

Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG) Statement of Usage
Intermountain Forensics/Cold Case Coalition's 1921 Tulsa Identification Project
- Phase One - January - December 2022

1. The City of Tulsa's 1921 Graves Investigation project seeks to identify human remains found in Oaklawn cemetery through the use of investigative genetic genealogy (IGG). (Also referred to as forensic genetic genealogy in many public documents.)
2. The investigative genetic genealogy (IGG) process involves comparison of DNA profiles from the Oaklawn remains to members of the public who have previously taken consumer DNA tests and uploaded them to the publicly available genealogy DNA databases GEDmatch and/or Family Tree DNA.
 - a. Note: DNA uploaders choose their own level of privacy when uploading their consumer raw data file to the GEDmatch and/or Family Tree DNA databases. These settings determine which types of forensic cases, if any, can be compared to a user's uploaded DNA test. The two different types of forensic cases are (1) unidentified human remains and (2) DNA from violent crime scenes. [Please see numbers 11 and 13 below for more information on privacy from law enforcement.]
3. Intermountain Forensics/Cold Case Coalition's 1921 Tulsa Identification Project's investigation into unidentified remains related to the Tulsa Race Massacre is somewhat unique in that there is no law enforcement agency involved. Investigative genetic genealogists will work under the direction of Intermountain Forensics' parent organization, the Cold Case Coalition. IGG work will be independent of law enforcement and the City of Tulsa. Findings will be reported to the City of Tulsa's 1921 Graves Investigation Committee and/or the Public Oversight Committee.
4. The City of Tulsa will not be given access to the DNA profiles at either GEDmatch and/or FTDNA.
5. The City of Tulsa will not be given access to the list of DNA matches (consumer DNA tests which have been uploaded) that share DNA with the human remains in this project. [Note: at some point, the City of Tulsa's 1921 Graves Investigation Committee and/or the Public Oversight Committee may be notified of common ancestors shared by the DNA matches and may be advised of some of the names of close DNA matches. This would be done at a stage where closer DNA relatives need to be contacted for further information, or confirmatory DNA testing.]

6. Intermountain Forensics and its parent organization, the Cold Case Coalition, will not voluntarily cooperate with any request by law enforcement to access any information, DNA or otherwise, related to the 1921 Graves Investigation Project.
7. There is no separate DNA database for this project. Nor are there current plans to create one. This project will utilize consumer DNA tests which have been voluntarily uploaded to GEDmatch or FTDNA. These large databases offer the best chance of successful identification since more than a million members of the public have made their DNA tests available for comparison to the DNA profiles of unidentified remains. Many relatives of Tulsa Race Massacre victims will be represented in these genealogy databases.
8. FTDNA and GEDmatch do not allow downloads of other user's raw data files that are in their database. Therefore, files from GEDmatch and/or FTDNA cannot be utilized to populate a new database.
9. Many people who believe a family member may have been a Tulsa Race Massacre (TRM) victim, or part of the Greenwood community, have already shared their family stories and asked if they can have their own DNA compared to the DNA profiles of the undocumented human remains found in the Oaklawn Cemetery. A [form](#) for submission of stories, records, family trees and existing DNA tests is available to community members desirous of having their information considered as part of this project. These forms will be referred to in this project as "Information Donations" and the originators as "Information Donors."
10. Approximately 25% of the information donors indicated they had already taken a consumer DNA test and uploaded it to either GEDmatch and/or FTDNA. These information donors will automatically be compared to the unidentified remains for this project.
11. Some information donors indicated that they have already taken a consumer DNA test, but not uploaded it to GEDmatch or FTDNA. Many asked for information on how to have their DNA compared to the human remains in this project. A [chart](#) outlining available paths for comparison will be sent to each, along with a video outlining how to upload their existing consumer DNA test to the GEDmatch database, if they so choose. [The GEDmatch database is being suggested, instead of FTDNA, because GEDmatch allows users to exclude themselves from searches regarding crime scene DNA.] The following statements are included in the video and/or sent in the email message with the video:
 - a. GEDmatch is a public database that allows relatives who took their DNA tests at different testing companies a way to connect and to see each other's match lists.

