



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**NEBRASKA-WESTERN IOWA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

Omaha  
4101 Woolworth Avenue  
Omaha NE 68105-1873

Lincoln  
600 S 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln NE 68510-2493

Grand Island  
2201 N Broadwell Avenue  
Grand Island NE 68803-2196

Mail Code: 636/001

**FOIA Request: 20-02832-F**

02/04/2020

Russ Kick  
New England Anti-Vivisection Society  
333 Washington St. Suite 850  
Boston, MA, 02108

Dear Russ Kick:

This letter is the initial agency decision to your 12/23/2019, request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, submitted to the VHA 636 - VA Nebraska Western Iowa HCS FOIA Office for copies of the following records:

This request concerns the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) at your VA facility. (If there is more than one IACUC, this request applies to all of them.)

1a) According to The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (The Guide), 8th edition, all entities must have a system in place for anyone (insiders or members of the public) to report concerns regarding animal welfare at a facility. These reports are either made directly to the IACUC Chair or a designated representative, or they eventually are routed to the IACUC Chair/representative. We request all such reported concerns received by the Chair since January 1, 2019.

(This would encompass all appendices, annexes, attachments, and accompanying documents, including photos and videos in their original formats and resolution.)

1b) Further, for all such reported concerns deemed supported, we request the notification sent to the Institutional Official. The time frame is January 1, 2019, to present.

(This would encompass all appendices, annexes, attachments, and accompanying documents, including photos and videos in their original formats and resolution.)

2a) Per The Guide, all entities must have a system in place for investigators to notify the IACUC and/or attending veterinarian of adverse events, unexpected or unanticipated outcomes, violations of protocols, and other incidents involving animal welfare that occur during their studies/experiments.

We request all such notifications received by the IACUC or AV since January 1, 2019.

(This would encompass all appendices, annexes, attachments, and accompanying documents, including photos and videos in their original formats and resolution.)

2b) Further, we request all notifications sent to the Institutional Official regarding these reported incidents. The time frame is January 1, 2019, to present.

(This would encompass all appendices, annexes, attachments, and accompanying documents, including photos and videos in their original formats and resolution.).

The Research Department conducted a search for documents responsive to your request. The search was conducted by utilizing the search criteria of use of key words, the cut-off date of the search or date range. At the conclusion of the search, [1] one document, totaling [2] two pages, were determined to be responsive to your request.

My review of the documents revealed that they contained information that falls within the disclosure protections of FOIA Exemption 6, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6). FOIA Exemption 6 permits VA to withhold a document or information contained within a document if disclosure of the information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of a living individual's personal privacy. Stated another way, VA may withhold information under FOIA Exemption 6 where disclosure of the information, either by itself or in conjunction with other information available to either the public or the FOIA requester, would result in an unwarranted invasion of an individual's personal privacy without contributing significantly to the public's understanding of the activities of the federal government.

Specifically, the information I am withholding, as indicated on the enclosed documents, under FOIA Exemption 6 consists of personal information. The foreseeable harm in the release of the personal information on individuals involved in animal research is the inability to adequately protect these individuals when there is known attacks against those involved in animal research as documented in the news media. The individuals associated with this information have a personal privacy interest in it.

The coverage of FOIA Exemption 6 is absolute unless the FOIA requester can demonstrate a countervailing public interest in the requested information by demonstrating that the individual is in a position to provide the requested information to members of the general public and that the information requested

contributes significantly to the public's understanding of the activities of the Federal government.

Additionally, the requester must demonstrate how the public's need to understand the information significantly outweighs the privacy interest of the person to whom the information pertains. Upon consideration of the materials provided, I have not been able to identify a countervailing public interest of sufficient magnitude to outweigh the privacy interest in this case. The individuals associated with this information have a personal privacy interest in information that outweighs any public interest served by disclosure of their identities under FOIA. Consequently, I am denying your request for this information under FOIA Exemption 6, 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b)(6).

If you disagree with my determination to withhold the information under FOIA Exemption 6 please be advised, you may appeal to:

Office of the General Counsel (024)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20420  
Email: [ogcfoiaappeals@va.gov](mailto:ogcfoiaappeals@va.gov)

If you should choose to file an appeal, your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted no later than ninety (90) calendar days from the date of this letter. Please include a copy of this letter with your written appeal and clearly state why you disagree with the determinations set forth in this response.

You may also seek assistance and/or dispute resolution services for any other aspect of your FOIA request, excluding the release determination, from VHA's FOIA Public Liaison and/or Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) as provided below:

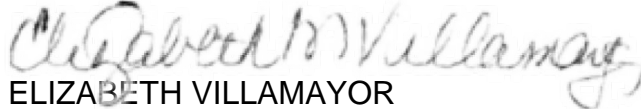
VHA FOIA Public Liaison:  
Email Address: [vhafoia2@va.gov](mailto:vhafoia2@va.gov)  
Phone Number: (877) 461-5038

Office of Government Information Services (OGIS)  
Email: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov)  
Fax: (202) 741-5769  
Mailing address:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Thank you for your interest in VA. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (402) 995-4976 or via email at [NebraskaWesternIowaVHAFOIA@va.gov](mailto:NebraskaWesternIowaVHAFOIA@va.gov)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Villamayor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Elizabeth" and last name "Villamayor" clearly distinguishable.

ELIZABETH VILLAMAYOR  
VHA 636 - VA Nebraska Western Iowa HCS  
Alternate FOIA Officer

Saturday, April 6, 2019 at 6:13:50 PM Central Daylight Time

**Subject:** Re: CMP results**Date:** Saturday, April 6, 2019 at 6:12:39 PM Central Daylight Time**From:** (b)(6)**To:** (b)(6)**CC:** (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Unfortunately this pig expired Friday evening. Not sure what was going on. I'll be in early Monday AM to perform a necropsy. The carcass is in the cooler in the ARF.

I'll give you a call Monday afternoon to discuss. I'll be in the clinical OR until then.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

On 4/5/19, 2:53 PM, (b)(6) wrote:

(b)(6)

Thanks for having the blood work done! My interpretation of the results are that there is nothing too significant: white count is ok, BUN is a little high as is the PCV (probably due to slight dehydration from decreased water intake?). Na and CL are a little low. There are only old, and rather poor reference ranges for amylase and lipase in pigs - but the values listed don't strike me as too abnormal (hard to interpret) - if they are elevated, they're not too highly elevated I think. And it would be too surprising if they were.

Clinically the pig is ok. Not eating great, but eating some. The pig doesn't seem painful, but we have been administering carprofen (NSAID) because we thought there was a little belly pain a few days ago. We'll continue to just monitor him/ her for now. Let me know if you have any questions.

There may be some value in getting some pre-surgery (baseline) Amylase/ Lipase run on some of these pigs - to compare and establish a "normal" for these pigs (and to allow later comparisons if pigs develop signs of possible pancreatic problems...)

Anyway - thanks again for having the blood work done!

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6)

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Sent: Friday, April 5, 2019 1:56 PM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: CMP results