Standard operating procedure (SOP) · FRT-SOP-002 · Version 1.0 · Approved by the ASF Expert Committee

Supports: 8.4

At a glance

- Gametes and embryos are stored in monitored conditions with alarms.
- Each alarm is answered within the set time, and the response is recorded.
- A back-up storage system is ready and tested.
- A storage failure triggers the written response at once.
- Stop and get help straight away if: an alarm is not answered, or a storage failure happens with no back-up in place.

1. Purpose

To protect each gamete and embryo from a storage failure (8.4).

2. Scope

Applies to	Clinical and support staff in the hospital
Locations	All wards, clinics and departments of the facility
When	Whenever the activity described is carried out
Does not apply to	Activities covered by another document listed in section 15

3. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Clinical lead	The doctor or nurse in charge of the area at the time

4. Background

A storage failure can destroy years of work. Monitored storage with alarms, a defined response and a back-up is the only protection against a silent failure.

5. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility	Competence
Senior embryologist	Owns the storage, alarms and back-up	Embryologist
Duty embryologist	Answers alarms and records the response	Embryologist

6. Materials and equipment

Item	Requirement	Condition
Records and forms named in this document	Current version	Checked before use

7. Safety

- Stop and call for help if a patient is at immediate risk. Do not delay urgent care to complete paperwork.

8. Before you start

- Confirm the forms and equipment named in this document are available and current.

9. Procedure

Step 1. Monitor.

- Keep storage monitored at all times, with alarms set to the approved limits (FRT-REG-002).

Key point: Alarms on at all times.

Step 2. Respond.

- Answer each alarm within the set time, follow the failure response, and record it.

Key point: The response is written.

Step 3. Back-up.

- Test the back-up storage on the schedule and record the test.

Key point: A back-up that is not tested is not a back-up.

10. Decision points

- No decision points in this procedure.

11. Special situations

Situation	Action
Out of hours	Follow the same steps. Use the on-call contact on the wall of the area.

12. Escalation

- Any serious problem goes to the duty clinical lead at once and to the clinical director the same day.

13. Monitoring

Measure	Target	Frequency	Owner	If not met
Alarms answered within the set time	100%	Monthly	Senior embryologist	Escalate to chief executive
Back-up storage tests on schedule	100%	Quarterly	Senior embryologist	Escalate to chief executive

14. Records

Record	Kept in	Retention
Record named in this document	Patient record or the area file	the period set by the facility’s records policy years

15. Training

- Staff are trained in this document at induction and refreshed each year, with a recorded competency check.

16. Related documents

ID	Title	Use
FRT-REG-002	Storage monitoring and alarm log	Log

17. Evidence

Reference	Note
E-009	Based on ESHRE revised guidelines for good practice in IVF laboratories (2015).
E-006	ASF Policy Framework v1.2. Adapted.
E-009	ASF Expert Committee consensus.

18. Change history

Version	Date	What changed	Approval
1.0	the date of approval	First version	set Expert Committee approval

E-learning for this document

- Equipment, calibration, maintenance and environment (L-05)
- Information security, LIS downtime, backup and data protection (L-10)

References

- Accréditation Sans Frontières (2026). ASF Policy Framework v1.2. (E-006)
- Accréditation Sans Frontières (2026). ASF Expert Committee consensus on Standard 1. (E-009)

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