- b. In addition, GEDmatch allows agencies to compare unidentified remains, or crime scene DNA, to the kits in the GEDmatch database, depending upon which of their upload options you choose.
- c. In order to have your DNA test show as a match to the unidentified remains from the Tulsa Race Massacre, you will need to select either of the options on top. Please pause the video here and read the descriptions of each to ensure you choose an option you are comfortable with. [Video shows the GEDmatch screen with descriptions of each option.]
- d. For a greater degree of privacy from law enforcement, you might want to choose Opt Out. That limits their use of your DNA to identifying human remains.
- e. If you are uncomfortable choosing either of the top two options, please contact us directly at info@IntermountainForensics.com.
- f. For a greater degree of privacy from your DNA matches, you can use an alias instead of your real name when uploading your DNA to GEDmatch. However, even with these precautions, your DNA may ultimately be identifiable.
- g. Be aware that GEDmatch users will be able to see the email address associated with uploaded DNA tests, which affects your overall level of privacy.
- h. In order to make an informed decision about uploading to GEDmatch, we recommend users read the terms of service, as well as doing additional research. The following articles, available on the internet have been provided as potential resources.
 - i. The Genetic Genealogy Standards Committee, "[Genetic Genealogy Standards](#)", posted 10 Jan 2015
 - ii. Judy G. Russell, "[The dos and don'ts of DNA](#)," The Legal Genealogist : posted 6 Mar 2022). [This article has links to terms of services, privacy statements, and law enforcement usage information current as of Mar 2022.]
 - iii. Blaine Bettinger, et al., "[Four misconceptions about investigative genetic genealogy](#)," Journal of Law and the Biosciences, published online 13 Apr 2021 [Section III of this article is very useful in dispelling myths regarding IGG and law enforcement. Please be aware that this article also discusses the use of IGG and the GEDmatch database by law enforcement seeking to identify perpetrators of violent crime. Intermountain Forensics/Cold Case Coalition's 1921 Tulsa Identification Project does not seek to identify perpetrators of any crime. Our project works to identify

human remains only. We encourage uploaders desirous of a greater degree of privacy from law enforcement to use the “opt-out” option at GEDmatch which limits their use of your DNA to identifying human remains only. One of the reasons we have included this article is an effort to make you aware of how your DNA upload may be used if you select GEDmatch’s “Opt-In” option.
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iv. Clair L Glynn, “[Bridging Disciplines to Form a New One: The Emergence of Forensic Genetic Genealogy](#)”, Genes, vol 13, issue 8, published online 1 Aug 2022 [Please note, this article discusses the use of IGG (also known as FGG) and the GEDmatch database by law enforcement seeking to identify perpetrators of violent crime. Intermountain Forensics/Cold Case Coalition’s 1921 Tulsa Identification Project does not seek to identify perpetrators of any crime. Our project works to identify human remains only. We encourage uploaders desirous of a greater degree of privacy from law enforcement to use the “opt-out” option at GEDmatch which limits their use of your DNA to identifying human remains only. We have included this article in an effort to make you aware of how your uploaded DNA may be used if you select GEDmatch’s “Opt-In” option. In addition, section 3.3 of this article provides a history of GEDmatch including previous changes to their terms of service.]

i. Project updates, as well as a statement on the usage of IGG and the 1921 Graves Investigation can be found online at [Tulsa1921DNA.org](#).

12. Some community members who have contacted us with their family stories have indicated that they would like to have their DNA compared, but have not already taken a consumer DNA test. A number of free Ancestry DNA kits are available to direct descendants of potential Tulsa Race Massacre victims so that they can be included in comparisons to the DNA profiles of the unidentified remains.

13. These elective testers will also be given the information on the different paths they can take for having their DNA compared to the DNA profiles for the unidentified remains. (Those paths can be viewed at this [link](#).) The most private option available is comparison path A. Please note, this path is also the least helpful to this project as it does not allow the elective tester’s DNA to be grouped with other DNA relatives. This grouping process is of great assistance in identifying the common ancestor shared by the voluntary uploaders and the unidentified remains. This process is part of the reason why large DNA databases, such as GEDmatch, are necessary for successful outcomes. Nevertheless, comparison path A has been made available for community

members who decide they cannot be in these larger databases at this time.

