**RELEASED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE
FIRST DEPUTY CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER**

1.   **Policy**
     All new employees to the OCME Forensic Anthropology Unit (FAU) who will be conducting anthropological analyses shall complete the required competency training and tests prior to completing casework unsupervised. The competency training will familiarize the new employee with the policies and procedures of the FAU Laboratory, as well as document competency in the analytical methods and techniques used in casework.

2.   **Scope**
     This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) applies to all new employees in the FAU that will be assigned casework. Portions of this SOP (Module 1) will also apply to interns and visiting scientists who will not be conducting casework.

3.   **Definitions:**
     Written Competency Tests: The written competency tests are internally generated multiple-choice tests that are used to assess the trainee's knowledge of the policies and procedures in the FAU's SOPs and select sections of the FAU quality documents.

4.   **Competency Training**

4.1 **Purpose**: The purpose of competency training is to provide the newly hired anthropologist with sufficient knowledge to perform anthropological analyses according to the FAU SOPs. Interns and visiting scientists will be required to complete certain modules, such as ANTH-001 Evidence Security and Management and ANTH-002 Anthropological Laboratory Analysis, or as determined by the Forensic Anthropology Director (Director).

4.2 **Training Structure**: Competency training for new employees is divided into four modules which are progressive and task oriented. Each module must be completed to the satisfaction of the trainer(s) and/or Director. The required tasks and the time it takes to complete each module may vary depending on the education level, experience, and/or skill set of the new employee.

     Note: The trainee must complete modules one through three sequentially. Module four (expert witness testimony training) can begin after completion of module one.

4.3 **Responsibility of the Trainer(s):** It is the responsibility of the FAU trainer(s) to make certain all policies and procedures detailed in the FAU SOPs are successfully presented to the analyst. The responsibility of training shall fall to all FAU members.

4.4 **Responsibility of the Trainee**: The trainee is required to familiarize themselves with the protocols and procedures outlined in the FAU SOPs and other documents deemed necessary by the Quality Assurance (QA) Specialist and/or Director. The trainee is required to complete all competency training modules and successfully pass all competency tests.

    4.4.1 **Competency Training Log:** The trainer is responsible for recording competency training progress in the trainee's competency training log. Information that should be recorded in the log includes, but is not limited to, the date of completion for each training task, initials/signature from FAU trainer(s) acknowledging the training task was satisfactorily completed, and, when applicable, the written competency test score.

    4.4.2 **Interns and Visiting Scientists:** Interns and visiting scientists only need to complete select portions of Module 1 and competency tests for select SOPs as assigned by the Director. Direct observation may be required for certain procedures. Maintenance of a training log and training through supervised casework will not be required for interns and visiting scientists as they will not be conducting casework. A Visiting Scientist/Intern Intake Checklist will be used by visiting scientists and interns to keep track of their training progress.

4.5 **Methods of Evaluation**: Trainee's competency of FAU policies and procedures and anthropological analytical methods and techniques shall be evaluated through written and practical competency tests, and direct observation.

    4.5.1 **Written Competency Tests:** The FAU competency tests are specifically created to assess the trainee's general knowledge of the FAU's policies and procedures that are outlined in the FAU SOPs and Quality documents. The competency tests were created and approved by the OCME QA Director. The tests can be administered either by the QA Director or FAU personnel who have previously taken and passed the tests.

    4.5.2 **Practical Competency Test:** The practical competency test will consist of a full skeletal analysis of one of the skeletal cases currently stored in the Anthropology Laboratory. The trainee will perform a complete analysis of the individual and write a report.

    4.5.3 **Direct Observation:** Some of the competency training will involve direct observation of the trainee by the FAU staff. For example, the trainee will be observed managing evidence or performing anthropological analyses to make sure they are adhering to the FAU policies and procedures.

4.6 **Case Analysis Authorization:** After completion of the third competency training module, the trainee will be authorized to work independently on case work. The FA director shall complete a Case Analysis Authorization form which will include the date when the analyst was given permission to perform case work without supervision.

4.7 **Competency Training Records:** All competency training documents (e.g., training log, acknowledgement forms, and competency tests) are retained in each employee's personnel binder or in a grouped folder of each year's interns and visiting scientists.

5.   Competency Training Modules

5.1 **Module 1- FAU Orientation and General Procedures:** Module 1 is designed to familiarize new personnel with the OCME and FAU facilities and policies and procedures.

Facility and Laboratory Orientation:
1. The trainee shall receive a tour of the OCME and FAU facilities (buildings 520 and 421).
2. The trainee shall be advised on the competency training procedure and given their competency training log (if applicable).

Facilities and Laboratory Safety:
1. The trainee shall read and acknowledge the OCME Health and Safety Plans and the FAU Health and Safety policies (ANTH-003: Anthropological Laboratory Analysis, Appendix A).
2. The trainee shall watch and acknowledge the safety videos that cover the following topics: Bloodborne Pathogens and using an N95 Respirator.
3. The trainee shall be shown the building exit points and location of safety equipment (fire extinguishers, eyewash and shower stations, chemical safety data sheets (SDS), etc.).

Code of Conduct Training:
1. The trainee shall read and acknowledge the OCME Code of Conduct handout.
2. The trainee shall read and acknowledge the OCME Policy Manual.

