

Small Animal Standards of Care – A Summary

The PIJAC Small Animal Standards of Care provides standards of care for small mammals, reptiles, and birds. In a process that began in March 2016 at the Global Pet Expo, stakeholders from across the pet community came together to ensure that all breeders and distributors of birds and reptiles – which are not regulated under the Animal Welfare Act – as well as small mammals would be able to rely on a single set of high-level standards to provide for the care and security of both animals and employees.

For just over a year, PIJAC’s Small Animal Care Committee worked diligently to create a document that best represents the industry’s commitment to animal welfare, responsible pet ownership, and the availability of healthy pets for pet owners. The committee consisted of individuals representing the breeding, distribution, and retail sectors of the industry, including veterinarians.

The standards combine current Animal Welfare Act regulations and industry best practices to provide guidelines for three groups of animals: small mammals, birds, and reptiles. The standards address facilities, best care practices, and the transport of each animal group. They also include a section on proper record keeping and staffing procedures.

In addition to these standards, PIJAC will present a sample “Duty to Report” policy for breeders and distributors to protect their animals, and a toll-free hotline for employees to anonymously report any animal care issues that they observe.

General standards for all three animal groups address the five shared priority areas below.

Facilities, which addresses:

- Animal Housing
- Exterior and Interior Facility recommendations including building, water, air, and lighting
- Building biosecurity and physical security
- Cleaning and Sanitation
- Proper storage protocol for food, medicine, and bedding

Care, which addresses:

- Nutrition
- Compatibility of Animals
- Climate within enclosures
- Health, including veterinary care
- End of Life Protocol
- Escape Protocol

Transport, which addresses:

- Receiving Protocol
- Enclosure during transport
- Packing and Shipping
- Monitoring during transport
- Emergency Protocol during transport

Staffing, which addresses:

- Personal biosecurity measures
- Staff retention plans
- Duty of Care to employees
- Training requirements and protocols

Record Keeping, which addresses:

- Facilities Record Keeping
- Animal Care Record Keeping
- General Record Keeping, including daily task checklists, intake records, emergency plans, and staffing records

In addition to the shared priority standards, specific standards of care for the three animal groups also include the following:

Standards of Care for Small Mammals are based on U.S. Department of Agriculture Guidelines, and address:

- Proper enclosure size and temperature guidelines
- Nutrition guidelines of proper food and supplements based on species' needs
- Proper storage and monitoring during transport

Standards of Care for Reptiles address:

- Proper enrichment objects based on species' needs
- Enclosure temperature variation and monitoring systems
- Proper food and water source availability during transport

Standards of Care for Birds address:

- Appropriate perch size based on size of the bird
- Appropriate wall coverings in the facility to ensure proper biosecurity
- Psittacosis testing standards that follow the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV), Compendium of Measures to Control *Chlamydia psittaci* Infection Among Humans (Psittacosis) and Pet Birds (Avian Chlamydiosis), 2017

What are the Small Animal Standards of Care?

The Small Animal Standards of Care are the first-ever, comprehensive set of voluntary standards for breeders and distributors of small mammals, reptiles, and birds developed by the Pet Joint Advisory Council's Small Animal Care Committee.

Why were these standards created?

Pet industry leaders, animal care experts, veterinarians, and others have worked together for more than a year to evaluate Animal Welfare Act regulations, existing animal care policies, and companion animal care best practices. The standards were created to address a gap in animal welfare – a lack of regulations surrounding birds and reptiles – and to align best practices for the care of small mammals at breeders and distributors.

What do the standards entail?

The standards are a compilation of federal Animal Welfare Act regulations, veterinary review, and existing industry best practices, with a firm grounding in science and data. Standards are divided into sections on facilities, care practices, and transport to address all stages of animal care by breeders and distributors. Guidelines for record-keeping and staffing procedures also are included. The standards also codify best practices for the care of reptiles and birds, which are not regulated under the federal Animal Welfare Act.

Who supports these standards?

PIJAC staff and the PIJAC Board of Trustees have worked closely with pet industry leaders for more than one year to create the standards.

How do these standards address the issues surrounding employees of breeders and distributors?

As an added measure of assurance within the program, two complementary programs focused on animal care by the employees of breeders and distributors accompany the introduction of the standards: A Duty of Care policy and a toll-free hotline. More information on both can be found at PIJAC.org.

How will breeders and distributors be evaluated to ensure that they are following the standards?

At this time, the program is voluntary. Program leaders anticipate that over time, the now-voluntary standards may be expanded as part of a continuous improvement process, and verification of compliance with the standards may be affirmed through third-party, independent audits.

Are there other programs available to ensure breeders and distributors are taking the correct actions to ensure the health and well-being of small animals?

The Animal Welfare Act, as well as certain state and local standards, provide guidance for proper animal care. Retailers also may require an audit be conducted of breeders and distributors with which they do business to confirm that certain standards are being met.

How many breeders and distributors do you anticipate will participate in the program?

Because the standards are voluntary, we currently do not have a projected number of participants.

Where can the standards be found?

An executive summary, as well as the full set of comprehensive SAC standards, is available online at PIJAC.org.



