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| **Procedure: Organ and Tissue Release** | **Union County Coroner Office** |

Purpose: To establish and provide a mechanism for documentation and appropriate release of retained organs and/or tissue specimens.

The Forensic Pathologists perform extended organ examination when indicated, as defined by standard forensic pathology practices. The taking and retention of organs, tissues, fluids and other evidentiary specimens is often a required standard practice for optimal results.

Upon completion of all pathological examinations, retained organs and/or tissue may be released upon request from the legal next-of-kin of the deceased. Organs and/or tissue will typically be released only to a designated funeral director or a legal representative for the family.

Requests for organs and/or tissue retained under the jurisdiction of the Union County Coroner Office must be approved by the Union County Coroner Office. The Union County Coroner Office may approve release of the requested organ and/or tissue by signing the Request for Organ/Tissue Release form provided by the Union County Coroner Office. The assigned pathologist may consult the Union County Coroner Office prior to authorizing the release of retained organ/tissue.

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| Responsible Party | Actions |
| Requestor/family member | Provides notice via telephone or written correspondence and requests a specific organ or human tissue specimen be released upon completion of all studies. |
| Autopsy Assistant, Administrative Secretary, Forensic Pathology Administrator | 1. Document the request in the appropriate case file. The date & time of the request will be indicated. 2. The name and contact information of the requestor must be included in the initial notation. 3. Document the name and contact number of the funeral director whom will receive the organ/tissue. 4. Notify the Forensic Pathology Administrator and the Administrative Secretary of the request via email. |
| Administrative Secretary and Forensic Pathologist | 1. Upon notice of a request to receive a retained organ and/or tissue, fill out and print the form “Request for Organs/Tissue Release.” 2. Attach the form to the case folder and present to the assigned Forensic Pathologist. 3. If the autopsy report is complete and the FP has jurisdiction as the Medical Examiner, the FP may authorize the release of the requested item(s). 4. If the Forensic Pathologist is not the Medical Examiner, the Forensic Pathologist shall not authorize the release. The Administrative Secretary should forward the request to the Union County Coroner Office for signature. 5. When the FP does not have Medical Examiner jurisdiction for the assigned examination, the FP may consult the Union County Coroner Office prior to authorizing release of the requested organ/tissue. 6. The Team Advisor will initiate written tracking of the request on the Request for Organ/Tissue Release form and place the form in the designated file folder in the morgue museum. |
| Team Advisor | 1. Notify the designated funeral director when an organ/tissue is packaged and authorized for release. 2. Inform the funeral director remains have not been cremated. 3. Remains of this nature will be released during normal business hours. 4. Complete the Chain of Custody form upon release of the remains 5. Route the Chain of Custody form to the office for filing with the autopsy documents. |