

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act-1960

Objectives of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

Purpose of the Act

- The **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (PCA Act)** was enacted by the Indian Parliament to prevent the infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering on animals.
- It is an important piece of legislation that lays the foundation for ethical and legal conduct concerning animal welfare, particularly relevant to pharmaceutical education and biomedical research.

Key Objectives

1. **Prevention of Cruelty:** To prohibit and prevent unnecessary cruelty or harm to animals.
2. **Regulation of Animal Use in Experiments:** To lay down legal standards for the ethical use of animals in scientific and pharmaceutical research.
3. **Promotion of Humane Treatment:** To promote the welfare of animals through humane care, housing, and treatment.
4. **Establishment of Regulatory Bodies:** To provide for the establishment of organizations like the **Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI)** and later the **CPCSEA**.
5. **Enforcement Mechanism:** To create a legal framework for the punishment of offenses involving cruelty to animals.
6. **Balance Between Research and Welfare:** To strike a balance between the need for scientific research and the ethical treatment of animals.

Definitions under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

- Understanding legal definitions is critical to applying the provisions of the Act accurately, particularly in pharmaceutical contexts involving animal use.

Important Definitions:

Understanding some key terms defined under the Act is essential for compliance.

- **Animal:** As per Section 2(a), "animal" means any living creature other than a human being.
- **Board:** Refers to the **Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI)**, established under the Act.
- **Owner:** A person who owns or is in possession of an animal, including temporary care (e.g., laboratory animal caretaker).
- **Cruelty:** Defined under Section 11. It includes:

- Beating, kicking, overloading, torturing animals.
- Keeping them in cages insufficient in height, length, and breadth.
- Using animals for experiments without due care or approval.

Pharmacy Relevance:

- Students and researchers must understand what **constitutes cruelty**, particularly in the lab setting.

CPCSEA – Committee for the Purpose of Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals

Full Form:

- Committee for the Purpose of Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals

Formation:

- Formed under the Animal Birth Control Rules of 1968, functioning under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.

Functions:

- **Regulate animal experimentation** in India.
- **Register institutions** conducting animal experiments or breeding animals for this purpose.
- **Inspect laboratories**, breeding centers, and ensure compliance.
- **Formulate guidelines** for animal housing, care, handling, and disposal.
- **Grant permission** for experiments involving animals, especially vertebrates.

Legal Authority:

- Operates under Chapter IV of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.

Pharmacy Relevance:

- No educational or research institution (like pharmacy colleges) can conduct animal experiments without CPCSEA approval.
- Ensures ethical experimentation and humane treatment of lab animals.

Institutional Animal Ethics Committee (IAEC)

- Each institution involved in animal research must form an **IAEC**, which operates under CPCSEA guidelines.

Composition of IAEC:

- As per CPCSEA norms:
 - Biological scientist
 - Two scientists from different biological disciplines
 - Veterinarian involved in animal care
 - Scientist in charge of animals at the institution
 - Non-scientific socially aware member
 - Representative from CPCSEA (main nominee)

Functions:

- **Review and approve experimental protocols** involving animals.
- **Ensure minimal pain and suffering** to animals.
- **Supervise housing and care conditions** of experimental animals.
- **Submit reports and records** to CPCSEA.

Approval Process:

- Any research project must be pre-approved by IAEC.
- IAEC can approve, suggest modifications, or reject the protocol.

Pharmacy Relevance:

- In pharmacy education and research, students may require IAEC clearance before conducting animal studies.
- IAEC ensures ethical compliance within institutional research labs.

Breeding and Stocking of Animals

Legal Framework

- Regulated under the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act** and overseen by the **CPCSEA** (Committee for the Purpose of Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals).

Breeding Regulations

A. Authorized Breeders Only:

- Only institutions **registered with CPCSEA** can breed animals for research.
- Separate registration is required for **breeding units**.

B. Veterinary Oversight:

- Regular health checks and **veterinary supervision** are mandatory.

C. Record Maintenance:

- Logs must include details on **breeding, stocking, transfers, and animal health**.

D. Species-Specific Care:

- Housing must follow **CPCSEA guidelines** for each species regarding:
 - Hygiene
 - Ventilation
 - Temperature
 - Lighting
 - Nutrition

E. Animal Identification:

- Each animal must be uniquely identified using **tags or microchips**.

Stocking Guidelines

A. No Overcrowding:

- Animals must be housed in a way that prevents **stress or disease**.

B. Separate Facilities:

- Different species must be kept in **separate enclosures**.

C. Capacity Limits:

- Stocking must not exceed the **approved capacity** of the facility.

Compliance for Researchers and Pharmacists

- Animals must be sourced **only from CPCSEA-approved breeders**.
- Ensures adherence to **ethical and legal standards** in animal research.

Performance of Experiments

Definition:

- "Performance of experiments" refers to any scientific or educational procedure carried out on animals to study the effects of drugs, chemicals, or other interventions, typically before human trials (preclinical stage).



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