SMALL ANIMAL CARE STANDARDS

Prepared by the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC)
Small Animal Care Committee 2017



Small Mammal Facility Standards



Small Mammal Housing Facility Standards

1. All animal housing provided by the facility must be in good repair, safe, secure, stable, durable, well protected, comfortable, and in an escape-controlled environment.
2. Animals must be housed in appropriate numbers meeting the standards of the USDA Animal Care Blue Book.
3. Animals must be able to sit, stand, and turn around comfortably in an enclosure.
4. Enclosures must be made of materials that allow them to be easily cleaned and disinfected.
5. Animals must be separated by species in enclosures.
6. Temperature must be species appropriate following USDA guidelines and should have multiple monitoring protocols in place.
7. The building must have a designated quarantine area for animals.

Exterior and Interior Facilities Standards

Building Standards

1. The building must be constructed and maintained to provide adequate shelter.
2. The building must be properly maintained to prevent entry of foreign animals or pests.
3. Sticky traps should not be used to prevent escape of animals.
4. Rooms must be designed to prevent escape outside of designated rooms.

Water and Air Quality Standards

1. Air and water quality must comply with all state, local, and federal regulations.
2. Air and water systems should have monitoring protocols to ensure animal safety.
3. Non-municipal water must undergo quality and microbial testing to check fecal and coliform levels at least once a year.
 - a. Guidance from local public health officials is strongly recommended to determine the need for additional testing. Water should be filtered as needed to maintain water quality for the health of the animals.
4. Facilities must have emergency water shut off valves.
5. Air system should receive maintenance at least once every heating and cooling season.

Lighting Systems

1. Facility lighting must be sufficient for cleaning and inspection purposes.
2. Lighting in enclosures must at minimum follow USDA Blue Book Guidelines and should be species specific.

Building Security

Biosecurity

1. Facilities must have biosecurity plan created with input from consulting veterinarian to minimize cross-contamination between areas.
2. The use of footbaths and protective clothing between areas is strongly recommended where appropriate to prevent cross contamination.
3. Rooms must be equipped with full hand washing stations, or, at minimum, hand sanitizer stations.
4. Enclosures must be sanitized prior to new animal shipments.
5. Areas must be clearly marked as restricted or employees only where applicable.
 - a. The use of employee ID badges is strongly recommended.

Physical Security

1. Building must meet local, state, and federal standards for fire protection.
2. Locks and alarms must be regularly inspected to ensure working order and prevent unauthorized access.

Cleaning and Sanitation Standards

1. Enclosures must be spot cleaned daily to remove waste and perishable food.
2. Enclosures must be sanitized at a minimum of every two weeks or more if needed using methods outlined in USDA AWA Bluebook.
3. All cleaning solutions must use chemicals that are appropriate for staff and animals.
4. Safety data sheets are strongly recommended to track any and all chemicals used in the facility.
5. Facility must be kept neat and clean at all times.
6. During cleaning, animals must be safely removed and placed in temporary habitats to allow for thorough cleaning.
7. Enclosures should only be cleaned by properly trained employees.

Storage of Food, Medicine, and Bedding

1. All food must be stored properly in a cool and dry place sealed to prevent moisture and vermin entry.
2. Food must be dated and have necessary information to track possible recalls.
3. Storage containers must be fully emptied and sanitized monthly or as needed following previously listed protocols.
4. Medicine must be securely stored with restrictive access.
5. Medicine and supplements must be dated and clearly labeled/ identified.
6. Safety data sheets are strongly recommended to track any and all medicines used and stored in the facility.
7. Bedding must be securely stored to prevent contamination from outside sources.
 - a. It is recommended that bedding and food be stored off the ground for added security.

Small Mammal Care Standards

Nutrition Standards

Food and Feedings

1. Food must be palatable, nutritious, and species specific and best efforts must be made to have food available at all times.
 - a. "The food shall be free from contamination, wholesome, palatable and of sufficient quantity and nutritive value to meet the normal daily requirements for the condition and size of the rabbit/guinea pig/ hamster."
2. Fruit and vegetable supplements may be given but must be species specific.
 - a. Enough Vitamin C should be given to guinea pigs to meet dietary needs.
 - b. Hay should be given to rabbits and chinchillas.
3. Food storage must follow protocols previously outlined in the facilities section of this document.
4. Employees must track feeding schedules.
5. Feedings must only be done by properly trained employees.
6. Food containers should be sanitized regularly following procedures outlined in the facilities portion of this document.

Water

1. Fresh water must be available to animals at all times.
2. Water in open containers must be changed daily.
3. Water provided by bottles must be checked daily and refilled as needed.
4. Water supplied by water lines must be checked daily and include a protocol to prevent accidental drowning.
5. Water containers must be sanitized regularly at a minimum of every two weeks.
6. Water lines must be sanitized with an appropriate disinfectant according to label directions at least once per month or as needed.

Housing Standards

1. See animal housing standards in facilities section of this document.

Compatibility of Animals

1. Animals must be separated by species.
2. Animals should be separated by sex aside from intentional breeding.
3. Ill or injured animals must be separated and placed in a specific quarantine area or habitat for monitoring and treatment; habitats used should be labeled and dated with injury/illness details.
4. Animals from separate shipments must be housed separately at distributor facility.

Lighting

1. See lighting of enclosures in facilities section of this document.

Care While Cleaning

1. Animals must be moved to secure temporary habitats during deep cleaning.
2. Animals may remain in enclosures during spot cleaning for partial bedding changes and waste removal.

Climate, Air, and Temperature Control

1. Climate and temperature must be species specific.
2. Animals listed in USDA Animal Care Blue Books must be kept in climates and temperatures recommended in the facilities section of this document.
3. Temperature and climate must be continually monitored with back up protocols in case of failure.
4. Air systems must follow monitoring guidelines listed in the facilities section of this document.
5. Air quality should be tested to maintain appropriate and safe levels of ammonia.

