

**Valdosta State University
Institutional Animal Care and Use Program
Animal Worker
Hygiene and Attire in Animal Facilities**

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* recommends that each institution conducting animal research establish a high standard of personal hygiene to prevent the spread of disease from animal to animal and from animal to human as well as decrease human exposure to animal allergens.

The following guidelines apply to laboratory animals housed or used on the Valdosta State University campus within laboratory animal facilities. These guidelines are suggested as a minimum standard for protection and are **not** to supersede more stringent requirements for personal protection that may be needed in some animal areas.

- Personal items such as coats, backpacks, and hats should not be taken into animal-housing areas.
- A laboratory coat should be worn over street clothes in animal housing areas or when animals are handled. A waterproof apron should be used in wet areas.
- The laboratory coat should not be worn outside of the animal facility or laboratory. It should be professionally laundered. Alternately, it may be safely laundered at home by transporting it in a sealed bag, laundering it separately in hot water and detergent as soon as it is removed from the bag, and carefully disposing of the bag. This will reduce allergen exposure for persons outside the animal facility.
- Latex or nitrile gloves and, where appropriate, a dust/vapor mask or respirator, should be used to minimize the risk of development or exacerbation of animal allergies and exposure to zoonotic diseases.
- Do not touch the face with potentially contaminated gloves or hands!
- Wash hands with soap and water (or decontaminate with an alcohol based hand rub) after handling animals or their bedding and after removing gloves.
- Do not take food or drinks into, or use tobacco products or apply cosmetics within, the facility.
- Wash hands before leaving the facility.