 <b>NORTHEAST OHIO MEDICAL UNIVERSITY</b>	<b>Policy No:</b> 3349-R-679
<b>RESEARCH POLICY TITLE:</b> Image and Sound Capturing in NEOMED Animal Facilities and Laboratories	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> October 24, 2025
<b>RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS:</b> Comparative Medicine Unit (CMU)	<b>Approval Authority:</b> VP of Research

**(A) PURPOSE**


The purpose of this policy is to establish parameters for the creation or release of images (from any media) or sound recordings related to the use of animals at NEOMED. These parameters are designed to prevent images or recordings from being used inappropriately, interpreted out of context, or endangering the animal care and use program, the safety of personnel working with animals, or the reputation of the University. NEOMED operates and maintains a high-quality animal care and use program and, by doing so, assures the public, NEOMED researchers, and NEOMED employees of its commitment to the protection of the well-being of personnel using the animal facility and the animals it houses.

**(B) SCOPE**

This policy applies to all University personnel and any person with a faculty appointment who has been approved to conduct research or training activities in the Comparative Medicine Unit. This policy governs the activities of information disclosure and animal image capture in any NEOMED animal facility or laboratory (whether owned or leased), the issuance of permits for such activities, and the ownership/use of NEOMED images.

**(C) DEFINITIONS**


- (1) “Animal Image” refers to a macroscopic image or sound recording of any live or dead vertebrate animal, which is or has been used, or is intended for use for research, teaching, testing, experimentation, or any other purpose within NEOMED programs and facilities. This definition excludes microscopic images.
- (2) “Comparative Medicine Unit (CMU)” refers to the unit within the Office of Research that manages the central animal housing facilities.
- (3) “Investigator Laboratory” refers to any and all areas outside of the CMU animal facilities where procedures are performed on animals.
- (4) “Image Capture” refers to the capture of still or motion images, or sound recordings onto any medium, or the transmission of any images or sound

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recordings to another medium or via the internet by any means. This includes devices now available for use or that may be invented in the future, including (but not limited to) film cameras, videotape, digital disk, digital cameras, and electronic devices such as personal computers, mobile phones, or any other personal digital device.

**(D) POLICY**

- (1) Capturing animal images within the animal housing facilities or laboratory may be permitted on the NEOMED Campus and/or its owned or leased properties in accordance with this Policy. Image or sound recording capturing within any NEOMED animal housing facility or laboratory (whether owned or leased) requires the prior approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), CMU Director (or designee), and Principal Investigator (PI). Any/all requests for captured animal images by any outside entity (e.g., news media) or animal images captured for any reason other than those outlined below require additional prior approval by the Vice President for Research (VPR) or his/her designee.
- (2) Animal Images may be captured for the following purposes, as required for scientific reasons (e.g., data collection, publication);
  - (a) to record instructional activities covered by an IACUC protocol;
  - (b) as requested by the research veterinarian to assist in clinical management of an animal health issue; and
  - (c) as required to document and report a compliance or animal welfare issue or program inspection.
- (3) Permission to capture Animal Images is granted only if:
  - (a) the activity does not interfere with the educational, research or other program functions or events of the University;
  - (b) it does not pose a security or safety risk to those individuals involved in the image/sound recording capture process or to any other persons;

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- (c) it does not cause harm or damage to any NEOMED property or asset; and
  - (d) the use or re-use of the resulting image is consistent with the interests of NEOMED and other applicable policies.
- (4) The Principal Investigator is ultimately responsible for the security and use of all Animal Images obtained from research animals and/or animal use areas and ensuring all research personnel have read and understand the requirements stated in this policy. Violation of this policy will be brought to the attention of the IACUC, which will investigate and recommend corrective action if appropriate. Any utilization of data outside these parameters could result in a report to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and suspension of the IACUC protocol.
- (5) Obtaining Permission to Capture Animal Images
- (a) The Principal Investigators must obtain permission to capture animal images within the animal housing facilities or laboratories. Animal Image capture should either be listed as a separate procedure or be written in the appropriate section of the IACUC protocol, and should include:
    - (i) purpose of image capture and/or what will be captured;
    - (ii) type of image capture (video, livestream, image, sound);
    - (iii) devices that will be used for image capture and security features of these devices, (4) storage of images; and
    - (iv) for animal monitoring videos, the duration of the video recording and the duration that videos will be stored before deletion.
  - (b) Animal Images captured for the purposes of clinical management of an animal health issue, to document a compliance issue, record an animal welfare issue, or as part of a program inspection can be given other approval by the CMU Director, a CMU veterinarian, the IACUC Chair, the Vice President of Research, or their designees as appropriate for the situation. Emergency/last-minute image capture approvals may also be granted by the

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CMU Director, a CMU veterinarian, the IACUC chair, the Vice President of Research, or their designees, but then must be added to the IACUC protocol as soon as reasonably possible. If additional Vice President of Research approval is needed, a written request should be submitted to the Vice President of Research prior to seeking the standard approval. Documentation of these approvals will be kept by (1) the VPR office, (2) the IACUC, and (3) the CMU.

