COMPARATIVE MEDICINE
LABORATORY ANIMAL FACILITIES

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
for
PROPER USE OF NIOSH APPROVED N95 DUST-MIST RESPIRATOR

1.0 Purpose:

This procedure outlines the proper use of the NIOSH N95 dust-mist respirator to reduce exposure to potential allergens. The major source of rat allergen exposure is via inhalation of aerosolized urine and saliva. The major source of mouse allergen exposure is via inhalation of aerosolized urine. Cage emptying produces the highest mean airborne concentrations of rat and mouse allergens, and represents the highest risk activity for allergies of all procedures conducted in animal laboratories. Exposure to these allergens can trigger allergic symptoms in some people. Proper use of a NIOSH N95 dust-mist respirator during cage emptying, will reduce exposure to these allergens, and should be used as part of an overall program to reduce exposure to aerosalizations, especially in symptomatic workers.

2.0 Scope:

This procedure applies to all CMLAF and research staff involved in rodent cage manipulations (cage emptying) and those with allergy symptoms.

3.0 Procedure:

3.1 Prior to using NIOSH N95 dust-mist respirator, all employees must have respiratory fit-testing performed through the CMLAF's Occupational Health Monitoring Program.

3.2 A new NIOSH N95 dust-mist respirator should be worn whenever cage emptying is performed.

3.3 Once the mask has been removed, the interior of the mask will become contaminated with airborne allergen particles and is no longer useful for protection. Thus, used masks should be promptly discarded and not saved or reused.