

## UW HEALTH JOB DESCRIPTION

### LEAD PATHOLOGISTS' ASSISTANT

<b>Job Code: 530023</b>	<b>FLSA Status: Exempt</b>	<b>Mgt. Approval: M Marggi</b>	<b>Date: February 2022</b>
<b>Department: Clin Labs - Surgical Pathology (3031461)</b>		<b>HR Approval: A Phelps Revolinski</b>	<b>Date: February 2022</b>

### JOB SUMMARY

Under the direction of the Clinical Laboratories Manager Lab Services the Lead Pathologists' Assistant serves as a lead technical expert in UW Health Surgical Pathology Gross Rooms, providing technical leadership and direction to trainees, pathologists' assistants (PAs), grossing technicians (GTs), and specimen control receiving technicians (SCRTs). The primary role of the incumbent is practitioner, educator and role model for trainees and staff members in gross room. Technical expertise must include the most complex cancer specimens (pancreas, breast, bladder, uterus, ovary, etc.) as well as simple benign resections and biopsies. It is the role of the Lead PA to work in support of and as an adjunct to the physicians in Pathology and operational leadership. The incumbent makes technical grossing decisions, troubleshoots and resolves specimen receiving issues.

This Lead Pathologists' Assistant must have the basic knowledge of the full scope of general gross room (supplies, equipment, and instrumentation maintenance) and PA technical duties in the laboratory when required (lab preparation, receiving, accessioning, performing an intraoperative evaluation including cryostat frozen sectioning and staining, specimen triage, gross sectioning, dictation, photography, etc.). The incumbent must have a thorough understanding of what and why these sections are essential and perform duties efficiently (focusing on quality and quantity). The incumbent's responsibilities include handling the staff competency programs and providing or facilitating education sessions to staff to learn to gross procedures. As determined, works variable schedules and rotates at other work sites as needed. Provides technical and leadership support to the Autopsy Service as needed.

Work is performed under general supervision referring matters to leadership only for clarification of policy. Independent decision making occurs frequently in day-to-day operation. Innovative procedures are occasionally necessary to accommodate the variety of samples prepared.

Organizational skill is required to plan and coordinate workflow in order to meet patient care requirements and provide for satisfactory turnaround time of specimens. To function successfully, working knowledge of computers using the Anatomic Pathology information system is required.

### MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

#### A. Lead Technical Expert

- Plans utilization of work areas with operational leadership. Leads team to provide updates to lab standards as directed by faculty & operational leadership.
- Recommends and researches equipment needs and use of new technology for the laboratory to achieve optimal patient care delivery.
- Identifies computer problems regarding gross room workflows and works with appropriate personnel to address problems.
- Updates and maintains operations lab manuals, and documentation as required by regulatory accrediting agencies.
- Ensures that equipment maintenance (daily, monthly, quarterly, annual) documentation is complete and maintained.
- Assists in the evaluation and competency assessment of grossing performance of trainees and staff members. Ensures that new employee orientation and annual competency assessment documentation is completed in a timely manner for all roles within the Gross Room.
- Performs quality control (QC) review and follow-up.
- Oversees the maintenance of applicable technical policy and procedure manuals. Reviews and updates procedures as required.
- Leads and teaches trainees, staff members and students, serving as a technical resource and advises on approaches for challenging or unique issues.
- Receives supervision from the Anatomic Pathology Medical Director, Surgical Pathology Faculty Director, Anatomic Pathology faculty, Anatomic Pathology Operational Director, Surgical Pathology Lab Services Manager, Supervisor(s) or designees. Lead oversight is exercised over fellows, residents, staff members and students. Works closely with laboratory and other health care personnel.
- Serves as a liaison to management to advise on, take lead action on, and provide direction on process improvement initiatives.
- Ability to assume leadership responsibilities such as prioritizing staff duties based on operational needs and assisting with operational oversight of Gross Rooms.
- Ability to work with the manager/supervisor and to address workflow issues and/or improvement.
- Monitors workload, staffing and educational needs of staff and trainees in the Gross Room and assists leadership in daily operations.
- Participates in projects assigned by leadership.

