



PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

April 7, 2020

Amy Gutmann, Ph.D.  
Office of the President  
University of Pennsylvania  
1 College Hall, Room 100  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Via e-mail: [presweb@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:presweb@pobox.upenn.edu)

Dear President Gutmann,

Thank you in advance for your time. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide regarding an urgent matter. Based on the repeated and documented failure of University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) to meet the provisions of the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and given the COVID-19 pandemic that is influencing the shut-down of animal experiments around the world,<sup>1</sup> we urge UPenn to immediately: 1) prohibit approval of new animal protocols and experiments; 2) prohibit breeding and acquisition of new animals for laboratories; 3) finalize and end ongoing animal experiments; and, 4) prove that all of these animals and experiments are concretely advancing human health, and if they're not then switch to superior human-relevant, animal-free research methods.<sup>2</sup>

### **UPenn's Culture of Noncompliance: Violations to the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals**

According to public records obtained by PETA from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) via the Freedom of Information Act, UPenn has reported many violations to the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. The following are a few of them: in two separate occasions, live and dead mice were found in cages ready to be washed; 26 cowbirds died of dehydration when staff did not notice that the water bowls were empty; 10 fish died when their tank's outflow pipe was blocked; a mice was subjected to an unapproved procedure by an unauthorized person, and was not administered any anesthetics; and a dog had to be euthanized after sustaining injuries in a fight with other two dogs.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.statnews.com/2020/03/14/coronavirus-pandemic-forces-research-labs-shut-down/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/The-Research-Modernization-Deal-Report-US\\_FINAL\\_2020\\_300.pdf](https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/The-Research-Modernization-Deal-Report-US_FINAL_2020_300.pdf)

Washington, D.C.  
1536 16th St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles  
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90026  
323-644-PETA

Norfolk  
501 Front St.  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757-622-PETA

Berkeley  
2855 Telegraph Ave.  
Ste. 301  
Berkeley, CA 94705  
510-763-PETA

Info@peta.org  
PETA.org

#### Affiliates:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

## **COVID-19: Ending Animal Experiments Protects Animals, Staff, and Patients**

As part of its COVID-19 contingency plan, UPenn has announced that only “essential activities” are allowed to continue.<sup>3</sup> In response to UPenn’s COVID-19 contingency plan, at least one UPenn experimenter stated on March 19, 2020, “preparing lab closure, euthanizing >3/4 of mouse colony.”<sup>4</sup> This begs the question why taxpayer dollars are being used on experiments that can easily be ended or delayed or that involve animals who, apparently, are considered by many universities to be extraneous to the testing in the first place. Equally troubling is that the experiments themselves are not critical to advancing human health, since more than 90 percent of highly promising basic science discoveries (most of which involve animal experiments) do not enter routine clinical use in humans.<sup>5</sup>

We call on UPenn to publicly release the following information:

- 1) An itemization of all experimental protocols that will continue as part of UPenn’s COVID-19 response plan (such that they may be categorized as critical, essential, necessary, and/or other similar terminology);
- 2) An itemization of all experimental protocols that will not continue as part of UPenn’s COVID-19 response plan (such that they may be categorized as extraneous, non-critical, non-essential, ramped down, disposable, unnecessary and/or other similar terminology);
- 3) The number and species of animals who are in experimental protocols covered by item number 1 above (e.g., in an essential and/or similar terminology category), and the number and species of animals who are in experimental protocols covered by item number 2 above (e.g., not in an essential and/or similar terminology category); and,
- 4) The endpoint/disposition of animals used in experimental protocols covered by item number 2 above (e.g., not in an essential and/or similar terminology category), and notice of if, when, and how many of these animals have been and/or will be euthanized, culled, killed, destroyed, disposed or reduced in cage census.

You can contact me by e-mail at [ShalinG@peta.org](mailto:ShalinG@peta.org) or by telephone at 757-962-8325. We look forward to your swift reply to this quickly developing and urgent matter. Thank you.

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://research.upenn.edu/resources/coronavirus/>

<sup>4</sup>

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:https://twitter.com/SunnyShinLab/status/1240796717626404864>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bmj.com/content/348/bmj.g3387.long>

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shalin G. Gala". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "S" that loops under the rest of the name.

Shalin G. Gala  
Vice President, International Laboratory Methods  
Laboratory Investigations Department