



AAALAC GUIDANCE STATEMENTS

Nonaffiliated Member of the IACUC

We are considering using a former employee as our nonaffiliated member. They are no longer affiliated with our program and they are familiar with the type of research we perform. Are there any concerns with this approach?

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (Guide)*, NRC 2011, does offer some guidance on the issue of what should be some of the traits of the nonaffiliated (public) member. The *Guide* states this person should represent the general community interests in the proper care and use of animals, should not be laboratory-animal users, and not be affiliated with the institution or be members of the immediate family of a person who is affiliated with the institution. The OLAW/ARENA Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Guidebook (which is an AAALAC International reference resource) expands on this by stating that the nonaffiliated member can bring significant value to the committee by bringing a non-institutional perspective to the research endeavor. For programs with an NIH Assurance, OLAW provides some additional guidance in their frequently asked questions section of their website (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/faqs.htm#IACUC_1) by stating that “the unaffiliated member should have no discernable ties or ongoing affiliation with the institution, and may not be a member of the immediate family of a person who is affiliated with the institution. Immediate family includes parent, spouse, child and sibling. Appointment of an individual who is unambiguously nonaffiliated is the best way to fulfill the letter and spirit of this provision.” Using a former employee as the nonaffiliated member is certainly a gray area that might come into question during a site visit based on the above guidance, especially in context of the comments about the value of that member bringing a non-institutional perspective to the research endeavor and not having any discernable ties or ongoing affiliation with the institution. While not specifically prohibited, the Institutional Official should give special consideration to the use of a former employee as a nonaffiliated member to ensure that both the intent and the spirit of the *Guide* are being met.