



Name:	Policy on the Adoption of Laboratory Fishes
Approving Authority:	Vice President Academic and Research
Approved:	23-FEB-2024
Responsible Office:	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Animal Care Committee
Responsibility:	Associate Vice President Research
Revision Date(s):	NA
Supersedes:	NA
Next Required Review:	2027

1. Preamble

- 1.1 As a certified institution of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), Saint Mary's University (SMU) follows the [CCAC guidelines on: the care and use of fish in research, teaching, and testing](#). These guidelines include the adoption of fish as pets by trained personnel with the knowledge and ability to provide adequate care as a means of final disposition and encourages the development of an appropriate policy describing the conditions that need to be fulfilled before their release.
- 1.2 The Policy on the Adoption of Laboratory Fishes is ultimately the responsibility of the Vice President Academic and Research (VPAR). The VPAR has designated day-to-day responsibility for the Policy to the Associate Vice President Research (AVPR). The AVPR has authorized the SMU Animal Care Committee (ACC) to oversee the Policy, to review it annually, and make recommendations on any changes to the AVPR.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to describe the process of adoption of fish no longer needed for research or breeding at Saint Mary's University.

3. Jurisdiction/Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to trained animal users adopting retired research fish and Principle Investigators (PIs) on the associated animal use protocol(s).

4. **Definitions**

ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE (ACC)	The local representative of the CCAC responsible for ensuring that all animals used in teaching, research or testing at SMU are treated ethically and in accordance with the Canadian Council on Animal Care's (CCAC) policies and guidelines.
ADOPTER	The trained animal user eligible to adopt fish no longer being used in research or breeding.
ANIMAL USER	Any faculty, staff, or student who use animals for research or teaching covered under CCAC mandate (for more information, see CCAC Policy: Requirement for submitting an animal protocol).
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)	The faculty member who holds an approved Animal Use Protocol (AUP) and associated funding.

5. **Policy**

- 5.1 Fish that are no longer needed for use in research or breeding can be adopted by a trained animal user. Only individuals who have completed the required training and have worked in the SMU Aquatic Facility are eligible adopters.
- 5.2 Only healthy and non-genetically modified fish that are not actively being used in an approved Animal Use Protocol (AUP) are eligible for adoption. Wild fish captured under federal and/or provincial license(s) are subject to the terms of final disposition outlined in the associated license(s). The health of the fish must be verified by the Consulting Veterinarian before adoption can be finalized. Information about all previous experimental procedures for each animal must be made available to the Consulting Veterinarian for assessment and to the potential adopter for their reference.
- 5.3 Adoption must be listed as a potential method of final disposition in the approved AUP that covers the animal.
- 5.4 The Fish Adoption Agreement form must be completed in full before fish can be released to the adopter.

6. **Related Policies, Procedures & Documents**

- 6.1 The PI will identify fish that are no longer required for use in research or breeding.
- 6.2 The fish eligible for adoption are inspected by the Consulting Veterinarian and the results of the health check are recorded on the associated Fish Adoption Agreement form.

- 6.3 The Fish Adoption Agreement form is reviewed and signed by the PI, Consulting Veterinarian, and adopter, and is sent to the ACC for approval. The ACC Coordinator and Chair will review the agreement and confirm the training records of the adopter.
- 6.4 Once approved by the ACC, the PI will arrange a time for the adopter to collect the fish.
- 6.5 Once the fish leave the SMU Aquatic Facility, they are considered to be under the care and responsibility of the adopter.

Related Guidelines: Delete if N/A

[CCAC guidelines on: the care and use of fish in research, teaching, and testing](#)

Fish Adoption Agreement Form

I, _____ am adopting fish from Saint Mary's University and agree to be fully responsible for the care, treatment, and well-being of these fish. Furthermore, I acknowledge that I am adopting these fish solely as my personal pet and not for sale, trade, gift or use in any illegal or harmful activity that may have adverse effects upon the fish or Saint Mary's University.

The SMU Animal Care Committee has informed me of the following information concerning the fish that I agree to adopt.

It has been explained to me that the below-referenced fish have been examined by SMU Animal Care Committee Consulting Veterinarian, as evidenced by their signature below. Any health conditions or abnormal conditions, known to exist at the time of the adoption, have been explained to me and I affirm that I am capable of handling all the obligations connected with the care and treatment of the fish. I have had an opportunity to ask the Consulting Veterinarian any health and care related questions and each question has been answered to my satisfaction.

I am fully aware that this animal has been the subject of a research and/or teaching at Saint Mary's University, the specifics of which have been discussed between myself, the Principle Investigator, and the Consulting Veterinarian.

To be completed by the Principal Investigator:

Fish Species/Strain	
Number of fish	
Reason fish are eligible for adoption	

Consulting Veterinarian's Statement: I have examined the above-described animal(s) and, to the best of my knowledge, have found it/them to be in good health and temperament at the time of examination and suitable for adoption.

Date of Examination: _____

Special Remarks (add additional pages if necessary):

Printed Name (Veterinarian)

Signature

I agree to accept full responsibility for this animal, including any and all future costs related to the animal's care, well-being, and actions. I have completely and thoroughly read this Acknowledgement and agree that all terms are fully understood and voluntarily accepted for the purpose of making a full and final adoption of the above animal.

Date of Fish Adoption Agreement: _____

Printed Name (Adopting Owner)

Signature

Printed Name (Principle Investigator)

Signature

Date of Transfer: _____

Completed, signed copies of this agreement are to be retained by the SMU Animal Care Committee and the Principal Investigator.