

Advancing High Standards in Animal Care and Use

# CCAC Certification Explained

CCAC CCPA

The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) awards its Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice® to institutions that meet Canada's high standards for the ethical and responsible care and use of animals in science. This certificate is respected in Canada and around the world. To earn it, institutions must take part in regular reviews by expert teams and members of the community, follow the CCAC's evidence-based guidelines and policies, and show they meet high standards for animal care and responsible research.

## Levels of Animal Use Oversight

### INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEES

- Keystone of the Canadian system of animal use oversight
- Responsible for overseeing all aspects of ethical animal care and use, and all those who use animals, including animal care personnel and the institutional administration

### ASSESSMENT PANELS

- Visit certified institutions to review all aspects of the animal care and use program (including processes, policies, and facilities)
- Comprised of volunteers including at least one scientist, a veterinarian, and a community representative, as well as a CCAC associate director of assessment
- Note any matters of concern and report their observations and recommendations to the CCAC Assessment and Certification Committee

### ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE

- Responsible for reviewing the assessment, implementation, and update reports for all certified institutions
- Makes recommendations on certification status to the CCAC and provides information to the CCAC Board of Directors

To help ensure animals are treated ethically in Canadian science, the CCAC issues three types of Certificates of GAP – Good Animal Practice®. Each certificate reflects how well an institution is meeting high standards for the care and use of animals in research, teaching, and testing. These certificates encourage institutions to keep improving and help ensure that animal welfare and responsible science remain a top priority across the country.

## CCAC Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice®

This certificate demonstrates that an institution participates in the CCAC program and adheres to internationally recognized standards for the ethical care and use of animals in research, teaching, and testing.

To maintain this certification, institutions must take part in peer reviews and assessments every three years, continually demonstrating their commitment to animal welfare.

## CCAC Preliminary Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice®

This certificate is for institutions preparing for their first Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice®. It confirms that program elements are in place, such as an animal care committee, qualified personnel, proper facilities, and veterinary care.

Valid for up to 18 months, it marks the beginning of an institution's participation in the CCAC program and its progress toward meeting national standards for responsible animal care and use.

## CCAC Probationary Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice®

This is a temporary certificate issued when an institution needs to address serious or unresolved issues in its animal care and use program. These institutions are still certified and are provided with support and guidance to help them return to full status.

Probation typically lasts one year and is extended only in exceptional circumstances. To return to full certification status, the institution must demonstrate to the CCAC that all concerns have been properly addressed.

CCAC certification is required for all federally funded animal-based research, teaching, and testing, and applies to most academic and government institutions. While not mandatory for private companies, many are certified to meet regulatory or partner requirements, foster collaboration, and demonstrate their commitment to responsible, ethical science.

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For more information, please visit the CCAC website or contact us