Comparison path A includes the following steps:

- a. Take a consumer DNA test, such as Ancestry DNA, and opt out of relative matching so that you do not appear on the match lists of your DNA relatives. [Users should read the Terms and Conditions of any consumer DNA testing company before providing a DNA sample.]
 - b. Instead of uploading the raw DNA file to GEDmatch, email it directly to info@IntermountainForensics.org. [Note: IMF is a nonprofit accredited forensic DNA lab. IMF does NOT have a DNA database of any kind. Emails received will be treated as confidential communications. Raw data files received and requested to be compared to the human remains that are part of the 1921 Graves Investigation project will be compared one by one to the DNA profiles generated by IMF for the said unidentified human remains.]
14. The successful identification of human remains can only happen through the comparison of DNA to their living relatives. We are grateful for those who have, and those who will, decide their DNA can be utilized in this project. At the same time, we reiterate that community members who feel uncomfortable with the [comparison paths](#) currently offered should refrain from submitting DNA at this time.
15. We respect and honor concerns that may prevent anyone from submitting DNA. We would still like to document the stories and family names of loved ones who may have been victims of the Tulsa Race Massacre and encourage submission of that information via our [information donation form](#) or email to info@intermountainforensics.com.
16. When the DNA profiles for the unidentified remains are available, they will be uploaded to GEDmatch Pro, which is the official portal to the GEDmatch database for projects involving unidentified remains. An automated process will compare these DNA profiles to all voluntary uploaders in the GEDmatch database whose permission settings make their kits accessible for this project. Our investigative genetic genealogy teams will be able to view the list of matching DNA relatives.
17. DNA profiles for the unidentified remains will also be uploaded to the FTDNA database via FTDNA's forensic upload process. The FTDNA automated process will compare to all voluntary uploaders in the FTDNA database whose settings make their kits accessible for identification of human remains. Our investigative genetic genealogy teams will be able to view the list of matching DNA relatives.
18. The City of Tulsa will not be involved in the investigative genetic genealogy phase of this project and will not see the list of matches provided by either GEDmatch or FTDNA. [Note: at some point, the City's 1921 Graves

Investigation Committee and the Public Oversight Committee may be notified of common ancestors shared by the DNA matches and may be advised of some of the names of close DNA matches. This would be done at a stage where closer DNA relatives need to be contacted for further information, or confirmatory DNA testing.]

19. At the request of the 1921 Graves Investigation Committee and the Public Oversight Committee, investigative genetic genealogy work is currently being provided free of charge.
20. Several of the most respected and experienced investigative genetic genealogy organizations have stepped forward to be pro bono partners with the Cold Case Coalition (the parent organization of Intermountain Forensics) in the IGG process. These partners include, but may not be limited to: the DNA Doe Project, Identifinders International, and DNA Detectives.
21. The highest level of industry practices and standards will be complied with during this process.
22. Investigative genetic genealogists from the African American and Black communities are a critical part of the genealogy team. Their insights into the importance of this project and guidance of the IGG team are crucial factors. Our African American and Black team members are leading our outreach efforts and have responded directly to many of the elective testers and potential DNA uploaders who have contacted us via email or information donation form.
23. We encourage experienced genetic genealogists who are part of the Greenwood, Tulsa Race Massacre, African American and/or Black communities to contact us regarding volunteer opportunities for this project or becoming an apprentice in training for future phases of the 1921 Graves Investigation project.
24. Members of the public who have provided their GEDmatch kit numbers, or emailed raw data files to IMF, or who have provided their FTDNA user name will be notified of project updates and the date their DNA was compared to each of the unidentified human remains that are part of this project. They will additionally be notified at the close of each phase of an identification project so that they can determine if they want to make changes to privacy settings, or remove their DNA raw data files from whichever entities they had given access (GEDmatch, FTDNA, or IMF via email).
25. If/when our investigative genetic genealogy teams are able to determine a possible identity or living relatives for any of the unidentified remains in this project, further confirmatory DNA testing and/or comparisons will be initiated. Closely related comparisons and/or confirmatory DNA testing will be provided free of charge.
 - a. In challenging cases, members of the public who may be distant relatives of the unidentified remains may be asked if they have existing consumer

DNA tests that they would be willing to make available for comparison using one of the [comparison paths](#) available in this project. Those comparisons may be necessary to get to the point where confirmatory testing of closer relatives is possible.

26. Announcement of any final identifications will be made in a manner determined by the 1921 Graves Investigation Committee and/or the Public Oversight Committee for this project.

