

ANIMAL ADOPTION

Date of Policy Adoption by ACUC: February 2005

Revised: March 2011, March 2014, October 2016

Background

Animals may finish a research or teaching project in good health, but are not suitable or needed for any other studies at the institution. The principal investigator (PI) is encouraged to find adoptive homes for the animals in such circumstances. It is understood that an adoption program not only provides a good quality of life for healthy research animals that are no longer needed by MU, but also can decrease stress and raise morale for both research and animal care personnel. The University of Missouri-Columbia believes that responsible and compassionate researchers and teachers utilize animals only when necessary. Therefore, it follows that we should do our best to ensure good lives for those animals whose use is not required by science.

Policy

Animal adoption will be administrated by the Office of Animal Resources (OAR) on a case-by-case basis.

The following conditions must be met in order to place an animal for adoption:

1. Animals should be of good temperament thereby reducing the risk of damage to the property of or harm to the new owner(s).
2. An animal may be placed for adoption only if in good physical condition as ascertained by the MU Attending Veterinarian (AV) and the PI. An animal must not have experienced any manipulation that, in the opinion of the PI and AV, detrimentally altered its anatomical, physiological, metabolic, or locomotor function. The animal must be free of clinical signs of infectious disease or abnormality that could threaten animal or public health. Any exceptions will be considered by the AV or designee on a case by case basis.
3. Dogs and cats must be neutered or spayed, and vaccinated for rabies prior to release. Spaying or neutering requirements will be defined for species other than dogs and cats on a case-by-case basis.
4. Dogs and cats must be permanently identified by microchip or tattoo prior to adoption.
5. The individual adopting an animal shall assume all financial responsibility for its housing, care, and medication at the time of transfer of ownership. The new owner must assume all further responsibilities associated with responsible companion animal ownership.
6. No animal donated or previously client-owned may be adopted out by MU unless designated for potential adoption by the original donor or client.
7. Only individuals 18 years of age or older are eligible to adopt animals.

The following steps must be taken before an animal may be adopted:

1. The PI must indicate on the Animal Care and Use Protocol Application form that adoption is a possible method of animal disposition upon completion of the proposed research or teaching project.
2. The PI with an animal being considered for adoption will submit to the MU AV an MU Animal Release/Adoption Record form on which sections I (New Owner Information) and II (Animal Information) have been completed. Research procedures that have been performed on the animal must be described fully in section II. Also, the form must be signed by the PI and the Department Head/Director prior to submitting the form to the AV. By signing the MU Animal

Release/Adoption Record form, the PI is providing assurance that the adoption procedure is compliant with official MU ACUC policy and that the animal appears to be suitable for adoption as a pet.

3. Animals must be examined by the MU AV (or his/her designate) before being released for adoption. The MU AV must document on the MU Animal Release/Adoption Record form that the animal appears free of detectable diseases and appears to have a temperament suitable for adoption. Signed approval by the MU AV is required before adoption may occur. The completed MU Animal Release/Adoption Record form should be maintained by the OAR for a period of 3 years from the date of signature by the MU AV.
4. The individual adopting an animal must sign an Acceptance of Ownership form which states that MU is not liable for any injury or damage to persons or property by the adopted animal. The form states also that no warranties, guarantees, or promises of any kind have been made or can be made with regard to the adopted animal's physical condition or temperament. A copy of the signed form will be maintained by the OAR for a period of 3 years from the date of signature by the new owner.
5. The PI and the individual adopting a dog or cat must complete the USDA-APHIS Record of Disposition of Dogs and Cats. A complete name, address, copy of a driver's license or federal ID, and a signature of the adopting individual are required. A copy of the signed form will be maintained by the OAR for a period of 3 years from the date of signature by the new owner.