#### B. Preparation and performance of surgical specimen dissection

- Assure appropriate specimen identification and accessioning.
- Obtain the clinical history including scans, x-rays, laboratory data, etc., as indicated after consulting with the pathologist(s).
- In association with the pathologist(s), describe gross anatomic features: describe the overall specimen dimensions, anatomical structures, size, appearance and relationship of disease (e.g., cancer, tumor) present to tissue border (margins). Dissect surgical specimens and prepare tissues for processing according to established procedures.
- Exercises judgment by preserving samples for testing.
- Obtain pathology specimens for specialized analysis (flow cytometry, cytogenetic analysis, immunohistochemistry, etc.) and upon direction of the pathologist(s) perform special procedures.
- In collaboration with the pathologist(s), select and prepare gross tissue sections for frozen section and electron and

## UW HEALTH JOB DESCRIPTION

immunofluorescent microscopy.

7. Photograph of pertinent specimens and microscopic slides.
8. Assume responsibility for administrative maintenance of surgical pathology protocol manuals in accordance with regulatory standards.
9. Assure proper maintenance of equipment, provision of adequate supplies, and cleanliness of the surgical pathology suite.
10. Assist in the organization and coordination of anatomic pathology conferences.
11. Act as liaison to tissue bank activities for educational and research purposes.
12. Maintains quality control/assurance activities and records.

### C. Assist in human postmortem examinations

1. Ascertain proper legal authorization has been obtained for autopsy.
2. Review patient's chart and other pertinent data for discussion with the pathologist(s). Communicates with surgeon to obtain patient history and orientation of sample.
3. Confer with the pathologist(s) to identify the special techniques and procedures that will be necessary (e.g. histochemical, immunofluorescence, toxicological, viral, or electron microscopic studies, cultures, smears, coronary artery perfusion studies, tumor triage, and Faxitron (x-ray).etc.) and notify all personnel directly involved.
4. Notify the physician involved in the care of the patient and all other authorities prior to beginning the dissection; coordinate special requests for specimen sampling (e.g. organ transplantation team, research, etc.).
5. Under the direction of the pathologist(s), perform postmortem examinations which may include: external examination, in situ organ inspections, evisceration, dissection and dictation or recording of data such as organ weights, presence of body fluids and gross anatomic findings. Inspect all external surfaces and orifices noting abnormalities.
6. Obtain biological specimens for analysis (blood cultures, viral cultures, toxicological material, etc.) and perform special procedures such as coronary artery perfusion studies, central nervous system perfusion studies, enucleation (eyes), inner ear bone dissection

and removal of the spinal cord in consultation with the pathologist(s).

7. Perform photography of the body, organs, microscopic slides, and other relative materials.
8. In collaboration with the pathologist(s), may assist in the assembly of data necessary for the preparation of the preliminary summarization of the clinical history.
9. Release the body to the correct mortuary, following proper restoration and indicating any biohazards – such as contagious disease or radioactive implant – that may be present.
10. Assure anatomic pathology protocol manuals are maintained, photographic and microscopic records are retained according to established regulatory guidelines.
11. Assure proper maintenance of equipment, provision of adequate supplies and cleanliness of the autopsy suite.

### C. Educational Responsibilities

1. Assist in the organization and coordination of anatomic pathology conferences.
2. Assist in the training of pathology residents in gross dissection techniques
3. Act as lead instructor for Pathologists' Assistant students during their UW Health clinical rotation

### D. Assume other responsibilities as directed by operational leadership.

**ALL DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS MUST BE PERFORMED CONSISTENT WITH THE UW HEALTH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.**

## JOB REQUIREMENTS

Education	Minimum	Master's Degree in Pathologists/ Assistant Studies
	Preferred	
Work Experience	Minimum	Five years experienced as an ASCP-certified Pathologists' Assistant
	Preferred	Previous leadership experience in a hospital laboratory.
Licenses & Certifications	Minimum	Active Pathologists' Assistant (American Society for Clinical Pathology)
	Preferred	

