

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION**

Rescission of FAQs on COVID-19 and VA Animal Care and Use Programs

DATE: June 23, 2023

Guidance Document: AR2023-001

The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on COVID-19 and VA Animal Care and Use Programs, originally released on March 19, 2020, and subsequently revised several times, most recently on April 13, 2020, are hereby rescinded. The guidance that was provided focused largely on compliant application of existing flexibilities in the regulatory and policy requirements for VA Animal Care and Use Programs, to address the challenges of the acute pandemic conditions of early 2020. VA programs are encouraged to continue to apply flexibilities that exist in the regulatory and policy language, to minimize administrative burden while maintaining compliance, but it is recognized that acute pandemic conditions are no longer the prevailing environment in which the programs operate.

FAQs 15 and 16 address changes in VA Animal Research Policy from what was required by VHA Handbook 1200.07. On May 23, 2023, VHA Handbook 1200.07 (dated November 23, 2011) was rescinded and replaced by VHA Directive 1200.07, which largely incorporates the changes described in FAQ 15. The waivers described in FAQ 15 are therefore no longer relevant, and the policies documented in VHA Directive 1200.07 apply to all VA Research with Animals.