



July 2, 2025

Jacquelyn Tubbs, DVM
Acting Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

Via e-mail: Jacquelyn.Tubbs@nih.gov; olawdco@od.nih.gov

Dear Dr. Tubbs:

I am writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 9 million members and supporters to request that your office investigate possible noncompliance with the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS Policy) and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (the *Guide*) related to the treatment of animals at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center (MD Anderson; PHS-Approved Animal Welfare Assurance #D16-00222).

According to an [inspection report dated May 28, 2025](#), and posted today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), a female squirrel monkey was found dead in a “hospital cage” that had been attached to her primary enclosure. The monkey’s head had become entrapped in a gap between the hospital cage door and the cage. It seems employees had failed to properly attach the hospital cage to the primary enclosure. Similar problems were observed with other cages, as the report lists corrective actions that were implemented, “including repairing or replacing all doors with integrity defects, checklists were modified to include hospital cage door inspections, retraining staff, and applying fluorescent zip ties on the cages to ensure metal clips are placed in the correct location on the door.”

It appears to us that the issues raised in the USDA report—specifically, MD Anderson’s failure to ensure that primary enclosures are “constructed and maintained so that they protect the nonhuman primates from injury”—indicate noncompliance with PHS Policy and the *Guide*. In particular, PHS Policy requires that institutions ensure that the “living conditions of animals will be appropriate for their species and contribute to their health and comfort.”¹ Additionally, the *Guide* advises that the “primary enclosure should provide a secure environment [and] should be designed and manufactured to prevent accidental entrapment of animals or their appendages.”²

We urge your office to thoroughly investigate the failures detailed in the USDA inspection report. Prompt and decisive action is warranted to address this

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- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

¹ National Institutes of Health (US). Office for Protection from Research Risks. (1986). *Public Health Service policy on humane care and use of laboratory animals*. Office for Protection from Research Risks (OPRR), National Institutes of Health, 14.

² National Research Council, *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, 8th ed. (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2011), 51.

apparent violation and to help prevent future lapses in oversight and animal welfare.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alka Chandna". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alka" and last name "Chandna" clearly distinguishable.

Alka Chandna, Ph.D.

Vice President

Laboratory Oversight & Special Cases