A. Purpose

To describe when the use of animal tissue is exempt from IACUC review and approval.

B. Background

The IACUC is charged with the oversight of live animals used in research and teaching activities. The use of animal tissue that was originally collected for purposes unrelated to the research or teaching activity or that is obtained from animals euthanized for other purposes generally falls outside the scope of the IACUC’s responsibility. For purposes of this policy, tissue includes cells, body fluids, blood, etc.

C. Policy

An ASAF/IACUC approval is not required for research and teaching activities that utilize tissue that was originally obtained for unrelated purposes or collected from animals euthanized for another purpose (e.g. clinical purposes or euthanized under another approved ASAF). Some examples would include:

- The use of tissue obtained from a slaughter facility
- Purchasing commercially available animal tissue
- Obtaining tissue from procedures that were performed for clinical purposes (e.g. tumors removed for clinical purpose, reproductive tissue collected after routine spay/neuter, or blood that was collected for clinical diagnostic purposes)
- Collection of animal tissue after an animal has been euthanized for clinical reasons or for another approved research protocol
If the research or teaching activity requires that animals be purchased specifically for the tissue collection or requires manipulation of the live animal specifically for the activity, then an ASAF must be submitted for IACUC approval.

D. Review Process

Review of tissue use can be conducted by the Animal Welfare Program staff and may include consultation with a member of the campus veterinary staff. Review shall focus on two key issues that distinguish exempt tissue use from animal use requiring ASAF submission and IACUC approval:

1. Verification that the animals are not manipulated for the purposes of the investigator who is requesting the tissue. For example, animals cannot be fed a special diet prior to euthanasia for tissue. If animals are manipulated prior to euthanasia, a full ASAF must be submitted by the investigator.

2. Animals cannot be euthanized specifically to generate tissues for research purposes without an approved ASAF.

A letter stating why this tissue use is exempt from IACUC review may be requested by the investigator. This can be provided to funding agencies or publishers who may ask about IACUC oversight and tissue use.

Investigators may be informed of any additional occupational risks noted after review to reinforce existing policy and procedures to minimize transmission of zoonotic biohazards or other animal contact-related hazards.

A Tissue Use ASAF gathering pertinent information is available as an option to investigators through the IACUC online system at https://myresearch.wsu.edu.