

Vivaria Access: Visitors Policy

Title/Subject: VIVARIA ACCESS: VISITORS POLICY

Applies to: ☒ Faculty ☒ Staff ☒ Students ☒ Student Employees ☒ Visitors ☒ Contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: August 1, 2026

Policy Owner: Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC); Office of Research Compliance

Background

Various individuals interested in animal research, including students considering involvement in research projects, visit Central Michigan University (CMU) vivaria and observe procedures conducted by Principal Investigators (PIs), their research students, and staff. During these observations, such visitors observe and may ask questions. The visitors do not handle or conduct procedures on animals. Only a subset of those who make such observational visits will eventually participate in a CMU research project involving work with animals.

Purpose

Considerable time, effort and resources are necessary for training those who work independently with animals in the CMU vivaria. Such training is required for those permitted independent access to the vivaria. This policy allows individuals visiting CMU vivaria **accompanied** access to the vivaria without completing Institutional animal care and use training, but with stipulations outlined below. This policy is consistent with CMU Administrative Policy #3-58, the *Laboratory Entry and Access Policy*, as well as the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee's (IACUC's) *Mandatory Training Policy*.

Definitions

Facility Manager: The individual responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of a vivarium.

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC): The oversight body composed of individuals within an organization performing federally mandated oversight of the care and use of animals at that organization.

Principal Investigator (PI): The individual responsible for conceiving, running and overseeing a research project.

Visitors: Individuals without vivarium facility access entering the facility escorted for a distinct or periodic need – e.g., facility tours, student observers, visiting faculty, staff, equipment repair personnel.

Designee: For the purposes of this policy, designees are individuals authorized by a PI, the IACUC, or facility staff to guide and supervise visitors during the visitor's time in a CMU vivarium. Designees may include other PIs, research associates and postdoctoral associates, graduate students, advanced undergraduate researchers, or facility staff. Designees must have successfully completed the training required for unaccompanied access to the vivarium as described in the IACUC's Mandatory Training Policy. The Mandatory Training Policy may be found in the list of Policies, SOPs and Guidance on the IACUC's website.

Vivarium: An animal care facility.

Policy

Visitors may enter CMU vivaria when accompanied by facility staff, a trained PI with animals in the facility and current facility access, an appropriately trained course instructor, or a PI's designee.

Accompanied access will require adherence to the stipulations below.

1. Visitors will only access the vivarium accompanied by facility staff, a PI, or their designee. Whoever accompanies the Visitor must be trained and approved for independent facility access. The role of designee for this purpose will require written confirmation of assignment by the PI.

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2. Visitors will adhere to all rules specific to the facility they are accessing and CMU's Lab Access and Entry Policy.
3. Visitors will use all personal protective equipment (PPE) required within the facility.
4. Visitors may access only one CMU vivarium within a 24-hour period.
5. Visitors will **NOT** handle animals, transfer animals, conduct surgery or other procedures with animals, or otherwise materially alter the behavior of animals during their observation visits.
6. On each visit to the vivarium, visitors and the accompanying PI or designee must log in (sign in) to the vivarium with a logbook to be kept in an accessible location (e.g., the break/conference room or foyer of the Health Professions Vivarium).
7. Principal Investigators or their designees will inform visitors of potential hazards in the vivarium. Notification will include allergy information. Visitors will acknowledge their understanding of hazards by signing the Visitor's logbook.
8. Those who decide to participate in animal research must complete training as outlined in the IACUC Policy on Mandatory Training (available on the IACUC's Website) before they may be granted unaccompanied access. Individuals not affiliated with the university will need approval from the Vice President for Research and Innovation (Institutional Official for the purposes of the Public Health Service) before being considered or trained for independent access.
9. Emergency personnel (e.g., CMU Police), IACUC members, the Institutional Official, staff from the Office of Research Compliance, and contractors are not covered under this policy, but are subject to the conditions set forth in the CMU's Laboratory Entry and Access Policy (#3-58).

Central Michigan University reserves the right to make exceptions to modify or eliminate this policy and or its content. This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures or guidelines related to this subject.

Related Policies and Laws (Add Number & Name of Significantly Related Policy(ies))	
Appendices (Optional)	
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