

The University of Kansas (KU)
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)

Standard Operating Procedure
Rodent Enrichment

1.0 Scope and Application

As promulgated in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, the aim of environmental enrichment is to enhance animal well-being by providing animals with sensory and motor stimulation through structures and resources that facilitate the expression of species-typical behaviors and promote psychological well-being through physical exercise, manipulative activities, and cognitive challenges. In accordance with the *Guide*, enrichment programs should be reviewed by the IACUC, researchers, and veterinarian on a regular basis to ensure animal well-being and consistency with animal use goals. To ensure conformance with Guide standards, the following program is established.

2.0 Summary of Method

- Social grouping for compatible animals is provided unless scientific justification for isolation is requested by the principal investigator and approved by the KU IACUC. Male mice from differing litters are known to exhibit conspecific aggression and may be housed singly for animal welfare purposes
- Environmental Enrichment Bedding (7087 Soft Cob Bedding, Harlan Laboratories, Indianapolis, IN) is used as contact bedding for all rodents unless specific exemption is requested by the principal investigator. Additional nesting material may be provided.
- Rodents are provided hiding structures, manipulable resources, and/or foodstuffs on a rotational basis unless specific exemption is requested by the principal investigator and approved by the IACUC.
- Enrichment is rotated at time of cage change to ensure novelty.
- Sanitizable resources are sanitized at least once every 2 weeks. Disposable resources are replaced at time of cage change or as required.
- Changes to the aforementioned strategies must be approved by the University Attending Veterinarian and the principal investigator prior to implementation.

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