



July 30, 2026

Bernadette Juarez
Deputy Administrator
Animal Care
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Via e-mail

Dear Ms. Juarez:

On behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), I am writing to request that the U.S. Department of Agriculture investigate two serious incidents involving rhesus macaques at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (USDA Certificate No. 35-R-0001) that were reported to the National Institutes of Health's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) as noncompliance with the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Based on information contained in OLAW records obtained by PETA under the Freedom of Information Act, these incidents also appear to constitute violations of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and its implementing regulations.

The first incident, identified by OLAW as [Case 14W](#), involved a macaque who was attacked by another monkey housed in an adjacent enclosure through a food-delivery opening. The injuries were so severe the monkey's forearm had to be amputated to the elbow. According to the records, the injury resulted from a housing configuration that permitted physical contact between animals in adjacent enclosures.

The second incident, identified as [Case 14Y](#), occurred when two macaques housed in adjacent enclosures engaged in an aggressive encounter after staff failed to fully secure the interlocking doors separating the enclosures. One monkey sustained a traumatic oral injury requiring 10 days of veterinary treatment. According to the university's report to OLAW, the staff member involved in the incident was subsequently retrained.

These incidents raise serious concerns regarding the university's compliance with the Animal Welfare Regulations governing the housing and care of nonhuman primates. **Sections 3.80(a)(2)(iii) and 3.80(a)(2)(iv) of the Animal Welfare Regulations** require that primary enclosures for nonhuman primates be constructed and maintained so that they “contain the nonhuman primates securely and prevent accidental opening of the enclosure, including opening by the animal” and “keep other unwanted animals from entering the enclosure or having physical contact with the nonhuman primates.” In both incidents, monkeys housed in separate enclosures were nevertheless able to engage in physical contact, resulting in severe injuries—including, in one case, the traumatic amputation of a forelimb. These incidents raise substantial questions regarding whether the university complied with this requirement.

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.)

The second incident also raises questions regarding compliance with the personnel training requirements set forth in **Section 2.32 of the Animal Welfare Regulations**. Section 2.32(a) provides that “[i]t shall be the responsibility of the research facility to ensure that all scientists, research technicians, animal technicians, and other personnel involved in animal care, treatment, and use are qualified to perform their duties. This responsibility shall be fulfilled in part through the provision of training and instruction to those personnel.” According to the university's report to OLAW, the aggressive encounter occurred because staff failed to ensure that the interlocking doors between adjacent enclosures were fully secured. The university further reported that the individual involved was retrained following the incident. While retraining may have been an appropriate corrective action, it also raises questions about whether personnel had received adequate training and instruction before the incident, as required by Section 2.32.

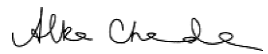
Additionally, both incidents suggest failure on the part of the institution to ensure that handling of all animals was carried out “in a manner that does not cause trauma, ... physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort,” as required by **Section 2.38(f)(1)**.

The violations documented in the OLAW case reports follow a pattern of chronic and egregious violations in UW-Madison’s laboratories. In [February 2025](#), your agency documented three AWA violations, two of them critical, including an incident in which monkeys sustained injuries requiring sutures after staff failed to lock a divider between cages that separated monkeys. This inspection report also documented that eight pigtailed macaques did not receive the required analgesia after a procedure. In [July 2024](#), your agency documented five AWA violations, four of them critical, including an incident in which two monkeys died after they were subjected to whole-body perfusion, a procedure that had not been approved. Other monkeys endured 13 intraocular injections, more than the permitted maximum of six; two monkeys sustained burns after heating lamps were placed dangerously close to them during surgery; and in five separate incidents, monkeys were able to access other monkeys’ neighboring cages due to human error or faulty equipment, resulting in altercations between the stressed animals that left them with injuries requiring sutures. In [September 2023](#), following a PETA undercover investigation, your agency fined UW-Madison \$77,000 for 20 AWA violations, including 10 incidents in which personnel failed to handle animals humanely and six incidents in which personnel failed to ensure that cages held monkeys securely. Monkeys sustained injuries that included amputations of fingers and toes as well as tongue and tail injuries. One monkey was also strangled to death when their head became trapped in a chain in their cage. On multiple occasions, personnel administered incorrect dosages of medication to monkeys and gave medication to the wrong monkeys.

Although the incidents noted in this complaint were reported to OLAW as reportable noncompliance under the Public Health Service Policy, PETA is unaware of any corresponding enforcement action by USDA. The Animal Welfare Act and its implementing regulations establish independent federal requirements applicable to registered research facilities. We therefore respectfully request that the USDA investigate these incidents, determine whether the University of Wisconsin–Madison violated the Animal Welfare Act or its implementing regulations, and, if violations are substantiated, pursue whatever enforcement action the agency deems appropriate.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

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

Alka Chandna
Vice President, Laboratory Oversight & Special Cases
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals