



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

FOR US POSTAL SERVICE DELIVERY:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500, MSC 6910  
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-6910  
Home Page: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>

FOR EXPRESS MAIL:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500  
Bethesda, Maryland 20817  
Telephone: (301) 496-7163  
Facsimile: (301) 402-7065

January 29, 2019

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
A3007-01 [OLAW Case 1Y]

G. Michael Purdy,, Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President for Research  
Columbia University Medical Center  
535 West 116<sup>th</sup> St. – 313 Low Library MC 4310  
New York, NY 10027

Dear Dr. Purdy,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your January 28, 2019 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at Columbia University, following up on an initial telephone report on July 25, 2018. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that up to 25 cages of mice were housed in an unapproved location, had low levels of food/water, some were overcrowded, and some cages contained mold.

The corrective action consisted of having the investigator ensure that all research staff is adequately trained and retrained and assigning the laboratory manager to monitor staff so that no one houses animals in an unapproved location. The person responsible for the unapproved housing has left the institution.

Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that measures have been implemented to correct and prevent recurrence of the problem. OLAW concurs with the actions taken by the institution to comply with the PHS Policy.

Sincerely,

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Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.  
Deputy Director  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC Chair  
Mary Jo Shepherd, D.V.M., IACUC Office Director

# COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

January 28, 2019

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.  
Deputy Director  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Suite 360, MSC 7982  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7982

Re: Columbia University  
Animal Welfare Assurance # D16-00003 (A3007-01)

Dear Dr. Wolff,

On July 25, 2018, Columbia University (the "University") notified the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare ("OLAW") by telephone of an allegation concerning the housing of mice longer than 24 hours in a location outside the central animal facility that was not approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee ("IACUC" or the "Committee"). The research under the associated protocol (AAAQ6425) was supported by the Public Health Service under NIH grants # 5P01AG032959-09 and 5R01DK104727-04.

This letter reports the results of a review of the incident and the corrective actions taken by the IACUC.

## **Background and Investigation**

On July 13, 2018, Dr. Mary Jo Shepherd, Executive Director of the IACUC, received an anonymous written animal welfare concern alleging that 30-40 cages of mice had been housed in an IACUC unapproved location for a number of days without proper care (e.g. insufficient food and water, overcrowding, and mold in some of the cages). The anonymous complainant further claimed that, by the time the mice were discovered by another member of the laboratory, some had died. The incident took place in September 2017.

Dr. Shepherd notified the IACUC Chair and the Attending Veterinarian when she learned of the allegation and Dr. Shepherd and another IACUC member investigated further. The investigative team subsequently met with the principal investigator and with three members of his laboratory. The investigative team determined that animals had been housed in a location not approved by the IACUC for more than 24 hours. They also found that the allegations concerning inadequate care appeared to have been exaggerated and estimated that 20-25 cages of mice, rather than

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**Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]**

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**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Monday, January 28, 2019 2:01 PM  
**To:** Shepherd, Mary J.; OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Subject:** RE: Compliance Report from Columbia University

Thank you for this report Dr. Shepherd. We will send an official response soon.

Best regards, Brent Morse

Brent C. Morse, DVM, DACLAM  
Director  
Division of Compliance Oversight  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health

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**From:** Shepherd, Mary J. [mailto:ms4387@cumc.columbia.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 28, 2019 12:37 PM  
**To:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>  
**Subject:** Compliance Report from Columbia University

See attached. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you. MJ

Mary Jo (MJ) Shepherd, DVM, CPIA  
Executive Director of the Office of the IACUC  
Columbia University

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## Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

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**From:** Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 22, 2019 8:35 AM  
**To:** 'Shepherd, Mary J.'  
**Subject:** RE: Missing response

Thanks for your instant response. I'll put it in the file.

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**From:** Shepherd, Mary J. <ms4387@cumc.columbia.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 22, 2019 8:33 AM  
**To:** Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E] <wolffa@od.nih.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Missing response

You've got it! It is with General Counsel. MJ

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 22, 2019, at 8:31 AM, Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E] <wolffa@od.nih.gov> wrote:

Hi MJ,

We are reviewing our late case files and I found a preliminary you had made on July 25, 2018. This involved mice in an unapproved location, several dead mice, and moldy food. At the time of the report you indicated the person left the institution.

Please send me an interim or final report by the end of the week.

Thanks.

Axel

A3007-1X



## Initial Report of Noncompliance

By: ad

Date: 7/25/18

Time: 1:40

Name of Person reporting: MS Shepherd

Telephone #: (b) (6)

Fax #:

Email:

Name of Institution: Columbia U

Assurance number: A3007

Did incident involve PHS funded activity? yes

Funding component: \_\_\_\_\_

Was funding component contacted (if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

Mice in unapproved location, several dead, mold on food

Species involved: Mice

Personnel involved:

Dates and times:

Animal deaths: yes

Projected plan and schedule for correction/prevention (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Euthanize mice, person leaving institution

Projected submission to OLAW of final report from Institutional Official:

OFFICE USE ONLY

Case # \_\_\_\_\_