CONFIDENTIALITY OF ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

DATE OF REVISION: September 2024

In order to foster frank and open discussions of all animal care and use issues by assessment panel members and institutional representatives, information related to individual institutional animal care and use programs, including institutional animal data and assessment information, must be treated as confidential, unless it is subject to an exception within this policy or explicitly made public by the institution. "Assessment information" includes pre-assessment documentation, information obtained during the assessment process, assessment reports, and post-assessment documentation.

1. Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) interpretation of the term "confidential":

   1.1 "Confidential" does not imply "secret" since assessment information is discussed freely by institutional and assessment panel members, the CCAC Secretariat staff, and members of the CCAC Assessment and Certification Committee prior to submission of an assessment report to an institution.

   1.2 "Confidential" means "restricted to those authorized to have access", in that assessment reports and other CCAC documents related to a specific institution may not be quoted in public, transcribed, or disseminated, in full or in part, to individuals, groups, or others, **except by decision of the institution concerned and subject to the following conditions**:

   a) The institution must not disclose documents containing names of CCAC personnel; such names must be irreversibly redacted from the documents prior to publication.

   b) Prior written notification of public release must be sent to the CCAC by the senior administrator responsible for the animal care and use program.

   c) The CCAC reserves the right to correct or clarify any information released by the institution. The names of panel members who conducted the visit must not be released.

2. The CCAC assures institutions participating in its programs that all information provided to the CCAC, and all CCAC letters and reports concerning the institution, remain in confidence according to the definitions in point 1. The only exceptions to this are:

   2.1 aggregated data that cannot be used to directly identify an identifiable institution

   2.2 notification sent to federal granting agencies (in cases where the institution is eligible for granting agency funding) when the institution is no longer certified, where federal granting agencies require the CCAC to provide such notification

   2.3 the list of names of certified institutions (certificate holders) on the CCAC website

3. If, for any reason and at any time, a panel member cannot comply with the *CCAC policy: Confidentiality of assessment information*, the individual must withdraw from the panel.

4. The following statement is included in CCAC assessment reports:

> "The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) treats as confidential matters relating to the assessment and the report. Nonetheless, the assessed institution may release the assessment report, or part thereof, to the public. The report must not contain names of CCAC personnel unless those names are irreversibly redacted, the CCAC must be advised in writing prior to any release, and the CCAC reserves the right to correct or clarify any information released by the institution."