
Overview

This standard is about maintaining bio-security procedures and infection controls when working with animals.

Good hygiene and bio-security arrangements are essential to the successful operation of any business providing animal care. These controls and procedures should be an integral part of the on-going management of animals and a key factor in the promotion of animal health and welfare.

The term "work environment" is used to describe the different areas that may house animals, on a permanent or temporary basis, as well as the areas where equipment and consumables are stored, disinfected or sterilised before use.

In this standard the term "animal" is used to include all species; however, specific species of animals may need different bio-security measures.

This standard is suitable for anyone who works with animals.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. maintain the site hygiene, bio-security procedures and infection controls relevant to the animal areas on site
2. identify and follow the advice and guidance on protocols, work routines, site hygiene and bio-security
3. minimise contamination to animals and staff, including specific requirements for infection controls when working with animals
4. check that the suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) is relevant to the activity
5. monitor the animal's physical condition and behaviour when working with animals
6. recognise animal health issues and take action to address them, seeking professional veterinary advice where necessary
7. communicate the site infection controls and bio-security procedures and protocols to all those who access the animal areas on site, including staff, contractors, visitors and customers
8. deal with waste in accordance with relevant legislation and organisational policy
9. confirm that records are maintained and stored as required by the relevant legislation and organisational policy
10. carry out all work in accordance with the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, associated codes of practice and organisational policies

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the site hygiene and bio-security procedures and infection controls for the animal areas on site; and the implications of not following these
2. how to maintain site hygiene and bio-security procedures and infection controls, in accordance with relevant legal and organisational requirements; and where to seek advice if you have any queries
3. the risk of exposure to allergens and infectious micro-organisms when working with animal products and equipment
4. the likely causes of infection, cross-contamination and transmission
5. the signs of ill health in the animals in your care and when to ask for professional veterinary advice
6. how the spread of infection or cross-contamination can be minimised, including quarantine and isolation
7. the importance of quarantine and isolation bays
8. the different methods of hand hygiene and when to use them
9. the types and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and the dress requirements to maintain site hygiene and bio-security when working with animals
10. the difference between sterilisation and disinfection and the techniques and materials used for each
11. the specific organisational requirements for infection control when working with animals
12. the importance of your own health and why it is important to report any personal health conditions that may increase the risk of transmission, including immuno-suppression and allergies, as well as prophylactic treatments for animals and humans
13. how to inform all those involved in, or affected by your work of the site hygiene and bio-security procedures and protocols
14. the hygiene and bio-security measures required for the handling, storage and disposal of different types of waste
15. the reasons for controlling access to different areas of the work environment and the use of protective barriers
16. the records that need to be kept in relation to bio-security and infection control and the importance of completing them, in accordance with the relevant legislation and organisational policy
17. the importance of maintaining records to aid contact tracing for infectious diseases
18. your responsibilities under the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, associated codes of practice and organisational policies

Scope/range

Use bio-security procedures and infection controls when working with animals, including:

1. cleaning of animal accommodation**
2. cleaning of feeding equipment
3. sterilisation or disinfection of equipment and consumables
4. storage and disposal of all types of waste
5. supply of equipment and consumables into animal accommodation
6. collection of animals from animal accommodation
7. delivery of animals to barrier accommodation
8. entry and exit of people to animal accommodation

Minimise potential contamination by:

1. provision and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
2. appropriate standards of hygiene required for personnel
3. correct use of disinfection or sterilisation methods appropriate to items and area
4. appropriate infection control routines and schedules

recognise signs of ill health in animals in your care including:

1. appearance
2. posture and movement
3. behaviour
4. bodily functioning
5. social interaction

Specific organisational requirements for infection control are required when:

1. arrival of new animals
2. visiting animals
3. working in unfamiliar environments
4. increased risk of contamination
5. suspicion of infection
6. disposal of waste
7. disposal of animals

Glossary

Acute – severe

Chronic – persistent for a long time or reoccurring

Vector – an insect or other organism that transmits a pathogenic fungus, virus, bacterium

Fomite - an inanimate object or substance, such as clothing, furniture, or soap, that is capable of transmitting infectious organisms from one individual to another

Host - a living animal or plant from which a parasite obtains nutrition

Notifiable - a disease that must be reported to public health authorities at the time it is diagnosed because it is potentially dangerous to human or animal health

Pathogen – any disease-producing agent, especially a virus, bacterium, or other microorganism

Zoonosis – pathology. any disease of animals communicable to humans

Infectious – transmitted by infection, as from one person to another or from one part of the body to another

Allergen – any substance, often a protein, that induces an allergy: common allergens include pollen, grasses, dust, and some medications

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