

# Guidelines for OSU-Based Researchers Requesting a Procurement Autopsy

## Overview of Our Services

Autopsy tissue may be procured for OSU-based researchers by the staff of the OSUWMC Regional Autopsy Center (RAC). We offer procurement services six days a week (Monday through Saturday) as well as most university holidays (excluding New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day).

In general, procurement autopsies are performed for the sole purpose of removing prespecified tissues from decedents based on research protocols and clinical findings. We do not routinely render microscopic diagnoses or cause of death statements for these cases. An Autopsy Report is generated that includes basic clinical information and gross observations from the external exam.

Procurement autopsies may be processed prospectively. However, autopsy requests will not be approved until all documentation is properly executed and reviewed. A funeral home must be designated for each decedent, in advance, before a request is approved and processed.

Requesting a procurement autopsy is a multi-step process that requires detailed communications with multiple entities. Each entity has its own required documentation and fee schedule.

- Per OSU policy, all OSU-based researchers are REQUIRED to work in conjunction with Tissue Procurement Services (TPS) to acquire autopsy tissues. TPS will guide you through the process of completing/providing the necessary documentation. Their fees will be determined at this point. It must also be determined at the start whether after-hours TPS staffing should be planned.
  - *Note: Researchers registered with the TCCP are exempt from TPS fees and select documentation requirements. However, RAC fees still apply.*
- Once TPS has approved your documentation, you will work in conjunction with RAC staff to complete the autopsy documentation. Our fees are estimated until completion of the procedure due to the fact that the fees are dependent upon the extent of the dissection. A round-trip transportation fee may be estimated by our contracted livery service. This livery service will retrieve the decedent following expiration and deliver the decedent to the predesignated funeral home following the autopsy.

Researchers, RAC staff and TPS staff work closely to coordinate the logistics of the autopsy. RAC staff and faculty will prepare the decedent and procure the tissues. TPS will assist with processing and shipping the tissues (as applicable).

Upon completion of the procurement, RAC staff will facilitate the preparation of a formal invoice that will be sent to your facility. Our fees are most easily funded via eRequest funds transfers (further instructions on this process may be provided upon request).

## Step-by-Step Guideline for Requesting a Procurement Autopsy

### **STEP 1: Contact TPS to complete documentation and determine processing logistics**

1a: Contact TPS by telephone (614-293-5449) or email ([PathologyTPSLab @osumc.edu](mailto:PathologyTPSLab@osumc.edu)) to discuss the documentation required for approval

1b: Fees may be confirmed at this time for procurement services and tissue processing/shipping

1c: Once the TPS documentation is complete and the research is approved, proceed to STEP 2

### **STEP 2: Contact RAC to complete documentation and determine processing logistics**

2a: Contact RAC by telephone (614-247-7485) or by email ([autopsy@osumc.edu](mailto:autopsy@osumc.edu)) to discuss the documentation required for approval

2ai: Three forms are required:

1. *Death & Donation Request*

- Much of this information will be completed following expiration (e.g. date/time of death, signing physician, LOOP information)
- A funeral home MUST be designated prior to approval of the request

2. *Autopsy Consent Form*

- Consent may be obtained with the patient's signature (prior to death) or with the signature of the legal next-of-kin (NOK). NOK is determined by Ohio Revised Code and may be determined by the following algorithm:
  - Spouse (even if estranged and/or separated)
  - Adult Child/Children (if there is more than one, the majority must be obtained)
  - Parents (if both are living, both must be obtained)
  - Adult Sibling(s) (majority)
  - Grandparent(s) (if both are living, both must be obtained)
  - Extended Family

3. *Agreement of Financial Responsibility*

- Researcher (or designee) must complete and sign the bottom portion

2b: Transportation may be provided by our contracted livery service or the funeral home designated by the NOK (this should be determined as early as possible to streamline the tasks following expiration of the decedent)

2c: Fees are estimated prospectively and confirmed upon completion of the autopsy procedure (Due to the nature of procurement autopsies and changes in transportation arrangements, the final fees are determined the day of the autopsy.)



### **STEP 3: Complete and submit RAC documentation**

3a: Completed forms may be faxed (614-685-4167) or emailed to RAC ([autopsy@osumc.edu](mailto:autopsy@osumc.edu)) for review and approval

3b: Provide RAC staff with procurement protocols and a detailed list of specimens to be collected at the time of autopsy along with processing details

3c: Once all forms are reviewed and the request is approved, RAC staff will add the patient to a list of pending cases (in a Morgue SharePoint site) that is accessible by all RAC faculty and staff, including the hospital administrative managers and administrative nursing supervisors who provide after-hours coverage

### **STEP 4: Upon expiration of the patient, the researcher may be the first to be notified. If so, organize transportation to the OSUWMC Morgue & notify the appropriate parties of the death. If RAC staff is notified before the researcher, RAC staff will coordinate the actions below and notify the researcher. The body must be clearly labeled with two identifiers (at least name and date-of-birth).**

4a: If transportation is being provided by the contracted livery service, call Shaw-Davis Funeral Home (614-299-4155) and arrange for pick-up and delivery to the OSUWMC Morgue

4b: Contact RAC staff (614-247-7485) to notify of the death (leave a voicemail if after-hours)

4c: If after-hours, contact hospital administrators (614-293-8559) and inform them that this is a pre-approved pending autopsy that is included on the pending autopsy SharePoint. Hospital Security will NOT accept the decedent if it is not pre-approved and noted in the SharePoint as a pending autopsy.

4d: Contact TPS staff (614-293-5449) to notify of the death (leave a voicemail if after-hours)

4e: The decedent will not be accepted by OSUWMC without two clearly labeled identifiers

### **STEP 5: Coordination of the start of the autopsy**

5a: Autopsies are routinely performed Monday through Friday (1000-1400), Saturday (0800-1300), and most university holidays (0900-1300)

5b. RAC staff will coordinate the necessary communications between TPS and the researcher in order to begin the procedure and process the tissues

### **STEP 6: Complete the procurement autopsy**

6a: RAC staff will prepare the decedent and procure the tissues indicated by the researcher

6b: Upon completion of the autopsy, RAC staff will organize transportation of the decedent to the funeral home previously designated



**STEP 7: Processing and shipment of tissues (as applicable)**

7a: TPS staff works with researchers to complete case documentation and to properly process and ship specimens as previously determined and per protocol specifications

**STEP 8: Distribution of RAC-Pathology Invoice to Researcher**

8a: RAC staff finalizes the *Agreement of Financial Responsibility* with the autopsy/transportation fees (as appropriate to each case) and forwards the information to the Pathology Finance team

8b: Pathology Finance prepares a formal invoice and distributes the invoice to the appropriate individuals as designated by the researcher

8c: Researcher forwards the funds to the Pathology Finance team by credit card, eRequest, etc.

*NOTE: more information regarding eRequest funding transfers is available by request*