



Introduction to Standard Operating Procedures

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Overview

- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**
 - Written instructions that document a routine or repetitive activity
 - Detail of processes necessary to perform a job safely and properly
 - Describe both technical and administrative practices and operations
 - Specific to an organization or laboratory





Purpose

- **Ensure all relevant individuals understand the work**
- **Document how activities shall be performed**
 - Facilitate consistency which supports data quality
 - Ensure compliance with regulations
 - Help maintain quality control
- **Types**
 - Repetitive technical activities
 - **Clinical specimen receipt and processing**
 - **Proper use of biosafety cabinet**
 - **Diagnostic test procedures**
 - Administrative procedures
 - **The process for proper documentation of training**
 - **Laboratory Access Authorization**



Benefits

- **All personnel will know the correct procedure**
- **Facilitate planning for procedures**
 - Required equipment
 - Time requirements
- **Detailed work instructions can be used as part of a training program**
- **Reconstruction of experiment activities in the absence of other information**
- **Improved data quality and comparability**
- **Minimize the possibility of miscommunication**
- **Incorporate safety practices into the experimental steps**
- **Minimize guesswork for workers**
 - Required PPE
 - Required safety and security practices
- **People are more likely to follow a written protocol**



When is a SOP Required?

- **Every procedure performed on a routine basis**
 - Routine procedures in the laboratory
 - Infectious specimen receipt and processing
 - Diagnostic tests
- **All response procedures require a SOP**
 - Routine procedures for spills
 - Inside or outside of the biosafety cabinet
 - Response to security breach
 - Medical emergencies
- **Equipment should be familiar to personnel**
 - Routine use of equipment
 - Autoclaves
 - Centrifuges
 - Biosafety Cabinets
 - Repair
- **Evacuation Procedures**
 - Fires
 - Medical emergencies requiring expedient evacuation
 - Other medical emergencies



Review and Approval

- **Written by person with adequate knowledge of the procedure and who actually performs the procedure**
- **SOPs should be reviewed by more than one person for accuracy**
 - Test the SOP to verify it is complete
- **SOPs must remain current**
 - As new procedures are identified SOPs should be developed
- **Revise SOPs when procedures change**