AAALAC Site Visit Readiness Checklist

1. General Housekeeping

- ☐ Remove cardboard, unnecessary supplies, and equipment from floors.
- ☐ Elevate any supplies that are stored on the floors on a plastic pallet or other riser.
- ☐ Remove clutter and items that are no longer needed in the animal use area.
- ☐ Ensure work surfaces, furniture, carts, and equipment can be appropriately cleaned and sanitized.
- ☐ Replace or remove fabric or upholstered furniture that cannot be adequately sanitized.
- ☐ Ensure trash, sharps, and waste containers are cleanly and not overflowing.
- ☐ Ensure that materials in sharps containers do not exceed the maximum limit of the container.
- ☐ Check that storage areas and procedure spaces are orderly.
- ☐ Make sure the space reflects normal operating conditions—not simply temporary "site visit" conditions.

2. Disinfection & Sanitation

- ☐ Know the routine cleaning frequency for the procedure space.
- ☐ Confirm disinfectant dilution requirements.
- ☐ Confirm disinfectant contact time.
- ☐ Check disinfectants for expiration dates and hazard labels.
- ☐ Check that cleaning and disinfection practices are appropriate for investigator-owned equipment.
- ☐ Confirm that equipment brought into the vivarium is clean and in proper working order.
- ☐ Be prepared to explain how specialized equipment is cleaned between uses.
- ☐ Ensure any cleaning or sanitation logs are current.
- ☐ Confirm that sterilization methods used for surgical instruments are understood and consistently followed.

3. Expired Materials

- ☐ Check **all drugs, medical supplies, hand soaps, swabs, and other dated products** for expiration.
- ☐ Remove expired materials from animal use areas unless they are clearly segregated and appropriately designated for another permitted purpose.

- ☐ Check refrigerators, cabinets, drawers, procedure carts, and other less visible storage locations.
- ☐ Confirm expiration dates are present on prepared solutions when applicable.
- ☐ Make sure personnel know how expiration dates are determined for prepared solutions.
- ☐ Remove materials that are no longer needed.

4. Anesthesia & Procedure Equipment

- ☐ Verify anesthesia machines and vaporizers have up to date certifications.
- ☐ If an equipment label appears out of date but documentation supports continued use, have that documentation readily available.
- ☐ Check that appropriate equipment, such as needle recappers where required, is present.
- ☐ Ensure personnel can explain the safe operation and cleaning of anesthesia equipment.
- ☐ Confirm scavenging equipment and other anesthesia-related systems are being used as intended.

5. Surgery & Aseptic Technique

- ☐ Review the sterilization method used for surgical instruments.
- ☐ Confirm the study team’s approach to aseptic handling.
- ☐ If a "tips-only" technique is used, make sure surgeons can accurately explain the technique.
- ☐ Check surgical supplies for expiration.
- ☐ Confirm that materials that could also be used by humans (ex. Nair) are labeled "only for animal use”.

6. Labels, Signs & Hazard Communication

- ☐ Remove outdated or obsolete signs.
- ☐ Check that hazard signage accurately identifies the hazard or agents in use.
- ☐ Make sure labels on caging clearly identify relevant hazards or agents.
- ☐ Review ABSL-2 or other containment signage for accuracy and clarity.
- ☐ Make sure required reporting and contact information is visible and easy for personnel to find.
- ☐ Check posted policies and signs to ensure they reflect current program expectations.

7. Housing & Husbandry

- ☐ Confirm animals are housed according to the approved protocol and program expectations.
- ☐ Ensure that social animals being housed singly are identified with appropriate justification.
- ☐ Confirm animal transport practices and equipment are consistent with program expectations.
- ☐ Review any unusual housing or husbandry arrangements and be prepared to explain current practice.

8. Hazardous Agents & Chemical Safety

- ☐ Ensure hazardous agent information associated with animal cages is clear and specific.
- ☐ Review SDS requirements for chemicals used in animal procedures.
- ☐ Confirm actual laboratory practices are consistent with applicable safety instructions.
- ☐ Where practice differs from an SDS recommendation, raise the issue with the appropriate program contact **before the visit** rather than attempting to explain the discrepancy during the visit.
- ☐ Know how to handle hazardous animal cages when opening and during a cage change. This includes how to properly dispose of cages once the study is completed.
- ☐ Confirm appropriate PPE for chemical use, animal procedures, and other potentially hazardous procedures.
- ☐ If you use Controlled Substances, ensure all are stored and secured appropriately.

9. Occupational Health & PPE

- ☐ Make sure personnel understand applicable occupational health requirements.
- ☐ Confirm personnel know when respiratory protection (and fit testing) is required.
- ☐ Review hearing protection expectations where applicable.
- ☐ Confirm chemical specific PPE requirements.
- ☐ Personnel should know where to go with occupational health or workplace safety questions.

10. Records & Documentation

- ☐ Make sure personnel know how animal mortality is documented and communicated to veterinary staff.
- ☐ Ensure required animal, treatment, procedure, mortality, and other records are current.
- ☐ Make sure records are accessible during the visit, including electronic records.
- ☐ Check that cage side post-procedure monitoring records are complete and understandable.

- [ ] Confirm cleaning logs and schedules are current.
- [ ] Confirm equipment validation/certification records are available.
- [ ] Retain supporting correspondence when it explains an apparent discrepancy in an equipment certification label or similar record.
- [ ] Make sure any protocol specific supporting documentation needed to explain a practice is readily available.
- [ ] If you use Controlled Substances, ensure that records are up to date and complete.

11. Personnel Readiness

Every person who may interact with the site visitors should be prepared to:

- [ ] Describe what they personally do rather than speculate about someone else's responsibilities.
- [ ] Explain routine cleaning and sanitation of their space.
- [ ] Explain how expired materials are identified and managed.
- [ ] Explain how animal health or welfare concerns are reported, including available confidential reporting mechanisms.
- [ ] Explain how unexpected mortality is documented and reported.
- [ ] Explain relevant occupational health and PPE requirements.
- [ ] Identify applicable hazards and the precautions used when working with them.
- [ ] Explain anesthesia, surgical, and procedural practices they personally perform.
- [ ] Know whom to contact if they are unsure of an answer.

During the visit: Answer the question that was asked, describe actual practice accurately, and do not guess. If you do not know an answer, it is appropriate to say that you do not know and identify the person or office that can provide the information.

12. Final Walkthrough

Before the site visit, perform one final review of every animal use area:

- [ ] Floors and work surfaces are clear.
- [ ] No unnecessary cardboard is present.
- [ ] No expired supplies are in use.
- [ ] Refrigerators and cabinets have been checked.
- [ ] Signs and labels are current.
- [ ] Hazard labels identify the applicable hazard/agent.
- [ ] Cleaning logs are current.
- [ ] Equipment records are current and available.
- [ ] Furniture and surfaces can be sanitized.

- ☐ Animal records are current and accessible.
- ☐ Personnel know the practices relevant to their work.
- ☐ Personnel know how to report animal welfare concerns.
- ☐ Any unresolved questions have been elevated to the appropriate program contact **before the site visit**.