Project Glossary

1921 Graves Investigation = A project created by the City of Tulsa to investigate undocumented burials believed to be related to the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Overseen by the 1921 Graves Investigation Committee and a Public Oversight Committee. The first phase of this project examines undocumented burials in section 20 of the Oaklawn Cemetery in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Unidentified remains from section 20 were sent to the nonprofit and accredited DNA lab Intermountain Forensics for extraction and sequencing in an effort to produce a DNA profile for the remains that could be utilized in a process known as Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG)

1921 Tulsa Identification Project = Is the contracted project being conducted by Intermountain Forensics and the Cold Case Coalition for the forensic laboratory and IGG work as a part of the 1921 Graves Investigation being overseen by the City of Tulsa.

Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG) = For this project, IGG work will be the application of traditional genealogy and genetic genealogy, to the process of identifying human remains that are part of the 1921 Graves Investigation. [Note: In broader application, IGG work is also used to refer to traditional genealogy and genetic genealogy applied to the process of identifying DNA found at violent crime scenes. IGG is referred to interchangeably in public documents as Forensic Genetic Genealogy (FGG) or in a combined format as Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy (FIGG).]

Greenwood Community Member = A person who has reason to believe their ancestors, or close relatives of their ancestors, lived in or near the Greenwood District of Tulsa, Oklahoma in the year 1921. This district, known as Black Wall Street due its thriving business community and affluent citizens, was destroyed on May 31st and June 1st of that year in what is now known as the Tulsa Race Massacre.

Tulsa Race Massacre Community Member = A person who has reason to believe they may be related to a victim or survivor of the Tulsa Race Massacre (TRM).

Existing DNA Testers = Members of the public who have already taken a consumer DNA test, such as those available at Ancestry DNA, 23 and Me, My Heritage and Family Tree DNA (FTDNA). They did not take a DNA test because of this project, but

may have already, or may be willing to upload to GEDmatch for comparison to this project.

Existing Uploaders = Members of the public who have already uploaded consumer DNA tests to either GEDmatch and/or FTDNA. They did not upload because of this project, but more than a million are already in the GEDmatch database and available for comparison to this project.

Potential Uploader = Members of the community who have taken a consumer DNA test and asked about how to have their DNA compared to the unidentified remains.

Elective Tester = A member of the public who has chosen to take a consumer DNA test. Also used specifically for members of the Greenwood or Tulsa Race Massacre community who may choose to take a DNA test in order to be part of this project.

(Please note descendants of Tulsa Race Massacre victims may contact us regarding qualifying for a free DNA test to be used as part of the Tulsa 1921 Identification project.)

Consumer Raw DNA Data File = The file that a DNA tester gets from Ancestry DNA, or another consumer DNA testing company, that has their DNA markers. This is the file that gets uploaded to public databases such as those at GEDmatch or FTDNA.

DNA Profile = Used interchangeably with “Consumer Raw DNA File” in many public documents. For the sake of this project, “DNA Profile” will mainly be used when referring to the DNA data file that Intermountain Forensics will create for each of the unidentified human remains in this project. IMF will then upload the DNA Profiles for the unidentified remains into the GEDmatch, and likely FTDNA, databases for comparison to the more than million Consumer Raw DNA Data Files that already exist there.

DNA Sample (consumer testing) = A physical sample, such as saliva or cheek cells, that is sent to a consumer DNA testing company or lab. The end product is always a consumer raw DNA data file that contains information about the tester’s DNA. Samples are usually sent for the purpose of family history, or biological relative matching and identification. Each consumer testing company has different policies regarding the use and retention of the original sample. Consumers should read the terms and conditions relating to any DNA test they are considering.

DNA Sample (unidentified remains) = bones, teeth, tissue, and/or hair from unidentified human remains sent to a forensic lab to create a DNA profile of some kind. In the 1921 Graves Investigation, these samples were sent to Intermountain Forensics, a nonprofit and accredited forensic DNA lab.

DNA Sample (voluntary confirmation testing) = A physical sample, such as saliva or cheek cells, collected near the end of the identification process for the purpose of confirming a suspected biological relationship. A project member will make contact with the best candidates for confirmation testing and ensure proper handling and processing of their DNA sample.

Information Donations: Information sent to Intermountain Forensics by members of the public. A [form](#) has been made available as a way to receive and document this

information. It allows information donors to submit stories, records, family trees and information about existing DNA tests so that their information can be considered in this project. These forms are referred to in this project as “Information Donations” and the originators as “Information Donors”

Information Donor: A person who has submitted information to Intermountain Forensics regarding this project, whether via email, or the form that has been made available.