POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE
TISSUE PROCUREMENT SHARED FACILITY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM (UAB) COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER
AND THE DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY

I. PURPOSE
The Cancer Center Tissue Procurement Shared Facility (TPSF) specializes in the collection, preservation, and distribution of human tissues to the UAB cancer research community. The facility is operated primarily for members of the UAB Cancer Center. Due to their support of the facility, Cancer Center members have priority for specimens. Specimens can be made available to UAB non-Cancer Center members via the Cooperative Human Tissue Network (CHTN).

The specific purpose of this facility is: 1) to obtain remnant human tissues from routine surgical resections and autopsies; 2) to provide Cancer Center research investigators with access to fresh human tissues through a central facility that provides uniform quality control of these tissues; and 3) to assure that investigators using human tissues for research have the proper human subjects approval.

II. SERVICES AVAILABLE
From the UAB associated hospitals fresh tissues are obtained, described diagnostically, and made available to investigators in cold saline, in sterile tissue culture medium, frozen in liquid nitrogen, or in whatever form is specified by the researcher. Malignant, benign, normal, and diseased tissues are available for study. Remnant body fluids can sometimes be obtained.

Limited histology services, which include frozen sections, stained or unstained slides, and paraffin blocks, are also available through the TPSF. Arrangements can also be made to obtain tissue microarrays.

III. QUALITY CONTROL
Diagnostic and therapeutic specimens that are not subject to pathological examination (e.g., normal tonsils) are supplied to investigators directly. All other specimens are subject to rapid gross examination by a pathologist. The diagnosis is then verified through subsequent follow-up of permanent histopathology. In most cases, the diagnosis can be assured before the specimen is released to the investigator. In some cases, however, the tissue is provided to the investigator with a preliminary diagnosis and the investigator is informed of the final diagnosis as soon as this information is available. Pathological diagnosis and patient care have total priority over the use of any specimen in research.

AT NO TIME WILL THE DIAGNOSTIC QUALITY OF A SPECIMEN BE COMPROMISED TO OBTAIN TISSUE FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES.

IV. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN USE APPROVAL
Convened (full) review and approval is obtained annually through the UAB Institutional Review Board for Human Use (IRB) for operation of the TPSF.

Each investigator who requests specimens from the TPSF must provide documentation of human subjects approval or review through the UAB Institutional Review Board for Human Use. A copy of this approval or review must be provided to the TPSF staff and is maintained in our records.
V. PROTECTION OF PATIENTS
The function of this facility is limited to the procurement of human tissues from routine surgery conducted for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes and to the procurement of tissues from autopsies performed at the UAB associated hospitals. We receive only remnant tissue samples, which are not needed for diagnostic purposes. Surgery will not be performed just for the purpose of obtaining tissues for research.

Material obtained from patients is identified by a unique assigned number in the TPSF laboratory. The identification of patients is not revealed to researchers.

The operation of the TPSF does not impose any increased risk to any patient. His/her physical, social, psychological, and legal welfare is in no way impaired. The care of the patient is not altered in any way because of the procurement of remnant tissue.

VI BIOHAZARD AND INFECTION CONTROL
A major focus of the TPSF is preventing accidental exposure to infectious agents by research personnel who work with human tissue. A set of guidelines that provides extensive detailed information and procedures for handling human tissues and body fluids used in research is provided to investigators to assist them in developing working guidelines and operating procedures for their laboratory. Each investigator does, however, remain responsible for the development and implementation of adequate safety procedures in his/her laboratory. This is formalized by an agreement on the application form, which each investigator must sign before receiving tissues.

The TPSF does not provide tissues from patients with known infections such as hepatitis, AIDS, or tuberculosis. However, because there is no universal policy on testing for infective agents such as hepatitis B and HIV (AIDS virus) and because medical histories of patients are not always indicative of infection, we can never be absolutely certain that the tissues provided are not biohazardous. For this reason, the TPSF requires its investigators to treat all specimens as if contaminated.

The TPSF will continue to evaluate and incorporate any changes in the recommended guidelines or development of new laboratory requirements for the safe handling of human tissues. Investigators will be informed of any new guidelines or developments.

VII METHODS OF COLLECTION
1) Surgical schedules are obtained and reviewed on the afternoon prior to surgery.

2) If it appears that the projected surgery may result in the removal of tissue that will be useful for specific studies, an iced, sterile specimen container is prepared and delivered to the surgical nursing staff in the operating room on the morning of surgery. The nursing staff then makes arrangements to inform the surgeons so that the specimen can be transferred rapidly to the sterile container. The TPSF staff is contacted immediately and picks up the tissue from the operating room.