Health Standards

Veterinary Care

1. Facility must have a consulting veterinarian.
2. Facility must have standard of care protocol for frequency of visits.
3. An emergency care protocol is strongly recommended.
4. Surgeries may only be performed by a licensed veterinarian or by trained technicians under the supervision of a veterinarian as allowed by the USDA and/or state veterinary boards where applicable.
5. Facility must have protocol for monitoring animals' health regularly.
6. Veterinary visits must be recorded and updated as needed.

Medication

1. Medication must be prescribed by a veterinarian and administered only by properly trained employees.
2. Medication must be stored and marked as previously outlined in the storage section of the facilities portion of this document.
3. Records of medication given must be kept and updated as needed.
4. Expired medication must be discarded.
5. SDS sheets should be used to track medication in facility.

Quarantine

1. Facility must have quarantine area as outlined in the facilities section of this document.
2. Animals received from external sources must be quarantined upon arrival to facility.
3. Quarantine due to illness or injury should be conducted based on veterinarian recommendations and facility protocol.
4. Employees cleaning quarantine area must change protective coverings (gloves, booties, etc.) before leaving quarantine area and use different cleaning tools to prevent cross-contamination.

Testing Standards

1. Animal health testing should be done as appropriate with the understanding that testing requirements will differ between breeder and distributor requirements.

Biosecurity

1. Facility must have biosecurity protocol in place; veterinary input is strongly recommended.
2. See biosecurity portion of facilities section of this document.
3. Waste disposal must follow state, local, and federal guidelines.

End of Life Standards and Protocol

1. Euthanasia must follow AVMA guidelines.
2. Only properly trained and authorized staff may preform euthanasia procedures.
3. Disposal must follow local, state, and federal laws.
4. Euthanasia must be done in secure and sanitary location.
5. Records of procedures must be kept and updated as needed and should be kept in a secured area.

Escapes/Losses

1. Inventory must be done regularly to establish baseline number of animals in facility.
2. Sticky traps should not be used to trap escaped animals.
3. Rooms must be designed to prevent escape outside of designated rooms.

Small Mammal Transport Standards

Transport activities must be compliant with local, state, and federal regulations, including but not limited to regulations of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Transportation (DOT), and the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

Receiving

1. Animals must be tended to immediately upon arrival to receiving facility.
 - a. If transport is by air, must be picked up as soon as available and taken to the receiving facility.
2. Primary enclosures must be removed carefully so as not to jostle the animals.
3. Animals should be carefully placed in sanitized and cleaned habitats and an environment that provides them with an acclimation period (reduced lighting, minimal activity, etc.).

Enclosures (animal carriers)

1. Animal carriers must be constructed in a way to comply with USDA Standards of primary enclosures for guinea pigs, hamsters, and rabbits.
2. Enclosures must be large enough to allow for normal postural movements.
3. The number of animals transported in each enclosure must meet standards outlined by the USDA.
4. Animals in the same primary enclosure should be the same species and in compatible groups.
5. Animals must be in enclosures that allow them to be safe and secure while preventing escape.
6. Enclosures must be properly labeled to comply with local, state, and federal requirements ("live animals").
7. All previously used enclosures must be properly cleaned and sanitized using methods outlined in the facilities section of this document prior to re-use.

Packing and Shipping

1. Primary enclosures must be packed so that animals remain safe and secure during transport.
 - a. Straps or other securing methods should be used when transporting in company owned delivery vehicles.
2. All appropriate required documents for each mode of transportation (company owned vehicles and other transports) must accompany each shipment such as: health certificates from place of origin, certificate of compliance, and acclimation certificates. (USDA Introductory Course for Commercial Breeder of Guinea Pigs, Hamsters, and Rabbits Transport Req.).

3. During transport, animals must be provided adequate food and a water source in each primary enclosure.
4. Enclosures must have appropriate bedding as needed.

Monitoring During Transport-Company Owned Delivery Vehicles

1. Animal cargo space must meet temperature guidelines listed in the USDA Blue Book.
2. Vehicles should have a temperature gauge visible to the driver.
3. Cargo space should be monitored throughout the trip.
4. Cargo space should be visually monitored at least once every 4 hours during vehicle transport.
5. Use of a GPS is suggested to monitor vehicle during transport.
6. Vehicles used in transports should be regularly inspected and maintained and include a vehicle safety kit and fire extinguisher.
7. Vehicle drivers should be provided a checklist to ensure the interior of the vehicle (heat, lights, etc. are properly working before each transport).
8. Drivers should be trained in animal transport.
 - a. Driver should carry a backup food and water source.

Emergency Protocol-Company Owned Delivery Vehicle

1. Emergency protocols as suggested in the Record Keeping section of this document must be in place and should be updated regularly.
2. In case of vehicle malfunction or accident, plans should include a protocol for maintaining correct temperature.
3. In case of delay caused by an accident or malfunction, an emergency plan should include a back-up transportation method (bringing to another location or offloading to another driver).
4. Theft of Transport protocol must be in place.

