



# POLICY

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Establishing a Quorum, Telecommunication &amp; Voting</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	2016-054
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
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<b>Approval Date:</b>	8/10/16
<b>Reviewed:</b>	11/8/17; 7/8/2020 (No changes)
<b>Revised:</b>	11/8/17 (Defined simple majority and how to calculate if an odd number of voting members); 6/13/18 (Added policy on telecommuting to convened meetings)

**Purpose of Policy:** Establishes the quorum requirements and voting process for conducting official Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) business.

**Definitions:** The following definitions will apply to this policy:

**Abstain:** To refrain from voting by one's own choice. Examples: a) A member was absent for the discussion and chooses not to vote; b) a member did not read the protocol and does not feel it proper to vote; c) a member may not have sufficient understanding of the protocol and chooses not to vote.

**Recuse:** To disqualify oneself from voting due to a conflict of interest regardless of the nature of the conflict.

**Policy Information:** The [Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#) defines a quorum as "a majority of the members of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee." The National Institutes of Health (NIH) varies this definition by stating that "A quorum is the total number of voting members of the IACUC" and that "a committee member may not participate in the review or approval of a project in which they have a conflict of interest except to provide information and may not contribute to the quorum for the vote on that project."

Although abstentions from voting for reasons other than a conflict of interest do not alter the quorum and do not change the number of votes required for approval of an animal subject protocol, recusal of a member due to a conflict of interest does alter the quorum. The IACUC must ensure that the necessary number of members are present if a quorum is required.

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) has issued guidance concerning the use of telecommunications (telephone or video conferencing) when a convened meeting of a quorum of the IACUC is required. This guidance is incorporated into the following Policy.

**Policy:** Western University of Health Sciences' IACUC will adhere to the following:

- ❖ A quorum is defined as a **simple majority (50% + 1)** of the voting members of the IACUC. If the IACUC has an odd number of members, the number of members that must be present to constitute a quorum shall be determined by taking half of the total number of voting members and rounding up to the next whole number + 1.
- ❖ Official business requiring a vote shall not be conducted unless a quorum, as defined above, is present.
- ❖ Members who recuse themselves shall not contribute to a quorum.
- ❖ If a recusal results in the loss of a quorum, any business under consideration that led to the recusal shall be tabled until a quorum is present.
- ❖ A simple majority of votes by the voting members present and eligible to vote shall determine a decision.
- ❖ The committee Chair contributes to the quorum but shall not vote except to break a tie.
- ❖ Pursuant to OLAW's [NOT-OD-06-052](#), IACUC members may telecommute to IACUC meetings for the purpose of conducting official IACUC business requiring a quorum provided that the following criteria are met:
  - Circumstances prohibit the physical attendance of a member.
  - All members are given notice of the meeting.
  - Documents normally provided to members during a physically-convened meeting are provided to all members in advance of the meeting.
  - All members have access to the documents and the technology necessary to fully participate.
  - A quorum of voting members is convened when required by PHS Policy.
  - The forum allows for real time verbal interaction equivalent to that occurring in a physically-convened meeting (i.e., members can actively and equally participate and there is simultaneous communication).
  - If a vote is called for, the vote occurs during the meeting and is taken in a manner that ensures an accurate count of the vote. A mail ballot or individual telephone polling cannot substitute for a convened meeting.
  - Opinions of absent members that are transmitted by mail, telephone, fax or e-mail may be considered by the convened IACUC members but may not be counted as votes or considered as part of the quorum.
  - Written minutes of the meeting are maintained in accord with the PHS Policy, IV.E.1.b.