



**Forensic Anthropology Center**  
**PROTOCOL FOR RESEARCH REQUESTS FOR THE FACILITY AND COLLECTIONS**



The Forensic Anthropology Center (FAC) encourages the use of its collections and facilities for scientific research. The following guidelines for access apply. These guidelines are designed to ensure that FAC personnel are fully prepared to assist with individual projects and to enable researchers to use their time effectively. All researchers are required to sign a liability waiver upon arrival at the FAC.

### **Collections Research**

1. The Collections Research Request Form from researchers outside of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville must be submitted to the Director of the FAC *at least two months prior* to the proposed date of visit. Attaching a full prospectus, grant proposal or other more detailed document to the Form is strongly encouraged for senior researchers and required for students. The signed Form and any supportive materials must be mailed to the Director for approval.
  - a. UTK students and faculty researchers are encouraged to submit their requests at least one month prior to the proposed start date.
2. If the requestor is an undergraduate or graduate student a signed letter from the advisor/supervisor is required.
  - a. This letter should objectively discuss the scientific merit of the research, the role the FAC collections will play in that research, the level of proficiency in utilizing the necessary equipment, and the experience the student has previously gained in collecting the specified data.
3. Collections are available for research from 9am – 5pm Monday through Friday excluding holidays and UTK breaks.
4. If destructive analysis is requested then the Request for Destructive Sampling Form must also be submitted. See the FAC Policy on Destructive Analysis.
5. Funds must be available to defray costs if FAC staff is asked to collect data for the researcher.
6. Social media posting of activities or photographs within the collections or with donor materials are strictly prohibited.

### **Research at the Anthropology Research Facility (ARF)**

1. The ARF Research Request Form from researchers outside of the University of Tennessee must be submitted to the Director of the FAC *at least four months prior* to the proposed date of visit. Attaching a full prospectus, grant proposal or other more detailed document to the Form is strongly encouraged. The signed Form and any supportive materials must be mailed to the Director for approval.
  - a. UTK students and faculty researchers are encouraged to submit their requests at least one month prior to the proposed start date.
2. If the requestor is an undergraduate or graduate student a signed letter from the advisor/supervisor is required.

- a. This letter should objectively discuss the scientific merit of the research, why the ARF is an appropriate facility in which to conduct the research, the level of proficiency in utilizing the necessary equipment and the experience the student has previously gained in collecting the specified data.
3. FAC staff must monitor and guide the researcher at the Facility.
  - a. Funds must be available to pay a graduate staff member a daily or hourly rate to accompany the researcher at the facility. Contact the director to discuss the details.
4. Daily access of the ARF is not restricted to normal business hours given that many types of research require particular environmental conditions. However, since FAC staff must always accompany the researcher, studies that take place at the Facility over weekends, overnight, or on holidays place a heavy toll on our staff. Funds must be available to defray costs for staff in these situations.
5. Funds must be available to defray costs if FAC staff is asked to collect data for the researcher.
6. Researchers must bring their own personal protective equipment (PPE) or have funds available to defray PPE costs of the FAC.
  - a. Minimal PPE at the ARF includes gloves, and shoe covers.
  - b. Depending upon the nature of research, Tyvek pants or suits may be necessary.
7. Appropriate dress is always required at the ARF, including closed-toe shoes, pants and weather-appropriate outer gear.
8. If destructive analysis is requested then the Request for Destructive Sampling Form must also be submitted. See the FAC Policy on Destructive Analysis.
9. Social media posting of activities or photographs within the Facility or with donor materials are strictly prohibited.

### **Destructive Analysis Requests**

1. If research of any of the collections or at the ARF involves the collection and subsequent analysis of any biological samples, the FAC Policy on Destructive Analysis must be signed and a Request for Destructive Sampling Form must be submitted in addition to the Collections and/or ARF forms described above.
  - a. Biological samples include both soft tissue (e.g. blood, muscle, hair, skin, nails, organs, cartilage), teeth and bone.
2. Funds must be available to defray costs if FAC staff is asked to collect samples for the researcher.
3. Sampling and other protocols are specified in the FAC Policy on Destructive Analysis.

## Review process

The review process has three primary goals:

- a. Ensure that the proposed research has a solid scientific foundation.
  - b. Confirm that the FAC facilities or collections are adequate to address the proposed problem.
  - c. Safeguard that any requests minimize the potential for destruction, loss or alteration of preserved soft and osseous tissues.
2. Submissions received by the 27<sup>th</sup> of each month will be reviewed during the first two weeks of the subsequent month. The Director will contact the researcher by the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month with a decision or request for additional materials for review.
  3. A review panel will be convened and act in the following manner:
    - a. The FAC Director and Coordinator will review all research requests. In addition, a minimum of one other faculty associated with the FAC will serve on the panel.
    - b. The Director may consult additional experts if the proposed research involves technical expertise beyond the scope of knowledge of the FAC faculty and staff.
    - c. Reviews will take place during the first two weeks of each month.
    - d. Upon consultation with the committee the Director will render a decision.
    - e. The Director or the Coordinator will contact the researcher/requestor on or around the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month of the review.
  4. If the request is granted then the Director will supply support letters for grant proposals as requested by the researcher. The Director should be contacted a minimum of one week before the grant proposal deadline.
  5. If the request is granted the researcher will work with the Director and/or Coordinator to establish dates for the research visit(s).

## Photography

1. Researchers may photograph their research for the purposes of documentation provided they supply their own camera, lighting and associated materials. Clearance for publication, electronic transmission, general distribution or commercial use must be secured by the FAC by submitting a written request to the Director.
2. UT identification numbers written on bones in the lab or on metal tags on posts or on the donors at the ARF must not be included in any photographs. This is to protect the anonymity of the donors. If including the number cannot be avoided to take the photograph, the numbers must be removed using image editing software or obscured by a black box prior to publication or any presentations.
3. Posting any image from the FAC on social media or for any other personal use is prohibited. This includes “selfies” in the lab or at the Facility. Individuals have donated their bodies for the purposes of scientific research and training and professional and respectful behavior is expected at all times.

## **Radiography**

1. Plain-film or digital radiography of the collections is permissible once all of the mandatory permits are obtained from the State of Tennessee.
2. Researchers wishing to employ radiographic equipment must contact the Director who will liaison with the UTK Radiation Safety Office (RSO).

## **Documentation**

1. Researchers must provide the FAC with a copy of:
  - a. All photographs taken.
  - b. All data collected.
  - c. All manuscripts (including dissertations and theses), book chapters, journals and other publications related to the research facilitated by the FAC.

## **Contact**

1. Any questions concerning the submission of research requests or these protocols should be addressed to FAC Director Dr. Dawnie Steadman ([oste@utk.edu](mailto:oste@utk.edu), 865-974-0909).