## UW HEALTH JOB DESCRIPTION

Required Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational methods needed to effectively interact with staff Pathologists and Residents.</li> <li>Working knowledge of adult learning styles and techniques is required to conduct effective programs for pathology residents, and university students.</li> <li>Knowledge of current laboratory principles and procedures used in gross tissue examination and autopsy techniques.</li> <li>Knowledge of the principles of cytology as applied to the analysis of specimens submitted for early detection of malignancy.</li> <li>Extensive knowledge of advanced laboratory theory, technique, and testing related to anatomic pathology.</li> <li>Knowledge of group process techniques and team leadership used in meetings and on project teams.</li> <li>Effective oral and written communication skills. Able to formulate processes and develop procedures.</li> <li>Knowledge of quality control, quality assurance, and record-keeping procedures which constitute good laboratory practice and which comply with regulations imposed by outside agencies such as The Joint Commission, College of American Pathologists and Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments</li> <li>Knowledge of standard laboratory safety procedures.</li> <li>Ability to apply laboratory principles in clinical analysis leading to the diagnosis of disease as it applies to cytology.</li> <li>Effective team skills.</li> <li>Effective interpersonal skills.</li> </ul>
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### AGE SPECIFIC COMPETENCY (Clinical jobs only)

Identify age-specific competencies for direct and indirect patient care providers who regularly assess, manage and treat patients.

**Instructions:** Indicate the age groups of patients served either by direct or indirect patient care by checking the appropriate boxes below. Next,

	Infants (Birth – 11 months)		Adolescent (13 – 19 years)
	Toddlers (1 – 3 years)		Young Adult (20 – 40 years)
	Preschool (4 – 5 years)		Middle Adult (41 – 65 years)
	School Age (6 – 12 years)		Older Adult (Over 65 years)

### JOB FUNCTIONS

Review the employee's job description and identify each essential function that is performed differently based on the age group of the patient.

### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

**Indicate the appropriate physical requirements of this job in the course of a shift.** *Note: reasonable accommodations may be made available for individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of this position.*

Physical Demand Level		Occasional Up to 33% of the time	Frequent 34%-66% of the time	Constant 67%-100% of the time
	<b>Sedentary:</b> Ability to lift up to 10 pounds maximum and occasionally lifting and/or carrying such articles as dockets, ledgers and small tools. Although a sedentary job is defined as one, which involves sitting, a certain amount of walking and standing is often necessary in carrying out job duties. Jobs are sedentary if walking and standing are required only occasionally and other sedentary criteria are met.	Up to 10#	Negligible	Negligible
X	<b>Light:</b> Ability to lift up to 20 pounds maximum with frequent lifting and/or carrying of objects weighing up to 10 pounds. Even though the weight lifted may only be a negligible amount, a job is in this category when it requires walking or standing to a significant degree.	Up to 20#	Up to 10# or requires significant walking or standing, or requires pushing/pulling of arm/leg controls	Negligible or constant push/pull of items of negligible weight
	<b>Medium:</b> Ability to lift up to 50 pounds maximum with frequent lifting and/or carrying objects weighing up to 25 pounds.	20-50#	10-25#	Negligible-10#
	<b>Heavy:</b> Ability to lift up to 100 pounds maximum with frequent lifting and/or carrying objects weighing up to 50 pounds.	50-100#	25-50#	10-20#
	<b>Very Heavy:</b> Ability to lift over 100 pounds with frequent lifting and/or carrying objects weighing over 50 pounds.	Over 100#	Over 50#	Over 20#

## UW HEALTH JOB DESCRIPTION

List any other physical requirements or bona fide occupational qualifications:	
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Note: The purpose of this document is to describe the general nature and level of work performed by personnel so classified; it is not intended to serve as an inclusive list of all responsibilities associated with this position.