Suggestions include:

- a. GPS monitoring
- b. Driver carrying two sets of keys

Reptile/Amphibian Facility Standards



Reptile/Amphibian Housing Facility Standards

1. All Reptile/Amphibian housing provided by the facility must be in good repair, safe, secure, stable, durable, well protected, comfortable, and in an escape controlled environment while allowing for normal postural movements.
2. Enclosures must be made of materials that allow them to be easily cleaned and disinfected.
3. Reptiles/Amphibians must be separated by species in enclosures as is appropriate.
 - a. Facilities should have individual enclosures as needed.
4. Temperature must be species appropriate and should have multiple monitoring protocols in place.
 - a. Enclosures should have temperature variations and humidity levels that are species appropriate.
5. Habitats must be species appropriate and include additional enrichment objects such as branches, rocks, hiding places, or water as are species appropriate.
6. The building must have designated quarantine area for Reptiles/Amphibians.

Exterior and Interior Facilities Standards

Building Standards

1. The building must be constructed and maintained to provide adequate shelter.
2. The building must be properly maintained to prevent entry of foreign Reptiles/Amphibians or pests.
3. Sticky traps, with the exception of fly paper, should not be used to prevent pests or escape of Reptiles/Amphibians.
4. Rooms must be designed to prevent escape outside of designated rooms.

Water and Air Quality Standards

1. Air and water quality must comply with all state, local, and federal regulations.
2. Air and water systems should have monitoring protocols to ensure Reptile/Amphibian safety.
3. Non -municipal water must undergo quality and microbial testing to check fecal and coliform levels at least once a year.
 - a. Guidance from local public health officials is strongly recommended to determine the need for additional testing.
4. Facilities must have emergency water shut off valves.
5. Air system should receive maintenance at least once every heating and cooling season.

Lighting Systems

1. Facility Lighting must be sufficient for cleaning and inspection purposes.
2. Lighting in enclosures should be species specific.

Building Security

Biosecurity

1. Facilities must have biosecurity plan created with input from onsite veterinarian to minimize cross-contamination between areas.
2. The use of footbaths and protective clothing between areas is strongly recommended where appropriate to prevent cross contamination.
3. Rooms must be equipped with full hand washing stations, or, at minimum, hand sanitizer stations.
4. Enclosures must be sanitized prior to new Reptile/Amphibian shipments.
5. Areas must be clearly marked as restricted or employees only where applicable.
 - a. The use of employee ID badges is strongly recommended.

Physical Security

1. Building must meet local, state, and federal standards for fire protection.
2. Locks and alarms must be regularly inspected to ensure working order and prevent unauthorized access.

Cleaning and Sanitation Standards

1. Enclosures must be spot cleaned regularly to remove waste and perishable food as is necessary and species appropriate.
2. Enclosures must be deep cleaned at a minimum of once a month or more if needed.
 - a. Branches, rocks, and additional habitat materials should be cleaned thoroughly.
3. Enclosures should be disinfected as needed.
4. All cleaning solutions must use chemicals that are appropriate for staff and Reptiles/Amphibians.
5. Safety data sheets are strongly recommended to track any and all chemicals used in the facility.
6. Facility must be kept neat and clean at all times.
7. During sanitization, Reptiles/Amphibians must be safely removed and placed in new or temporary habitats.
8. Enclosures should only be cleaned by properly trained employees.

Storage of Food, Medicine, and Bedding

1. All food must be stored properly to prevent spoilage.
2. Food must be dated and have necessary information to track possible recalls.
3. Storage containers must be fully emptied and sanitized monthly or as needed following previously listed protocols.

4. Medicine must be securely stored with restrictive access.
5. Medicine and supplements must be dated and clearly labeled/ identified.
6. Safety data sheets are strongly recommended to track any and all medicines used and stored in the facility.

Reptile/Amphibian Standards of Care

Nutrition Standards

Food and Feedings

1. Food must be palatable and nutritious and must be species specific.
 - a. Feeding schedule should be species specific.
2. Food storage must follow protocols previously outlined in the facilities section of this document.
3. Employees must track feeding schedules.
4. Feedings must only be done by properly trained employees.
5. Food containers should be sanitized regularly following procedures outlined in the facilities portion of this document.

Water

1. Water sources must be available according to species needs.
2. Water in open containers must be changed daily as appropriate.
3. Water provided by bottles must be checked daily and refilled as needed.
4. As applicable, water supplied by water lines must be checked daily and include a protocol to prevent accidental drowning.
5. Water containers must be sanitized regularly at a minimum of every two weeks.
6. Water lines must be sanitized with an appropriate disinfectant according to label directions at least once per month or as needed.

Housing Standards

1. See Reptile/Amphibian housing standards in facilities section of this document.

Compatibility of Reptile/Amphibians

1. Reptiles/Amphibians must be separated by species.
2. Ill or injured Reptiles/Amphibians must be separated and placed in a specific quarantine area or habitat for monitoring and treatment; habitats used should be labeled and dated with injury/illness details.
3. Reptiles/Amphibians from separate shipments must be housed separately at distributor facility.

Lighting

1. See lighting of enclosures in facilities section of this document.

Care While Cleaning

1. Reptiles/Amphibians must be moved to secure temporary habitats during deep cleaning.
2. Reptiles/Amphibians may remain in enclosures during spot cleaning for partial bedding changes and waste removal.

Climate, Air, and Temperature Control

1. Climate and temperature must be species specific.
2. Temperature and climate must be continually monitored with back up protocols in case of failure.
3. Air systems must follow monitoring guidelines listed in the facilities section of this document.

Health Standards

Veterinary Care

1. Facilities must have a consulting veterinarian.
2. Facility must have standard of care protocol for frequency of visits.
3. An emergency care protocol is strongly recommended.
4. Surgeries may only be performed by a licensed veterinarian or by trained technicians under the supervision of a veterinarian following state veterinary board guidelines where applicable.
5. Facility must have protocol for monitoring Reptile/Amphibians' health regularly.
6. Veterinary visits must be recorded and updated as needed.

