

TOXTALK



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



CAN YOU BELIEVE IT'S ALREADY 2025?

As a child, and even as a young adult, this year felt like a distant future filled with ambitious predictions. Self-driving cars that never needed refueling, seamless tracking of every move, invisible computers integrated into daily life, and personal companions were all imagined possibilities. While some of these remain futuristic, it's incredible how far we've come; hydrogen-powered and self-driving vehicles are becoming reality, omnipresent technology, and virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa are now part of our everyday lives. I was hoping that light sabers would be commonplace, but I am still waiting on that. Another prediction is that the life expectancy would be over 100 years. Toxicologists know that will be unlikely because humans can't handle themselves and continue to ramp up the number of drugs that we see daily. While we are not quite to the set of the Jetsons, they are set in 2062, we do have quite a bit of really cool features at our disposal in 2025.

Looking ahead, 2025 is already off to a great start. I am honored to begin this year as SOFT President and to work alongside our outstanding Board of Directors. I'm thrilled to **welcome two new Directors, Ms. Dani Mata and Dr. Kim Samano**, both of whom bring a wealth of experience and dedication to SOFT. I am looking forward to their contributions, feedback, and ideas. The Board of Directors is made up of some of the most dedicated professionals I've had the privilege to work with.

Recently, the Board has achieved key milestones, including completing the SOFT Policies and Procedures and the SOFT Code of Conduct. These documents will provide clear guidance for Board activities and ensure transparency and engagement for all members. Secretary Swortwood has created a streamline membership application process that you can read more about in this issue of ToxTalk, and the process of committee membership diversification has reached its goal. The work started by President Spargo and continued by President Yeatman has culminated in greater opportunities for your participation in SOFT. Currently,

TOXTALK

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

there are around 180 different individuals serving in positions within SOFT and openings on most committees will be available every year. I am excited to announce and warmly welcome our newest committee members. These dedicated individuals bring a wealth of expertise, passion, and unique perspectives that will undoubtedly enhance the impact of our organization. We are confident their contributions will play a pivotal role in driving our mission forward.



Perhaps the most exciting news beginning this new year is the funding of the **SOFT Huestis & Smith Toxicology International Travel Award**. This visionary award, conceived by Dr. Marilyn A. Huestis and Dr. Michael L. Smith, offers SOFT members an incredible opportunity to showcase their research on

a global stage while fostering international collaboration and connections. Both of these very special people have committed their lives to SOFT and TIAFT, but more importantly, to the advancement of the field of toxicology and the education of toxicologists of all ages. This award will fund up to three SOFT members to attend a TIAFT meeting. **Applications are open now for the 62nd TIAFT Annual Meeting to be held November 23-28, 2025, in Auckland, New Zealand.** You can read more about the award and make an application on the SOFT website <https://soft.memberclicks.net/travel-award>.

During the business meeting at the Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Executive Director, Beth Olson, announced the formation of a **SOFT Toxicology Forum**. This forum will allow SOFT members to connect and discuss topics and share ideas. While the official name of the forum is up in the air at the moment, it should be alive in the coming months. I am excited to see how this will provide more connection, education, and discussion among our SOFT family.

The theme of this message is opportunity. From the exciting technology that we have at our disposal, to application for membership, participation in committees, and international travel, SOFT provides opportunities for learning, discussion, education, and fun. But none of this works without you, the membership. So, I thank you for making this such a wonderful organization.

Looking ahead, I am thrilled about the 2025 Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon. Hosts Sara Short and Amy Miles, along with the Planning Committee, are working tirelessly to deliver an unforgettable experience. I hope to see all of you there as we come together to celebrate toxicology and the SOFT family. Thank you for allowing me the honor of serving as your SOFT President, it is a career highlight I will always cherish. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments, or ideas. See you in Baltimore for the 2025 AAFS meeting!