(6) Animal Image Capturing Criteria

- (a) Captured animal images and/or sound recordings taken for legitimate purposes for publication in manuscripts, presentations at conferences, or in any public forum should be appropriate to the intended audience and should meet the following criteria:
  - (i) appropriate handling and restraint methods are used for the species;
  - (ii) appropriate techniques are used when performing procedures (e.g., surgical scrubbing, aseptic technique);
  - (iii) procedures shown are described in an IACUC-approved protocol;
  - (iv) animals are in clean surroundings with clean accessories (with full water bottles and feeders); and
  - (v) appropriate personal protective equipment is worn by all people in the photograph/sound recordings.
- (b) When appropriate, focus the image on the specific site on the animal's body being highlighted rather than images of the whole animal. For example, anesthetized animals should be draped so that only the surgical approach or relevant anatomy is visible.
- (c) Recordings should not have any personal identifying information visible in the photograph/sound recording, including cage cards, investigator/staff names, etc., and background and surrounding areas that are clutter-free. The


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recording should convey the University’s commitment to responsible and humane use of laboratory animals. University personnel should be mindful of the potential for photographs and recordings of animals to be the subject of public record requests. Such photographs or recordings may be accessible to members of the public under the Ohio Public Records Law.

- (d) Animal Image capture requested by a NEOMED research veterinarian to assist in clinical management of an animal health issue (i.e., telemedicine) may necessitate the use of livestreaming, utilizing personal devices connected to the internet, or sending images via text or email during emergency situations. In these situations, exceptions may be made to facilitate rapid animal care and promote animal welfare. When possible, facility devices with the appropriate security measures in place will be used for telemedicine animal image capture. All animal images should be deleted from personal devices (if used) following communications with the veterinarian.


(7) Security and Storage of Images

- (a) Images or sound recordings captured for the purposes of animal research should be collected and stored securely. Images that do not need to be saved for later use (e.g., data analysis, images for publication, use in training, data validation, or subsequent reanalysis) should be considered to be transient records and deleted after they are no longer needed.
  - (i) Images should not be captured on a mobile/portable device that automatically backs up data to a drive. Animal images should not be streamed/saved to personal hand-held devices.
  - (ii) Any computer or device used to capture or store images needs to have appropriate encryption, multifactor authentication, or other security as deemed necessary by NEOMED IT.
  - (iii) When possible, image capturing should be completed utilizing cameras hardwired to a computer or utilizing devices with internal or removable storage devices (e.g., memory cards, flash drives, etc.). If remote

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viewing of images is needed, remote access to the computer should be done by virtual private network (VPN) verses livestreaming using an internet platform.

- (iv) Data can be copied onto external drives but not stored on a computer without appropriate security in place.
  - (v) For animal monitoring image capture, recordings should be kept no longer than 24-72 hours before they are erased or written over, unless there is scientific justification for keeping them for longer.
  - (vi) Images may be permanently stored on the PI's computer, laboratory computer, or external hard drive.
  - (vii) At no time should images be sent over the internet, stored in an external drive that can be accessed over the internet, texted, or shared on social media.
  - (viii) Any removable storage devices (tapes, flash drives, etc.) that contain animal images must be encrypted and kept in a secure, locked area with limited access and multifactor authentication. Unauthorized storage of images on mobile/portable devices for the purpose of removing them from the NEOMED campus is prohibited except for official NEOMED business (e.g., conferences, scientific presentations).
- (8) Permission Needed to Release or Publicly Share Animal Images
- (a) Release of any information, images, or sound recordings related to animal care and use program without prior appropriate written approval and authorization is prohibited.
  - (b) The IACUC Chair, Vice President of Research, and/or the Attending Veterinarian reserve the right to review any animal image captured. Images captured should be submitted to the IACUC for approval prior to publication in manuscripts, presentations at conferences, or release in any public forum. It should be requested that animal images captured by federal or state

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inspectors will be brought to the exit briefing for review by the CMU Director, a CMU veterinarian, the IACUC Chair, the Vice President of Research, or their designees.