



Veterinary Diagnostic Pathology Services

Submission Guidelines for Post-mortem Examination

We perform post-mortem examinations on small animals, including dogs, cats, rabbits, and rodents, as well as birds, reptiles, fish, and other small exotic species. Large animal species ([farm](#), zoo and equine) can also be accepted. Advance notification will be required for any intended post-mortem submission so that we can coordinate delivery and properly manage logistics. A completed AND signed [Submission Form](#) (found on our website) MUST be submitted and approved by a pathologist prior to arranging delivery of the animal.

Delivery of animals

Please contact the Veterinary Pathology Centre prior to delivery of any animal for post-mortem examination. Please call 01483 689823 or email vetpath@surrey.ac.uk in advance, to arrange delivery to the following address:

Veterinary Pathology Centre
University of Surrey
Francis Crick Road
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 7AQ

Our **post-mortem examination** service incorporates the following 3 areas:

1. **Post-mortem examination and basic histopathology:** all cases submitted for post-mortem examination will be examined by our Pathology team and/or a Veterinary Investigation Officer (VIO). Standard fees are based on species and weight, as shown in our post-mortem [price structure](#), and include gross post-mortem examination with routine histopathology for up to 5 tissues, as required.
2. **Cremation options:** either individual or communal cremation – see details below. Additional costs will apply depending on weight of submitted animal, and selected cremation option.
3. **Additional testing:** such as microbial culture, may be needed or recommended in some, but not all cases. Where this is required as part of the diagnostic process, an additional fee will be charged. Any additional tests recommended in the initial report will only be performed and charged following approval by the submitting veterinary surgeon.

Turn-around time (TAT)

All post-mortem cases will be reviewed by our Pathologist team and/or VIO, who aim to report gross pathology within 2 business days of the examination. Where histopathology is performed, an additional report will be issued as soon as feasible, generally within 6-8 weeks unless further, externally requested testing, is pending.

Cremation Options

Cremation options are either individual or communal cremation. We cannot return animals for burial after post-mortem examination, and we do not perform cosmetic post-mortem examinations.

Communal Cremation

For routine communal cremation there is an additional cost based on the weight of the animal in kilograms. Prior to post-mortem examination, animals will be weighed to determine a specific final cost. If this is significantly different to the estimated weight entered on the submission form, we will contact you.

- For animals under 10kg, a standard fee of £6 applies per animal.
- For animals over 10kg, a fee of £0.75 per kg will be applied (up to a maximum disposal fee of £400)

Individual Cremation

If an individual cremation is requested please indicate this on the [Submission Form](#). This will need to be arranged directly with the provider, by the owner or other responsible party, and will be subject to additional fees payable directly to the pet cremation company. Remains will only be released by the Veterinary Pathology Centre to a licensed pet crematorium. We will liaise with the pet cremation provider regarding transfer of the animal once we have the authorised party's instructions and authorisation to do so.

Remains will be stored for up to three months from the date that the final post mortem report is issued, at no charge. After three months, storage of remains will incur a £25 per month charge. After six months of no collection, remains will be communally cremated with no ashes returned to the owners. A final communication will be emailed to the submitting veterinary practice prior to this disposal.

Central Nervous System (CNS) Cases

In CNS cases where removal of brain and spinal cord is indicated a surcharge will apply in addition to the standard fees. This covers the additional time taken to perform the post-mortem examination as well as the significantly increased number of histological sections that typically need to be taken and interpreted in such cases. Please contact us at vetpath@surrey.ac.uk for a quote.

Litigation Cases

If you have a case that requires post-mortem examination and preparation of reports for legal purposes because of potential or known medicolegal implications, please contact the Head of Pathology or the Pathologist on Duty. They will discuss the case with you and determine whether it can be accommodated. Costs will also be determined in advance and confirmed prior to submission. Remains will be stored until we have received authorisation to release them, at no charge. Following authorisation, standard disposal procedures will apply; with the option of communal or individual cremation.

Teaching and Research

Materials submitted for post-mortem examination become the property of the University of Surrey and may be retained for diagnostic, teaching, and research purposes. They may subsequently be used for teaching purposes with our students and trainee pathologists and may contribute to further study as part of research projects, where applicable. Where publications are made, any personal information will be anonymised. Owners are required to provide informed consent for these purposes. Please indicate on the [Submission Form](#) that the owner has provided informed consent. Alternatively, please contact us prior to submission if the owner does not consent to this use.

Terms & Conditions

All post-mortem examination services offered by the University of Surrey at the Veterinary Pathology Centre, and detailed on our [website](#) are subject to our standard [Terms and Conditions](#) for the supply of Veterinary Pathology Services.

Payment

Please note we cannot accept direct payment from owners. As the submitting veterinary practice is our client, we invoice the practice for all diagnostic tests, including post-mortem examinations. All prices quoted are exclusive of VAT.