

March 15, 1996

ANIMAL FACILITY EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE

1. **REASON FOR ISSUE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides the procedures used by the Animal Facility Equipment Committee and applies to all Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities involved with research animals.
2. **SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES:** The principal changes are:
 - a. The deadline for receipt of requests has been changed from January 15 to July 15;
 - b. New criteria has been added to equipment requests; and
 - c. The Animal Facility Equipment Request Checklist, Appendix A, has been added.
3. **RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Office of Research and Development (12/V) is responsible for the contents of this VHA Handbook.
4. **RELATED ISSUES:** VHA Directive 1200, to be published.
5. **RESCISSION:** This VHA Handbook rescinds M-3, Part II, Chapter 12, dated July 5, 1991.
6. **RECERTIFICATION:** This document is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of March, 2001.

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Under Secretary for Health

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July 5, 1991

1. Transmitted is a change to Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration Manual M-3, "Research and Development in Medicine," Part II, "Medical Research Program," Chapter 12, "Animal Facility Equipment Committee." Brackets have not been used to indicate the changes.

2. Principal changes:

a. **Paragraph 12.01:** The deadlines for receipt of requests have been changed from June 30 and December 31 to January 15 and July 15.

b. The name of the committee has been changed from Animal Research Facility Equipment Committee to Animal Facility Equipment Committee.

c. **Paragraphs 12.02 and 12.03:**

(1) Preparation of AF Equipment Requests has been transferred from 12.03 to 12.02 and Factors Considered by the AF Equipment Committee transferred from 12.02 to 12.03.

(2) Paragraphs 12.02.a.(1)(a) and (b); 12.02.a.(2)(b); 12.02.a.(7) and (9); 12.02.b. and c.; and 12.03.a.(1) and b. have been added in the revision.

(3) Paragraphs 12.03.a.(2)(c), (d), and (f) of the original chapter have been deleted.

(4) Paragraph 12.03.a.(e) in the original chapter has been replaced by paragraph 12.02.(5) in the revision.

(5) Paragraph 12.03.a.(4) in the original has been transferred to 12.02.(3)(c) in the revision and 12.03.a.(4) transferred to 12.02.a.(4).

3. **Filing Instructions**

Remove pages

iii and iv
12-i through 12-2

Insert pages

iii and iv
12-i through 12-3

4. **RESCISSION:** M-3, part II, chapter 12, dated October 30, 1989.

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RESCISSIONS

The following material is rescinded:

COMPLETE RESCISSIONS

a. **Manuals**

M-3, part II, dated April 27, 1982

M-3, part II, dated November 12, 1985

M-3, part II, chapter 12, dated October 30, 1989

b. **Circulars**

10-88-88 and Supplement No. 1

10-88-95

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RESCISSIONS

The following material is rescinded:

Manuals

M-3, part II, chapter 12, dated October 30, 1989

CHAPTER 12. ANIMAL FACILITY EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE

12.01 GENERAL

The AF (Animal Facility) Equipment Committee reviews requests for purchase of new and replacement equipment to be used in a centralized animal facility. The Committee will not consider requests for items costing less than \$1,000 or for labor and material used in renovation of facilities. The Committee consists of seven members who serve overlapping 2-year terms. Meetings are held twice each year. Deadlines for receipt of requests are January 15 and July 15.

12.02 PREPARATION OF AF EQUIPMENT REQUESTS

a. To request AF equipment, submit for each item a separate and complete request consisting of an original plus eight copies of the following:

(1) Completed VA Form 10-0090 (March 1990), Research Equipment Request.

(a) In space 8 D, identify the request as "Animal Facility Equipment".

(b) Use space 9 to explain the reason for selecting the particular model or style and source of price quotation(s). If replacing existing major equipment (e.g., cagewasher, autoclave) explain why repair or renovation of the item is not feasible.

(c) The back side of VA Form 10-0090 is not applicable for AF equipment requests.

(2) A description of the animal care program that includes:

(a) Net square feet of animal facility space.

(b) Room(s) in which the requested equipment will be installed or used.

(c) Current VA Central Office allocation in cost center 105.

(d) Present AAALAC (American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care) status and if not accredited, plans to attain AAALAC accreditation.

(e) Signature of the AF Supervisor and Veterinary Medical Officer (or Veterinary Medical Consultant).

(3) Justification for the item requested, including explicit information as to:

(a) How the item is to be used.

(b) Frequency with which the item will be used.

(c) Improvements in quality or efficiency of animal care that would result from acquisition of the equipment. This might best be addressed by describing changes in current facility management practices that will occur if the item is received.

(d) Whether or not the item is required to meet USDA or AAALAC standards.

(4) Specifications for the equipment requested. A copy of the catalog description of the item would be useful for this purpose.

(5) Names of VA investigators who would benefit from the equipment requested and for each list the following information in tabular form:

(a) Source(s) of funding for current projects in which animals are used.

(b) Amount of funding for studies in which animals are used.

(c) Species used and approximate annual usage of each species.

(6) Floor plan or sketch of the animal facility on 8 1/2 inch by 11 inch paper with rooms labeled according to use.

(7) If a resubmission, a response to questions and comments of the previous AF Equipment Committee.

(8) Copies of the following:

(a) The most recent inspection of animal facilities and animal study areas by the local Subcommittee on Animal Studies.

(b) If AAALAC accredited, one copy each of the most recent annual report to AAALAC, the most recent report of AAALAC site visit and the VA response to the AAALAC site visit. If not AAALAC accredited, submit one copy of the most recent annual report from non-accredited VA animal facilities.

(9) A single copy of the most recent "AAALAC Outline for Description of Institutional Animal Care and Use Program" attached to the original VA Form 10-0090.

b. Staple, clip or bind each set of copies, clearly identifying the original. Forward the AF equipment request through the VA Medical Center Director to the Chief Veterinary Medical Officer (12/4), VA Central Office.

c. The Chief Veterinary Medical Officer may be contacted for additional information.

12.03 FACTORS CONSIDERED BY THE AF EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE

a. In arriving at recommendations for approval, disapproval and priority scores the AF Committee considers the following factors:

(1) Benefit of the item as described under Section 12.02(3), "Justification." The justification is a critical factor and must be fully addressed.

(2) Importance of the item to compliance with standards of the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture), and the AAALAC (American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care) as described in the PHS (Public Health Service) Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

(3) Clarity with which the use of the item is related to the programmatic needs of the VA medical center, including improvements in efficiency and/or quality of animal care and contribution to decreased stress or distress to animal subjects.

(4) Evidence of the VA medical center's commitment to improvements in the animal care program.

(5) Extent to which the item serves as a common resource in the animal facility for VA funded research projects.

(6) Impact of the item on research at the VA medical center and perceived potential of the item to enhance ability of VA investigators to compete for research support.

(7) Nature and scope of animal research, number of VA funded investigators benefiting from the equipment and funding for research that requires use of animal subjects.

(8) Appropriateness of the AF Equipment Committee as a funding source of the item requested.

(9) Other factors determined to be relevant in the course of reviewing requests.

b. *Funding is unlikely if requests are not prepared in accordance with instructions outlined in paragraph 12.02.*