

AAALAC e-brief

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Attention state-funded organizations:

Important guidance for state-funded AAALAC accredited organizations on responding to FOIA requests

The New England Anti-Vivisection Society (NEAVS), a group working to end the use of animals in research, testing and science education, is engaged in a campaign to obtain information from state-funded institutions, which includes all correspondence with AAALAC International (i.e., Program Descriptions and accreditation letters). **AAALAC International and the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) are partnering to provide information and support if you have received a request.** The basis of the NEAVS information requests comes from state open records laws. An example of a NEAVS request [can be viewed here](#). The following list is to provide key points and reminders:

1. **Consult with an institutional legal representative** to determine if you need to respond to the NEAVS request.
2. **Refer to "[Responding to FOIA Requests: Facts and Resources](#)"** brochure, co-authored by FASEB, the Society for Neuroscience and NABR. While the main focus of this document is Federal FOIA, the principles are generally applicable.

3. **Review the AAALAC International [Program Description \(PD\) Instructions](#)** for guidance on protecting information in your PD:

- "There have been instances when institutions have had information from their AAALAC Program Descriptions requested by the public through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or a Public Records Request. Institutions are encouraged to contact their legal counsel for guidance since access to public information varies among states and countries. If your institution deems that parts of the information requested by AAALAC International are of a particularly sensitive or confidential nature (e.g., building floor plans, building security features, proprietary research information, personnel names, room numbers, vendor identification), this information can be omitted from the Program Description and provided to the site visitors by other means. For example, codes may be used for buildings such as Building A, B, and C or 1, 2, and 3, etc. The same can be applied for housing and procedure rooms or laboratories, such as Room a, b, c, or i, ii, iii. Titles alone may be used for key institutional representatives whose identity is not already publicly available such as Facility Manager, Building A; Animal Care Supervisor, Building B; Nonaffiliated Member; and Scientific Member. Please contact the AAALAC International office for additional guidance in these cases."

4. **Label all AAALAC documents "CONFIDENTIAL AND PRIVILEGED INFORMATION"** (or other designation consistent with institutional guidance on data classification).
5. **Contact the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR)** for advice and additional information.

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Additional questions? Please email
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