

# STUDENT ANIMAL HEALTH RISK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Environmental Health & Safety

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this acknowledgement form is to inform students of the potential health risks associated with working with animals on the Cal Poly Pomona Campus. By signing this form, students acknowledge their understanding of these risks and agree to follow all safety protocols and guidelines provided.

## **HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ANIMAL WORK**

**Health risks associated with working with animals include, but are not limited to, the following:**

### **Zoonotic Diseases:**

Zoonotic diseases are infections that can be transmitted from animals to humans. These diseases can be caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi. Some common zoonotic diseases include:

- **Rabies:** A viral disease that affects the nervous system and is usually transmitted through bites or scratches from infected animals.
- **Leptospirosis:** A bacterial infection that can be contracted through contact with the urine of infected animals, often through contaminated water.
- **Salmonella:** A bacterial infection that can be transmitted through handling reptiles, birds, and other animals, often causing gastrointestinal illness.
- **Ringworm:** A fungal infection that can be transmitted through direct contact with an infected animal's skin or fur.

### **Allergic Reactions:**

Allergic reactions can occur due to exposure to animal dander, fur, saliva, and other allergens. These reactions can range from mild to severe and may include:

- **Respiratory Symptoms:** Such as sneezing, coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath.
- **Skin Reactions:** Such as hives, itching, and eczema.
- **Anaphylaxis:** A severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that requires immediate medical attention.

### **Physical Injuries:**

Working with animals carries the risk of physical injuries, which can include:

- **Bites and Scratches:** Animals may bite or scratch if they feel threatened or scared, leading to wounds that may require medical treatment.
- **Kicks and Trampling:** Large animals such as horses or cattle can cause serious injuries if they kick or trample a person.
- **Lifting and Restraining Injuries:** Improper handling or lifting of animals can result in musculoskeletal injuries, including strains and sprains.
- **Needle Sticks:** Accidental needle sticks can occur during injections or other procedures, posing a risk of transmitting infections and causing injuries.

### **Chemical Exposure:**

Exposure to chemicals and medications used in veterinary practices can pose health risks. These may include:

- **Anesthetics:** Exposure to anesthetic gases can cause respiratory issues and other health problems.
- **Disinfectants:** Chemicals used to clean and disinfect animal areas can cause skin and respiratory irritation.
- **Medications:** Handling medications, including antibiotics and hormones, can pose health risks if proper safety measures are not followed.

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## **Ergonomic Risks:**

Repetitive motions, heavy lifting, and awkward postures while working with animals can lead to ergonomic injuries, such as:

- **Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSIs):** Injuries caused by repetitive tasks, such as lifting or restraining animals.
- **Back Injuries:** Caused by improper lifting techniques or handling heavy animals.
- **Joint and Muscle Pain:** Resulting from prolonged periods of standing, bending, or awkward movements.

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS THAT MAY PUT INDIVIDUALS AT RISK:**

### **Known or Suspected Allergies to Animals:**

Individuals with known or suspected allergies to animals may experience severe allergic reactions.

### **Lung Problems:**

Such as asthma or other respiratory conditions, which may be exacerbated by animal dander, fur, or chemicals.

### **Chronic Health Problems:**

Including diabetes, which can affect the body's ability to heal and fight off infections.

### **Renal or Liver Disease:**

These conditions can affect the body's ability to process medications and toxins.

### **Sickle Cell Disease:**

Increases susceptibility to infections and complications from physical stress.

### **Valvular Heart Disease:**

Physical strain or stress from handling animals may pose additional risks.

### **Immune System Deficiencies:**

Conditions that impair the immune system, increasing susceptibility to infections.

### **Current Therapy with High Dose Steroids, Radiation Therapy, or Cancer Therapies:**

These treatments can weaken the immune system, increasing infection risk.

### **History of Problems with Your Spleen or Absence of Your Spleen:**

The spleen plays a critical role in fighting infections, and its absence can increase infection risk.

### **Pregnancy or Planning to Get Pregnant:**

Certain zoonotic diseases and chemicals can pose risks to pregnant individuals.

If, in the event you have any of the listed medical conditions and would like to consult with a physician prior to working with animals, please consider the following steps:

1. Notify your supervisor, faculty advisor, or instructor of your interest.
2. Complete a Health History Questionnaire (HHQ). The HHQ form can be found on the CPP EHS website (<https://www.cpp.edu/ehs/forms.shtml>).
3. Schedule a meeting with the designated physician at the Student Health Center, or your own physician, to discuss your completed HHQ.



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## **STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITIES**

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- Attend all safety training sessions provided. Follow all safety protocols and guidelines at all times.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) as required (gloves, masks, goggles, etc.).
- Report any injuries or health concerns to the instructor immediately. Notify the instructor of any pre-existing health conditions that may be affected by working with animals.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understood the information provided in this Animal Health Risk Acknowledgement Form. I am aware of the potential health risks associated with working with animals and agree to adhere to all safety protocols and guidelines provided during my course work. I understand that failure to comply with these guidelines may result in disciplinary action and/or removal from the course.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Pre-existing Health Conditions (Optional):**

Please list any pre-existing health conditions that may be affected by working with animals:

### **Notes:**

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If you have any questions or concerns about the information provided in this form, please contact [Environmental Health and Safety at ehs@cpp.edu](mailto:ehs@cpp.edu) or 909-869-4697.