General Knowledge of Forensic Science: Newly hired personnel are required to have at least one year of satisfactory experience in forensic science (see QM-001: Personnel clause 7.1.2). The trainer will review the new hire's educational background and previous work experience to ensure that additional general forensic science training is not required. If additional training is needed, this can be completed by attending internal/external lectures relevant to forensic science and/or read journal articles/book chapters covering general forensic science topics.

FAU Policies and Procedures:

1. The trainee shall read the FAU Standard Operating Procedures and take the required written competency tests. The trainee needs to receive a passing grade (80% or higher) for all written competency tests before they are given authorization to proceed to Module 2.
2. The trainee shall read the FAU Quality Documents (ANTH001- ANTH005 and QM001—QM009) and acknowledge their understanding of the management policies of the FAU.

Method of Evaluation: Written competency tests

<u>Note</u>: Successful completion of the written competency tests **only** states that the trainee has sufficient understanding of the FAU policies and procedures outlined in the FAU Standard Operating Procedures and QM documents and does not give the trainee authorization to process evidence or perform analyses on casework unsupervised. All newly hired FAU personnel are required to complete modules 2 and 3 before authorization is granted by the Director to work independently on casework (see clause 4.6).

5.2   **Module 2 – Observation Period:** The objective of Module 2 is to allow the trainee to observe firsthand the FAU procedures for evidence management, anthropological analysis, analytical notes/report writing, and peer-reviewing anthropological reports.

During the observation period, the trainers shall demonstrate to the trainee:
1. The proper use of testing equipment.
2. Evidence management procedures.
3. The FAU maceration procedures.
4. How to create and manage case files and fill out analytical notes properly.
5. How to use the OCME Case Management System (CMS).
6. The proper use of field equipment.
7. Scene search procedures.
8. Remains recovery procedures.

5.2.1   **Case file Review:** The trainee shall review a minimum of ten case reports covering a variety of the FAU scope of accreditation components/parameters (e.g., biological profile, trauma, medicolegal significance) and shall include at least three full skeletal analysis reports. Case reports chosen for review should be from more recent years to ensure that the most current methods, report language, and accreditation requirements are reviewed. The case numbers for case reports reviewed shall be recorded on the trainee's Training Log.

5.2.2   **Observing Cases:** The trainee shall observe at least five cases by different FAU personnel unless otherwise directed by the Director. The cases should cover a

variety of FAU scope of accreditation components/parameters. The name of the analyst and the case number for each case observed shall be recorded on the trainee's Training Log.

After the trainee observes a sufficient number of cases, the trainee will evaluate whether or not they would like to complete a full skeletal analysis on a case retained by the FAU prior to taking their practical competency test. If a full skeletal analysis is completed prior to the practical competency test, then the trainee will include a note on the training log.

Method of Evaluation: Direct Observation and Practical Competency Test

5.2.2.1 **Evaluation of the Practical Competency Test**: The practical competency test will be evaluated using the FAU peer review process (see ANTH-004: Peer Review). The designated trainer or the Director will peer review the trainee's analytical notes and report. The trainee will pass the practical competency test when the peer reviewer signs the peer review form.

5.3 **Module 3 – Supervised Casework:** The trainee shall process and analyze case material and author anthropological reports for at least three cases while under the direct supervision of an FAU member or until the Director is satisfied with the expertise of the trainee. The cases should cover a variety of scope components/parameters, if possible.

Additionally, the trainee shall attend scene responses with another member of the FAU until the Director is satisfied with the expertise of the trainee.

Method of Evaluation: Director Observation/Peer Review

5.4 **Module 4 - Expert Witness Testimony Training:** This training pertains to all FAU anthropologists. The objective of the training is to demonstrate how to present evidence in court and how to testify to findings. Aspects of this training may be waived at the discretion of the Director depending on the experience of the employee.

5.4.1 **Initial Training:** There shall be a period of initial training where the trainee:

- Observe Expert Witness Testimony either in-person or remotely. If the trainee is unable to observe Forensic Anthropology (FA) testimony, they may observe the testimony of other experts such as Medical Examiners and Medicolegal Investigators.
- Complete readings on criminal and civil law, and witness testimony related to Forensic Anthropology and/or Forensic Science.

Additionally, when available the trainee may:

- Attend OCME or external agency lectures on expert witness testimony.
- Participate in mock trial(s).
- Attend pre-trial conferences.

Method of Evaluation: Direct Observation and Mock Trial participation (when available).

5.5 **Completion of Competency Training**: The trainee's competency training is concluded once all four modules have been completed.

6. Continuing Training/Education

After completing the competency training period, the analyst is now responsible for maintaining their competency in anthropological methods and techniques used during analysis of casework. Annual proficiency testing, annual performance evaluations, and peer-review of casework are monitoring actions performed by the FAU to ensure the maintenance of competency (see QM-001: Quality Personnel, section 7.7).

Additionally, the analyst must keep up with developing technology and analytical methods in the field of Forensic Anthropology and Forensic Science by actively participating in continuing training and education activities. See QM-001: Quality Personnel, section 7.5.1 for more details about Continuing Training/Education.

6.1 **Expert Witness Testimony Training:** FAU personnel shall perform annual expert witness testimony training. The FA can fulfill their continuing training by observing expert witness testimony, complete readings on criminal/civil law and/or expert witness testimony, by attending lectures, or by participating in a mock trial, if such training is made available.

All FAU personnel are responsible for recording their witness testimony continuing training on their Continuing Education Tracking form.