Medication

1. Medication must be prescribed by a veterinarian and administered only by properly trained employees.
2. Medication must be stored and marked as previously outlined in the storage section of the facilities portion of this document.
3. Records of medication given must be kept and updated as needed.
4. Expired medication must be discarded.
5. SDS sheets should be used to track medication in facility.

Quarantine

1. Facility must have quarantine area as outlined in the facilities section of this document.
2. Reptiles/Amphibians received from external sources must be quarantined upon arrival to facility.
 - a. Wild caught reptiles must be evaluated and undergo species specific treatment as needed.
3. Illness/Medical quarantine should be conducted based on veterinarian recommendations and facility protocol.
4. Employees cleaning quarantine area must change protective coverings (gloves, booties, etc.) before leaving quarantine area and use different cleaning tools to prevent cross-contamination.

Testing Standards

1. Reptile/Amphibian health testing should be done as appropriate with the understanding that testing requirements will differ between breeder and distributor requirements.

Biosecurity

1. Facility must have biosecurity protocol in place; veterinary input is strongly recommended.
2. See biosecurity portion of facilities section of this document.
3. Waste disposal must follow state, local, and federal guidelines.

End of Life Standards and Protocol

1. Euthanasia must follow AVMA guidelines.
2. Only properly trained and authorized staff may preform euthanasia procedures.
3. Disposal must follow local, state, and federal laws.
4. Euthanasia must be done in secure and sanitary location.
5. Records of procedures must be kept and updated as needed and should be kept in a secured area.

Escapes/Losses

1. Inventory must be done regularly to establish baseline number of Reptiles/Amphibians in facility.
2. Sticky traps should not be used to trap escaped Reptiles/Amphibians.
3. Rooms must be designed to prevent escape outside of designated rooms.

Reptile/Amphibian Transport Standards

Transport activities must be compliant with local, state, and federal regulations, including but not limited to regulations of the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the US Postal Service (USPS). Transport in extreme temperatures should be avoided by monitoring temperatures of both shipping and delivery location.

Receiving

1. Reptiles/Amphibians must be tended to immediately upon arrival to receiving facility.
 - a. If transport is by air, must be picked up as soon as available and taken to the receiving facility.
2. Primary enclosures must be removed carefully so as not to jostle the Reptiles/Amphibians.
3. Reptiles/Amphibians should be carefully placed in cleaned and sanitized habitats.

Enclosures (Reptile/Amphibian carriers)

1. Transport containers should be manufactured to protect the Reptiles/Amphibians from physical injury and exposure to extreme temperatures by using containers with appropriate strength and insulation.
2. Reptiles/Amphibians should be put in internal containers to avoid injury during handling and transport.
 - a. Internal Reptile/Amphibian containers and external transport containers should include appropriate ventilation.
 - b. Internal containers should include appropriate bedding to absorb waste.
 - c. Internal containers should be designed to prevent escape.
3. Heat/cold packs should be used as needed to protect Reptiles/Amphibians from temperature fluctuations.
4. Enclosures must be large enough to allow for normal postural movements.
5. Reptiles/Amphibians in the same primary enclosure must be in compatible groups.
6. Reptiles/Amphibians must be in enclosures that allow them to be safe and secure while preventing escape.
7. Enclosures must be properly labeled to comply with local, state, and federal requirements ("live animals").
8. All previously used enclosures must be properly cleaned and sanitized using methods outlined in the facilities section of this document prior to re-use.

Packing and Shipping

1. Primary enclosures must be packed so that Reptiles/Amphibians remain safe and secure during transport.
2. During transport, Reptiles/Amphibians must be provided a moisture source where applicable and when is species appropriate.

Monitoring During Transport-Company Owned Delivery Vehicles

1. Reptile/Amphibian cargo space must meet temperature guidelines that are species appropriate.
 - a. Vehicles should have a temperature gauge visible to the driver.
2. Vendors should have a method to safely secure enclosures during transport.
3. Cargo space should be monitored throughout the trip.

4. Use of a GPS is suggested to monitor vehicle during transport.
5. Vehicles used in transports should be regularly inspected and maintained and include a vehicle safety kit and fire extinguisher.
6. Vehicle drivers should be provided a checklist to ensure the interior of the vehicle (heat, lights, etc.) are properly working before each transport.
 - a. Drivers should be trained in Reptile/Amphibian transport.

Emergency Protocol-Company Owned Delivery Vehicle

1. Emergency protocols as suggested in the Record Keeping section of this document must be in place and should be updated regularly.
2. In case of vehicle malfunction or accident, plans should include a protocol for maintaining correct temperature.
3. In case of delay caused by an accident or malfunction, an emergency plan should include a back-up transportation method (bringing to another location or offloading to another driver).
4. Theft of Transport protocol must be in place.

Suggestions include:

- a. GPS monitoring
- b. Driver carrying two sets of keys

Bird Facility Standards



Bird Housing Facility Standards

1. All bird housing provided by the facility must be in good repair, safe, secure, stable, durable, well protected, comfortable, and in an escape controlled environment.
2. Birds must be able to sit, stand, and turn around comfortably in an enclosure.
 - a. Perch size should correspond with the size of the bird in the enclosure.
3. Enclosures must be made of materials that allow them to be easily cleaned and disinfected.
4. Birds must be separated by species in enclosures.
5. Temperature must be species appropriate and should have multiple monitoring protocols in place.
6. The building must have designated quarantine area for birds.

