PROCEDURE
Corewell Health East - Irretrievable Specimen Handling

This Procedure is Applicable to the following Corewell Health sites:
Corewell Health Beaumont Grosse Pointe Hospital, Corewell Health Beaumont Troy Hospital, Corewell Health Dearborn Hospital, Corewell Health Farmington Hills Hospital, Corewell Health Taylor Hospital, Corewell Health Trenton Hospital, Corewell Health Wayne Hospital, Corewell Health William Beaumont University Hospital (Royal Oak)

Applicability Limited to: N/A

Reference #: 33643

Version #: 2

Effective Date: 09/10/2025

Functional Area: Clinical Operations, Laboratory

Lab Department Area: Lab - Processing

1. Principle
This document describes how to properly handle specimens designated as “irretrievable” when received in the laboratory without proper orders, unlabeled specimens (also referred to as No Identification (NID) specimens), or labeling discrepancies (also referred to as Requisition/Specimen Mismatch (RSM) specimens) during laboratory receipt, processing, delivery, testing, and storage of specimens and results.

2. Responsibility
Personnel who have completed the competency requirements will perform these tasks.

3. Definitions
A. **Irretrievable Specimens** are defined as specimens that are extremely difficult or impossible to recollect due to the nature of the specimen or due to unique circumstances under which the specimen was obtained.
B. Examples of irretrievable specimens are listed below:
   1. Fresh or fixed tissues, bone marrows, biopsies and fine needle aspiration specimens.
      a. Fluids, e.g., amniotic, Cerebral Spinal Fluid (CSF), synovial, peritoneal, and pericardial fluids. ***Blood and urine are not considered “fluid.”***
   2. Cytogenetic specimens.
      a. Cytogenetic specimens require delivery of the entire specimen (all containers) before distribution to all labs. Cytogenetics staff will forward the specimen after testing. To contact the Cytogenetics department, call 248-898-9030.
   3. Intra-Operative Parathyroid Hormone (PTH) specimens.
   4. Blood samples collected as part of an invasive vascular (or other surgical) procedure (e.g. - adrenal vein, inferior vena cava, and similar samples).

4. Procedure
A. Inpatient:

1. **No Orders or Order Clarification:**
    a. Call the unit to have them add orders. Once the order is received proceed as indicated.
2. **Inpatient unlabeled or labeling discrepancies:**
    a. If the specimen is determined irretrievable it may be relabeled; **the person responsible for collecting the original specimen** must come to the laboratory to accurately label the specimen per your site procedures.
        1) **Corewell Health East:** Corewell Health East - Proper Handling of Unlabeled / Mislabeled Specimens - All Beaumont Hospitals
        2) **Dearborn:** Corewell Health East - Laboratory Quality Assessment / Improvement Incident Report - Unacceptable Inpatient Specimen - Dearborn
        3) NOTE: If the collector explains that there are **extenuating circumstances** associated with the patient (e.g., urine culture mislabeled, but patient now on antibiotics), refer the incident to a manager, supervisor, lead, or on-call staff.

B. Outreach

1. **Outreach with Qualifying Presumptive Testing**
    a. Create an order based on patient information on the requisition and accompanying paperwork or on the specimen if you have 3 identifiers to register the patient but no requisition or paperwork.
    b. Order the approved presumptive testing and add a presumptive testing flag as indicated in the Corewell Health East - Specimen Processing Laboratory Presumptive and Rainbow Testing - Dearborn, Farmington Hills, Grosse Pointe, Royal Oak, Troy procedure.
    c. Print the Contact Serial Number (CSN) label so that the requisition can be imaged and available for Customer Service to review.
    d. Once order is completed and label printed, create an Irretrievable Follow-Up Task for Customer Service to resolve.
    e. Label the irretrievable specimens.
    f. Specimens will then be delivered to the designated testing departments. **Irretrievable specimens are not to be held in any problem bins in Processing to await resolutions.**
    g. Fluids and fluid tracking forms will be completed, split, and distributed as indicated at your specific site procedures.
        1) **Dearborn:** Corewell Health East - Body Fluid and Cerebrospinal Fluid - Interdepartmental Handling and Tracking - Dearborn
        2) **Royal Oak:** Corewell Health East - Fluid Specimens - Royal Oak
    h. Presumptive testing will be performed and results held until Customer Service resolves.
    i. Each testing department will maintain a Problem Specimen Folder or designated area which will contain results on the irretrievable specimens.
2. **Outreach without Qualifying Presumptive Testing** such as fresh or fixed tissues, bone marrows, biopsies and fine needle aspiration:
    a. Contact the physician's office to resolve unlabeled or labeling discrepancies. If the specimen integrity would be at risk, page the physician that collected the specimen.
        1) An affidavit stating the nature of the problem will be faxed for the physician's/clinician's signature to proceed with testing. Only the physician's or licensed care giver's signature is acceptable.
            a) Unacceptable Specimen Form – Dearborn, Taylor, Trenton, Wayne
            b) Specimen Relabel Form - FH, GP, RO, Troy
        2) Once the above signed forms are returned to the department, proceed with ordering the requested tests.
    b. For sites that have Customer Service resolve the issues:
        1) Create an order based on patient information on the requisition and accompanying paperwork.
        2) Print the CSN label so that the requisition can be imaged and available for Customer Service to review.

3) Once the order is completed and the label is printed, create an Irretrievable Follow-Up Task for Customer Service to resolve.
4) Label the irretrievable specimens.
5) Specimens will then be delivered to the designated testing departments.

C. **Resolution:** Customer Service or Department (per site/department process) will do the following:
   1. Unlabeled or labeling issues:
      a. Contact the physician/clinician office to resolve unlabeled or labeling discrepancies. If the specimen integrity would be at risk, page the physician that collected the specimen.
      b. An affidavit stating the nature of the problem will be faxed for the physician's /clinician's signature to proceed with testing. Only the physician's or licensed care giver's signature is acceptable.
         1) Unacceptable Specimen Form – Dearborn, Taylor, Trenton, Wayne
         2) Specimen Relabel Form - FH, GP, RO, Troy
      c. Once the signed Customer Service Patient Identification Discrepancy Form or above forms are returned to the department, proceed with ordering the requested tests.
      d. Resolve Follow-up and Presumptive Test Flag if needed.
   2. No Orders or Order Clarification:
      a. Contact the physician office to obtain or clarify orders.
      b. Once orders are obtained, proceed with ordering requested tests.
      c. Resolve Follow-up and Presumptive Test Flag if needed.

D. Notes:
   1. Hand deliver these specimens to designated testing areas. **Do NOT send via the Tube System.**
   2. Consult with the manager, supervisor, lead, or on-call staff if there is any question(s) about handling of Irretrievable Specimens.
   3. This procedure is a Corwell Health East Processing procedure. If applicable, refer to your department site specific procedures for additional Irretrievable Handling Requirements.

5. Revisions

Corewell Health reserves the right to alter, amend, modify or eliminate this document at any time without prior written notice.

6. Procedure Development and Approval

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7. Keywords

Not Set