examined upon arrival by a veterinary technician. Minor problems are treated.
 - C. All sick animals will be rejected on arrival. Animals found to be suffering will be evaluated by a veterinarian and will be treated immediately or euthanized.
 - D. All animals are observed daily. Any abnormalities observed are reported to the veterinary staff. Any ferret with a symptom of infectious disease is usually replaced by the vendor. Ferrets are given ID numbers and veterinary care records and are quarantined for a seven day period. Any animal showing any symptom of disease within the quarantine period is reported to the veterinary staff.
 - E. No animal will be used in an experiment until the seven day quarantine period is completed. The only exception to this is that an animal which is used in an acute study may be used after 3 days.
 - F. Acquisition of animals from non-approved sources or other institutions must be authorized by the veterinarian prior to the ordering of the animals.
- 3.2 Husbandry
- A. All ferrets are housed in stainless wire caging. Each cage has a nesting box in the cage for the ferret to sleep.
 - B. Ferrets are placed on standard ferret diet manufactured by Harlan at 34% protein and put on automatic watering.
 - C. Ferrets' pans are scraped daily to remove the feces and metal pans are cleaned three times a week.
 - D. The entire ferret rack is sanitized once every two weeks or sooner when necessary.

- E. Ferrets are let out daily for exercise and enrichment. Plastic tubes, balls and other objects are on the floor for them to crawl into and play with. All enrichment toys are sanitized weekly.
- F. Ferrets are let out of their cages in groups of two to play because they are very active social animals.
 - 1. Group play is closely observed by the animal care staff for any signs of discord.
- G. Floors are swept and mopped three times a week and the entire room is sanitized monthly.
- H. Any ferrets housed for over a one year period are updated on vaccinations.