Exterior and Interior Facilities Standards

Building Standards

1. The building must be constructed and maintained to provide adequate shelter.
2. The building must be properly maintained to prevent entry of foreign animals or pests.
3. Rooms must be designed to prevent escape outside of designated rooms.

Water and Air Quality Standards

1. Air and water quality must comply with all state, local, and federal regulations.
2. Air and water systems should have monitoring protocols to ensure bird safety.
3. Non -municipal water must undergo quality and microbial testing to check fecal and coliform levels at least once a year.
 - a. Guidance from local public health officials is strongly recommended to determine the need for additional testing.

4. Facilities must have emergency water shut off valves.
5. Air system should receive maintenance at least once every heating and cooling season.

Lighting Systems

1. Facility lighting must be sufficient for cleaning and inspection purposes.
2. Lighting in enclosures must be adapted to ensure birds are on a normal, species appropriate light schedule.

Building Security

Biosecurity

1. Facilities must have biosecurity plan created with input from onsite veterinarian to minimize cross-contamination between areas.
2. The use of footbaths and protective clothing between areas is strongly recommended where appropriate to prevent cross contamination.
3. Rooms must be equipped with full hand washing stations, or, at minimum, hand sanitizer stations.
4. Rooms housing birds must be equipped with wall coverings that are impervious to moisture and able to be properly sanitized.
5. Enclosures must be sanitized prior to new bird shipments.
6. Areas must be clearly marked as restricted or employees only where applicable.
 - a. The use of employee ID badges is strongly recommended.

Physical Security

1. Building must meet local, state, and federal standards for fire protection.
2. Locks and alarms must be regularly inspected to ensure working order and prevent unauthorized access.

Cleaning and Sanitation Standards

1. Enclosures must be spot cleaned daily to remove waste and perishable food.
2. Enclosures must be sanitized and disinfected at a minimum of every two weeks or more if needed.
 - a. Perches and enrichment objects should also be cleaned and disinfected.
3. Bedding should be removed and replaced twice weekly or as needed.
4. All cleaning solutions must use chemicals that are appropriate for staff and birds.
5. Safety data sheets are strongly recommended to track any and all chemicals used in the facility.
6. Facility must be kept neat and clean at all times.
7. During deep cleaning, birds must be safely removed and placed in temporary habitats.
8. Enclosures should only be cleaned by properly trained employees.

Storage of Food, Medicine, and Bedding

1. All food must be stored properly in a cool and dry place sealed to prevent moisture and infestation.
2. Food must be dated and have necessary information to track possible recalls.
3. Storage containers must be fully emptied and sanitized monthly or as needed following previously listed protocols.
4. Medicine must be securely stored with restrictive access.
5. Medicine and supplements must be dated and clearly labeled/ identified.
6. Safety data sheets are strongly recommended to track any and all medicines used and stored in the facility.
7. Bedding must be securely stored to prevent contamination from outside sources.
 - a. It is recommended that bedding and food be stored off the ground for added security.

Bird Care Standards

Nutrition Standards

Food and Feedings

1. Food must be palatable, nutritious, and species specific and best efforts must be made to have food available at all times.
2. Fruit and vegetable or bacteria supplements should be offered as needed to meet nutritional requirements.
3. Food storage must follow protocols previously outlined in the facilities section of this document.
4. Employees must track feeding schedules.
5. Feedings must only be done by properly trained employees.
6. Food containers should be species appropriate and should be sanitized regularly following procedures outlined in the facilities portion of this document.

Water

1. Fresh water must be available to birds at all times.
2. Water in open containers must be changed daily.
3. Water provided by bottles must be checked daily and refilled as needed.
4. Water containers must be sanitized regularly at a minimum of every two weeks.

Housing Standards

1. See bird housing standards in facilities section of this document.

Compatibility of Birds

1. Birds must be separated by species and compatibility.
2. Birds should be separated by size.
3. Ill or injured birds must be separated and placed in a specific quarantine area or habitat for monitoring and treatment; habitats used should be labeled and dated with injury/illness details.
4. Birds from separate shipments should be tracked in order to be traced back to individual shipment.

Lighting

1. See lighting of enclosures in facilities section of this document.

Care While Cleaning

1. Birds must be moved to secure temporary habitats during deep cleaning.
2. Birds may remain in enclosures during spot cleaning for partial bedding changes and waste removal.

Climate, Air, and Temperature Control

1. Birds should be kept in rooms with climate and temperature that is species specific and should be housed away from air vents/possible drafts.
2. Temperature and climate must be continually monitored with back up protocols in case of failure.
3. Air systems must follow monitoring guidelines listed in the facilities section of this document.

Health Standards

Veterinary Care

1. Facility must have a consulting veterinarian.
2. Facility must have standard of care protocol for frequency of visits.
3. An emergency care protocol is strongly recommended.
4. Surgeries may only be performed by a licensed veterinarian or by trained technicians under the supervision of a veterinarian following state veterinary board guidelines where applicable.
5. Facility must have protocol for monitoring birds' health regularly.
6. Veterinary visits must be recorded and updated as needed.

Medication

1. Medication must be prescribed by a veterinarian and administered only by properly trained employees.
2. Medication must be stored and marked as previously outlined in the storage section of the facilities portion of this document.
3. Records of medication given must be kept and updated as needed.
4. Expired medication must be discarded.
5. SDS sheets should be used to track medication in facility.

