



April 16, 2025

Brent Morse, DVM
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

Via e-mail: morseb@mail.nih.gov

Dear Dr. Morse:

I am writing 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 Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS; PHS-Approved Animal Welfare Assurance #D16-00007), located at 700 West Olney Road in Norfolk, Virginia.

According to documents obtained by PETA via a Freedom of Information Act request to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, on November 16, 2021, an EVMS student “weaned a cage of five mice and placed them in slot R217 on the racks.” An [internal report](#) of this incident states:

Somehow, [the student] managed to capture all five mouse pups in the full food hopper with the lid. The mice were severely overcrowded and had no access to water overnight. Further inspection of the cage showed evidence your students are not following the SOP on weaning that was developed specifically for your lab. Rather than placing wet chow in the cage in a bowl, dry chow was dropped on the floor of the cage without a container. This SOP was required by the IACUC for your lab to continue research and should not in any way be regarded as optional.

It appears to us that the issues raised in this internal report—failure to ensure that animals “have access to potable, uncontaminated water”; failure to ensure that animals were provided “sufficient space” to “meet physical, physiologic, and behavioral needs”; failure to allow for adequate ventilation to “provide appropriate air quality”; and failure to ensure that “personnel involved with the care and use of animals” were “adequately ... trained” to comply with SOPs—indicate noncompliance with PHS Policy and the *Guide*. Moreover, it does not appear that EVMS self-reported this incident to OLAW.

We urge your office to thoroughly investigate the incident detailed in the internal report and assess whether EVMS has complied with its obligation to self-report problems in its laboratories. Prompt and decisive action is warranted to address these apparent violations and to help prevent future lapses in oversight and animal welfare.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

Washington
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

Info@peta.org
PETA.org

Entities:

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alka Chandna". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alka Chandna, Ph.D.

Vice President

Laboratory Oversight & Special Cases

AlkaC@peta.org | (757) 803-6447