

NYU Langone Medical Center ULT Freezer Protection Policy

RATIONALE: Perishable research reagents and samples are routinely stored in ultra-low temperature (ULT) freezers (-80°C, -140°C, etc.). As demonstrated during Hurricane Sandy, materials contained in these units may be irreplaceable and losses are highly disruptive to sponsored research. To safeguard these items, the institution has pursued an aggressive program to move ULT freezers into dedicated freezer spaces with emergency power and consistent cooling, and to include the vast majority of units into the institution-wide ELPRO sensor system. However, due to the continued growth of the research faculty, the increased number of funded research projects requiring the archiving of perishable materials, and tighter regulations on the use of hallway spaces, we are reaching full capacity on campus.

To provide the broadest protection possible and do so in an equitable manner, the Office of Science and Research (OSR) will implement the following campus-wide policy:

- **Each Principal Investigator (PI) is permitted to keep one ULT freezer per R01 equivalent (currently defined as \$125K in annual indirect cost recoveries from any extramural sources) on campus.** [Note: for the majority of NYULMC investigators this will match their existing situation. The policy does not apply to -20/-30°C or +4°C units.]
- **New freezer purchase requires OSR approval.** Before placing orders for new ULT freezers, PIs or their representatives must contact OSR <osrfreezers@nyumc.org> for authorization, and to confirm that the planned location for the unit has adequate space, cooling and access to emergency power (where applicable). Additionally, the unit specifications must conform to policy. OSR staff can assist in selecting appropriate models and brands or alternative storage options.
- **New freezers must be upright models (no chests) and width should not exceed 42" (107 cm).** Exceptions will require OSR approval based on review of the scientific justification and other parameters.

FREEZER EXCHANGE PROGRAM: Horizontal (chest) freezers occupy a more significant footprint; space that could be used for additional units or other equipment. OSR offers to exchange existing horizontal units for new or reconditioned upright freezers of equivalent operating temperature and capacity, along with the corresponding storage racks. Routine consolidation of frozen samples and the use of shared freezers is strongly encouraged.

OFF-CAMPUS STORAGE OPTIONS: OSR has identified secure off-campus storage options for collections in excess of the above quota and as backup for irreplaceable materials. For the next three years (as of March 2016), NYULMC will cover the costs of relocating inventoried freezers or freezer contents that exceed the individual allowance. OSR will also coordinate and pay for the transfer or retrieval of individual items on a weekly basis. Investigators must cover the costs of additional sample retrievals outside of this schedule.

Sufficient funds for offsite storage and retrieval costs beyond March 2019 should be incorporated into the relevant grant proposal budgets.

FREEZER MANAGEMENT: Where possible, OSR and Facilities will ensure that all ULT freezers are connected to the emergency power network. OSR will also manage shared freezer spaces and oversee the placement of ULT freezers in these spaces. Dedicated cooling units will ensure appropriate ambient temperatures and will be continuously monitored by Facilities. OSR will maintain a number of dedicated backup freezers for use by researchers in the event of unit failures or for routine defrosting, cleaning and consolidation.

Questions about the policy or off-campus storage options can be addressed to

Angus Wilson or Kiki Nelson at <osrfreezers@nyumc.org>