Quarantine

1. Facility must have quarantine area as outlined in the facilities section of this document.
2. Birds received from external sources must be quarantined upon arrival to facility.
3. Illness/Medical quarantine should be conducted based on veterinarian recommendations and facility protocol.
4. Employees cleaning quarantine area must change protective coverings (gloves, booties, etc.) before leaving quarantine area and use different cleaning tools to prevent cross-contamination.

Testing Standards

1. Bird health testing should be done as appropriate with the understanding that testing requirements will differ between breeder and distributor requirements.
2. Bird psittacosis screening protocols should follow the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV), Compendium of Measures to Control Chlamydia psittaci Infection Among Humans (Psittacosis), and Pet Birds (Avian Chlamydiosis), 2017.

Biosecurity

1. Facility must have biosecurity protocol in place; veterinary input is strongly recommended.
2. See biosecurity portion of facilities section of this document.
3. Waste disposal must follow state, local, and federal guidelines.

End of Life Standards and Protocol

1. Euthanasia must follow AVMA guidelines.
2. Only properly trained and authorized staff may perform euthanasia procedures.
3. Disposal must follow local, state, and federal laws.
4. Euthanasia must be done in secure and sanitary location.
5. Records of procedures must be kept and updated as needed and should be kept in a secured area.

Escapes/Losses

1. Inventory must be done regularly to establish baseline number of birds in facility.
2. Sticky traps should not be used to trap escaped birds.
3. Rooms and cages must be designed to prevent escape outside of designated rooms.

Bird Transport Standards

Transport activities must be compliant with local, state, and federal regulations, including but not limited to regulations of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Transportation (DOT), and the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Birds must be properly banded based on state and local requirements.

Receiving

1. Birds must be tended to immediately upon arrival to receiving facility.
 - a. If transport is by air, must be picked up as soon as available and taken to the receiving facility.
 - b. It is recommended that shipping containers be sanitized before loading into company vehicles and into company facilities to control possible contamination as appropriate.
2. Birds should be removed first when unpacking a shipment.
3. Primary enclosures must be removed carefully so as not to jostle the birds.
4. Birds should be carefully placed in sanitized and cleaned habitats.

Enclosures (bird carriers)

1. Enclosures must be large enough to allow for normal postural movements.
5. Birds in the same primary enclosure should be the same species and in compatible groups.
6. Birds must be in enclosures that allow them to be safe and secure while preventing escape.
7. Enclosures must be properly labeled to comply with local, state, and federal requirements ("live animals").
8. All previously used enclosures must be properly cleaned and sanitized using methods outlined in the facilities section of this document prior to re-use.

Packing and Shipping

1. Primary enclosures must be packed so that birds remain safe and secure during transport.
 - a. Straps or other securing methods should be used when transporting in company owned delivery vehicles.
2. Birds should be packed on a schedule that allows for as little time in an enclosure as possible.
3. Birds should be packed in a way that they are able to be unloaded first and are away from a direct flow of air.
4. During transport, birds must be provided adequate food and a moisture source in each primary enclosure.
5. Enclosures must have appropriate bedding if needed.
6. Required health certificates must be included in each shipment.

Monitoring During Transport-Company Owned Delivery Vehicles

1. Vehicles should have a temperature gauge visible to the driver.
2. Vendor should have method to safely secure enclosures.
 - a. Cargo space should be monitored throughout the trip.
3. Cargo space should be visually monitored.
4. Use of a GPS is suggested to monitor vehicle during transport.

5. Vehicles used in transports should be regularly inspected and maintained and include a vehicle safety kit and fire extinguisher.
6. Vehicle drivers should be provided a checklist to ensure the interior of the vehicle (heat, lights, etc.) are properly working before each transport.
 - a. Drivers should be trained in bird transport.
 - b. Drivers should carry backup food and water sources.

Emergency Protocol-Company Owned Delivery Vehicle

1. Emergency protocols as suggested in the Record Keeping section of this document must be in place and should be updated regularly.
2. In case of vehicle malfunction or accident, plans should include a protocol for maintaining correct temperature.
3. In case of delay caused by an accident or malfunction, an emergency plan should include a back-up transportation method (bringing to another location or offloading to another driver).
4. Theft of Transport protocol must be in place.

Suggestions include:

- a. GPS monitoring
- b. Driver carrying two sets of keys

Staffing

1. Employers must follow all state, local, and federal labor laws.
2. Employers have a duty of care to their employees to take all the steps which are reasonably possible to ensure their health, safety, and wellbeing.
3. Each shift must have enough staffers to ensure that animals are properly and attentively cared for.
4. All staff must be properly trained in order to work with animals. Re-training should be completed as needed and on a pre-determined schedule.
 - a. Training should include, but is not limited to: proper cleaning techniques, animal care techniques, and training in how to monitor visual cues of the health of the animals.
5. Training and re-training records should be kept following the Record Keeping Section of this document.
6. Personal biosecurity and safety measures must be made available to staff following the Facilities section of this document (gloves, protective coverings, hand washing/sanitation stations).
 - a. Information on the healthy way to handle animals should be available.
7. Pre-employment screening protocols are encouraged either internally or using a third party.
8. Security measures should be in place to ensure employees are only able to access areas that pertain to their responsibilities at agreed upon times.
9. Each organization should have a staff retention plan including additional training and skills to increase career development.

