

Report on Research Compliance Volume 20, Number 4. March 23, 2023

APHIS Recently Fined Six Institutions for AWA Violations

By Theresa Defino

In the past two years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) entered into settlement agreements imposing fines for noncompliance with the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) against six universities and research institutions, according to documents posted online. APHIS shares minimal details about the violations leading to the fines; such documents are titled "citation and notification of penalty." It also issued dozens of notices of violations, which RRC will address in a future issue.

In order of dollar amounts, the agreements are as follows:

- APHIS imposed a fine of \$74,000 on the University of Wisconsin–Madison on April 15, 2020, for a series of violations related to handling, social grouping, watering, facilities and feeding.^[1] The incidents occurred from March 4, 2015, to April 25, 2019, resulting in two deaths and injuries, including amputations to more than a dozen nonhuman primates. These occurred during escapes, fights with one another or when they were deprived of water. Two mice also died after they were not fed.
- APHIS alleged Oregon Health and Science University personnel committed 12 violations related to handling, enclosures, personnel qualifications, veterinary care, lack of employee training and feeding.^[2] As a result of incidents from Feb. 5, 2018, to Oct. 15, 2021, APHIS said four nonhuman primates died, as did ferrets, guinea pigs and a gerbil; other animals were injured. The university was fined \$37,900 on Oct. 4, 2022.
- On April 13, 2022, APHIS fined Colorado State University in Fort Collins \$5,800 for violations occurring from January 2019 to Feb. 15, 2022.^[3] These related to handling, sanitation and veterinary care. Four sheep were killed by predatory animals, and several bats died.
- Lovelace Biomedical Research Institute of Albuquerque, New Mexico, was fined \$6,200 on May 13, 2022, for three violations occurring from Aug. 14 to Nov. 19, 2019.^[4] These included a violation related to its institutional animal care and use committee (IACUC). Lovelace officials "failed to request an IACUC protocol regarding the dose that should be administered to twelve non-human primates, before administering to the animals." The institution also failed to prevent the death of two macaques.
- The University of Washington (UW) was fined \$3,750 on Oct. 24, 2022, for five violations occurring from Nov. 15, 2018, to Jan. 26, 2021.^[5] APHIS cited failures in handling, veterinary care, training and enclosures. APHIS cited several deaths and injuries, including three macaques who were hurt after breaking apart connected cages. UW is currently fighting in court with the animal rights organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), which is seeking the names of its IACUC members.^[6] In September, UW was ordered to pay PETA more than \$500,000 in fines and penalties related to its failure to release other documents and videos of research involving animals.
- On Aug. 10, 2022, APHIS fined Labcorp Bedford, LLC/Toxikon Corporation of Bedford, Massachusetts,

\$3,375.^[7] Toxikon is a contract research organization that conducted nonclinical testing. It was cited for violations related to personnel qualifications, handling and veterinary care. Incidents APHIS noted include a rabbit that had to be euthanized after it was injured escaping from a restraint. Staff reported another rabbit as healthy but was visibly injured after being trapped in a collar.

This document is only available to subscribers. Please log in or purchase access.

[Purchase Login](#)