

## NON-CONTACT ANIMAL EXPOSURE AWARENESS FORM

All employees, visitors or students who may have exposure to animals either directly or indirectly must enroll in the Nova Southeastern University Occupational Health and Safety Program.

- Employees, visitors or students who may handle animals must receive medical clearance and complete required training prior to working with animals.
- Employees, visitors or students who do not handle animals but may enter animal facilities are required to be issued the information on this page in lieu of medical clearance (*this complete form is valid for three years*).

This information is provided to persons who enter the vivarium, but whose daily work activities DO NOT include direct contact with animals.

### Hazards Associated with Animals:

1. Physical injuries, e.g., animal bites and scratches; lifting heavy animal cages, or equipment.
2. Zoonotic diseases transmittable from animal to human. These diseases are uncommon in laboratory animals and the NSU Vivarium Core has measures in place to prevent transmission. Risks are further reduced by use of personal protective equipment such as lab coats, gowns, bouffant caps, gloves, safety glasses, and respirators, as required, while handling animals and equipment.
3. Allergies associated with exposure to contact or respiratory allergens, such as animal dander or urine.

Of these hazards, **ALLERGIES** are the only significant risk for individuals who do not directly handle animals or enter animal rooms. Even outside the animal holding rooms, allergens are frequently airborne or adhere to surfaces such as hallway walls.

### Animal Allergies

Development of allergies is the single most common occupational hazard for employees who work with research animals. Allergies can develop to a single animal species or to multiple species and can even begin after long-term exposure. Once a person develops an allergy and is then exposed to allergen, histamine release and other factors can cause a variety of symptoms within minutes of exposure.

These symptoms include:

- Runny nose
- Sneezing and coughing
- Itchy, watery eyes
- Skin reaction (reddening of the skin)
- Other respiratory symptoms, including asthma or difficulty breathing in severe cases.

The most common allergies are developed from continued exposure to protein allergens commonly found in bedding, cages, and residual dust particles. People who develop allergic symptoms should seek medical counseling and may need to wear special protective equipment or even discontinue working with the species if severe symptoms occur during exposure.

As a person who DOES NOT handle animals in the NSU vivarium, your risk of developing allergies to animals is low.

However, when you enter the NSU vivarium area:

1. Contact the vivarium supervisor upon arrival for guidance and facility-specific concerns.
2. Do not handle or touch animals. If your job responsibility includes touching animals, you must enroll in the Occupational Health Program and complete vivarium training. (This form is not intended for you.)
3. All vivarium entrants must follow protective clothing instructions posted at the entry door.
4. If you experience symptoms listed above within minutes after entering the vivarium, immediately report the problem to your supervisor.

I understand the potential hazards related to entering the vivarium as explained above and will follow the listed recommendations. **Print Clearly:**

NSU Vivarium Entrant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer / School: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_