Record Keeping

Facilities Record Keeping

1. Cleaning and sanitation procedures should be scheduled and documented.
2. Repairs to the facility should be documented.
 - a. An inventory of useful/necessary parts should be kept for quick repairs and to avoid delay.
3. Pest control procedures should be noted including dates, chemicals, and methods used.
4. Water and Air Filters should receive regular calendar maintenance.
5. Bedding and food should be monitored to ensure safety of use/consumption.
6. Food should be stored with proper dates to track spoilage.
7. Following the facilities guidelines of this document, Safety Data Sheets should be used to track medicines and chemicals used in the facility.
8. Medicines, supplements, and chemicals should be tracked with start dates and expiration dates.

Animal Care Record Keeping

1. Feeding and medication schedules should be recorded and updated.
 - a. Use of checklists as listed in this section is strongly recommended.
2. Health records should be kept for ill/injured animals and updated regularly to track veterinary visits and treatment plans.
3. Following the End of Life Standards in this document, records of end of life procedures must be kept and updated as needed and should be stored in a secured area.

General Record Keeping Protocols

1. Breeding Record Keeping
 - a. Records should be kept detailing all pertinent breeding information (lineage, date of breeding, number of offspring).
2. Intake Record Keeping (if applicable).
 - a. Incoming shipments should have the vendor identified, dates received, method of transport used, and records of the condition of the animals when received.
3. An animal identification system to identify animals that are either brought in or bred in the facility is strongly recommended.
4. Checklists should be used to ensure daily tasks are thoroughly and properly completed.
5. Records should be maintained to track official inspections and actions taken.
6. UV lights should be replaced as needed or according to manufacturer requirements.
7. An emergency/ disaster action plan should be in place and updated as needed.
 - a. Transport accidents or delays should be documented.
8. A Zoonotic outbreak action plan should be in place and updated as needed.
9. Quality standards are recommended to ensure transparency and understanding with your suppliers and contract breeders.
10. Staffing records should be maintained documenting training and certification completions.
 - a. A chart tracking employee training/re-training is suggested.

Disease Prevention and Management

- Consult with veterinarian familiar with animal health, diseases, and nutritional requirements.
- Maintain an ongoing pest control program to prevent or minimize wild rodents, e.g., rodent traps at the perimeter of the facility, in small mammal/reptile/bird rooms, and in areas where feed is stored.
- Staff must be trained to identify signs and symptoms of disease.
- Keep records (e.g., location, date, number of animals affected) for animals exhibiting signs or symptoms of disease or death.
- Isolate or quarantine animals with symptoms of disease.
- New animals should be isolated until clinical health status is confirmed.
- Distributors should avoid combining animals from different shipments to prevent pathogen transmission.
- Feed, water containers, equipment for handling cages, and bedding should not be moved among facility units (depends on the configuration of the facility; e.g., racks, rooms, buildings) to prevent cross-contamination.
- Equipment should be disinfected regularly.
- Euthanasia must be done following AVMA and any state guidelines in a secure environment by trained personnel.
- Multi-step sanitation of enclosures should be used.
 - Solid material should be removed into appropriate receptacle.
 - Surfactants and/or power spray should be used to remove remaining particulate material.
 - Tubs or cages should be washed using a detergent solution.
 - After washing, tubs should be soaked in a sanitizing agent (e.g., diluted chlorine solution).
 - Tubs and cages should be allowed to dry thoroughly before re-use.

- Waste (including bedding and animal waste) should be disposed of properly.
- Barriers to infectious agents should be in place (prevent entry of wild rodents, insects, birds and reptiles).
- General hygiene practices should be established to minimize accumulation of bacteria, parasites or viruses.
 - Regular cleaning of cages, floors, feed storage areas using disinfectants or sanitizers, surfactants, and hot water
 - Employees should not work in different areas of the facility; if employees service multiple areas, footbaths at entrances are recommended (footbath solutions must be changed regularly).
 - Hand washing stations, or at minimum hand sanitizer, must be available to employees.
- Staff should be informed regarding zoonotic pathogens and methods of transmission.
- Drinking, eating, or smoking should not take place in rooms housing animals.
- Newly acquired breeder animals should be isolated or tested for potential pathogens.
- Shipments should have a permanently affixed or indelible lot identification label to include:
 - Package date
 - Shipment date
 - Supplier information
- Records of animals leaving the facility should be maintained for at least 12 months (in the event of undetected zoonotic pathogen detection) including:
 - Date of shipment
 - Species, type/age and number of animals shipped
 - Specific location within facility where shipped animals were housed (if applicable)
 - Destination of animals
 - Carrier
 - Trip logs are recommended for the carrier, e.g., vehicle identification, time of departure and arrival, other stops made, other cargo.

Remediation in the Event of a Zoonotic Outbreak

- Movement of animals, cages and equipment within the areas of facility without prior sanitation and disinfection should be avoided.
- Staff working with infected (or potentially infected) animals should have access to appropriate personal protective equipment (dust mask, gloves, washable coveralls and footwear).
- Producers should cooperate fully with the Centers for Disease Control, local or state health departments, and departments of agriculture or animal health.
- All recent records of shipments should be made available to inspectors.
- Customers that have received animals should be notified immediately.
 - Customers of all animals shipped after the pathogen was documented includes animals potentially exposed to the pathogen prior to discovery.
- Transporters of animals in transit should be notified immediately.
- Animals in the facility (or part of the facility) should be isolated until the extent of the outbreak has been determined.



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