3) The specimen is then taken directly to Surgical Pathology where the resident or staff pathologist examines it. The pathologist/resident then determines if there is adequate tissue for routine diagnostic work and also for research investigators. If so, the desired tissue is then transferred to the TPSF staff member who places it immediately in cold culture medium, cold saline, etc., at the request of the particular investigator who is to receive the tissue. The tissue is then taken to the TPSF laboratory where it is processed for the investigator.

4) With the permission of the resident and pathologist in charge of the autopsy, TPSF personnel obtain remnant tissue from routinely performed autopsies at UAB. These tissues are processed in the TPSF laboratory for the investigators who specifically request autopsy tissues for their research.
VIII DATA SUPPLIED TO INVESTIGATORS
Investigators will receive a copy of the diagnostic report of the specimen from which their tissue is obtained. This report includes the patient's age, sex, race and the unique de-identified code assigned to the specimen; however, all information that identifies the patient is deleted from the diagnostic report before it is released to anyone outside our laboratory. If requested, limited background information on the patient such as tobacco use, alcohol use, radiation, and chemotherapy can be provided when available. For an additional fee, more extensive clinical histories and/or follow-up/survival information can be obtained.

IX SERVICES CHARGED
The Comprehensive Cancer Center Core Support Grant pays the largest part of the operating cost of the TPSF. To recover additional costs of processing, storing, and obtaining specimens, we charge a service fee of $30/specimen. Separate fees are charged for requested histology procedures and clinical histories.

When patients are placed on protocols, which require that records be maintained concerning the receipt of multiple tissues and/or blocks as well as to immunohistochemistry results, long-term storage, or distribution or return of specimens, a per patient fee is charged in addition to tissue processing charges.

X. INVESTIGATOR REQUIREMENTS
Cancer Center investigators at UAB who wish to obtain research tissues through the TPSF must have human subjects approval or review through the UAB Institutional Review Board for Human Use (IRB). Frequently the IRB decides that this approval can be obtained using expedited procedures and forms and the TPSF staff can aid in obtaining the proper IRB authorization. Investigators are to "assume full responsibility for informing and training all personnel in the dangers of and procedures for safe handling of these and other human tissues." Investigators are also required to provide us with a statement of their research intent. This information is maintained in our files and is treated as privileged information.

All research investigators who receive human tissue through the UAB TPSF are asked to acknowledge the Facility in any of their publications that may result from research with these tissues. An example of this acknowledgement could read as follows:

"Human tissues were provided through the University of Alabama at Birmingham Tissue Procurement Shared Facility, Birmingham, Alabama."

XI ACCESS TO RARE TISSUES
Since 1987, our laboratory has been one of six chosen by the National Cancer Institute to comprise the Cooperative Human Tissue Network (CHTN), which provides research tissue to investigators throughout the United States. UAB investigators can have access to specimens obtained from other institutions through the CHTN at a fixed processing fee per specimen ($50) plus shipping costs.

XII TISSUE PROCUREMENT STAFF
William E. Grizzle, M.D., Ph.D. - Director of TPSF and Professor of Pathology
Katherine C. Sexton, MBA - Assistant Director of TPSF, Program Manager II
Cindy Legge – Administrative Associate
Amanda Mitchell-Griffin - Office Associate II
Paul Billings – Laboratory Manager
Patty Williams – Shipping and Freezing Coordinator, Histology Technician
Jana Frost-Deleersnyder – Histology Coordinator
Elisabeth O’Dell – Histology Technician
Terri Staples – Investigator Request Coordinator
Kim Armstead – Patient Consent Coordinator
Arianne Fulce Jones - Procurement Team, Research Technician, ATP & PHBI Coordinator
Andrew Hyde – Procurement Team, Research Technician
Valencia Whitfield – Procurement Team, Laboratory Assistant
Keon Smith – Procurement Team, Laboratory Assistant
Uma Gupta – Shipping and Freezing Team, Laboratory Assistant
Nia Cummings – Shipping and Freezer Team, Student Assistant
Srianil K. Peddi – Informatics Project Coordinator

XIII APPLICATION INFORMATION
To obtain an application or to inquire about this facility you may:
• Access website: https://wwwpj1.it.uab.edu/medicine/tcbf/tpsf-sidebar
• Contact us by phone: (205) 934-6071 or by facsimile (205) 934-0816
• E-mail: amitchell@uab.edu
• Write to, or stop by our office:

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