Chris Heartsill
SOFT President

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Awards Committee

Aria McCall
Katherine Dozier
Mary Bouschard
Kayla Neuman
Tyson Baird

Ethics Committee

Lindsay Simpson

Continuing Education Committee

Lindsay Simpson
Jessica Ayala

Cultures, Values, and Diversity Committee

Sarah Toma

Drug Facilitated Crimes Committee

Stephanie Troupe
Meaghan, Hessler
Leanne Hazard
Tamara Salazar

Drugs & Driving Committee

Vanessa Meneses

Finance Committee

Lynn Wagner

Meeting Resource Committee

Vanessa Beall

Membership Committee

Marissa Finkelstein

Mentoring Committee

Dani Mata
Rachel Lieberman
Melissa Rodriguez
Eduardo de Campos

Nominating Committee

Tate Yeatman
Madeline Montgomery
Becky Wagner

Novel Psychoactive Substances Committee

Helen Chang
Jillian Neifeld

Oral Fluid Committee

Jasmine Maxwell
Jennifer Colby
Svante Vikingsson
Seth Tracy

Postmortem Toxicology Committee

Lindsay Hickerson
Lindsay Glicksberg
Andrew Wade

Publications Committee

Haley Mulder
Samuel Kleinman
Becky Wagner

Toxicology Resource Committee

Matt Meyers
Dominique Gidron
Scott Larson

Young Forensic Toxicologists Committee

Sarah Toma
Mahagani Thomas
Lindsey Vosters

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

REMINDER TO RENEW YOUR SOFT MEMBERSHIP FOR 2025!

It's time to renew your membership for 2025! SOFT members have been sent an email notification requesting that they complete their annual renewal. You can also log into your membership profile to pay, view, or download your renewal invoice.

Your continued membership ensures SOFT remains a valuable resource for professional growth, networking, and innovation in the field of forensic toxicology. Thank you for being an essential part of our community!

2025 RENEWAL FEE:

- \$150: Full and Associate Members
- \$40: Student Members
- \$40: Retired and Emeritus Members (Renewal + JAT Subscription)
- \$0: Retired and Emeritus Members (Renewal only)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- Membership Period: January 1 – December 31, 2025
- Payment Deadline: February 28, 2025

HOW TO RENEW

- [Log into your SOFT profile.](#)
- Select "My Profile."
- Select "Invoices."
- Select the invoice number you wish to pay, view, or download.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

- **Credit/Debit Card:** Pay online with a personal or company card.
- **Check:** Mail to the SOFT office at:
1955 W. Baseline Rd. Ste. 113-442, Mesa, AZ 85202
(Include your invoice number in the memo line)
- **ACH/Wire Transfer:**
Swift Code: USBKUS44IMT
Routing Number: 122105155
***PLEASE NOTE, NEW ACCOUNT NUMBER: 151709822416**



SOFT MEMBERSHIP: UPDATE TO MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & PROMOTION PROCESS

SUBMITTED BY: MADELEINE SWORTWOOD, CHAIR OF MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Membership Committee and the SOFT Office, I am pleased to announce a new, stream-lined process for membership applications and promotions. Previously, applications, fees, and sponsor forms were all submitted separately. This process created a long wait for applicants if their applications were not “complete” as they waited for sponsors to submit forms. Now, everything will be submitted together by the applicant, including application, fees, supporting documentation, and sponsor forms. We think this new method will allow applicants more control of their materials and it will allow a shorter turnaround time between application submission and review by our committee. As a growing organization, we feel this will improve communication and timeliness for new and promoting members.

BELOW IS EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP OR TO PROMOTE YOUR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

SOFT MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

1. FULL MEMBERSHIP

For individuals actively engaged in forensic toxicology with the following qualifications:

- **Ph.D.** + 1 year experience
- **M.S.** + 2 years experience
- **B.S. or B.A.** + 3 years experience

Dues: \$150/calendar year (applied toward application fee)

Sponsors Needed: 2 Full Members in good standing

Privileges: Voting rights and eligibility for all member benefits

2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

For individuals with an interest in forensic toxicology who do not meet Full Membership requirements.

Dues: \$150/calendar year (applied toward application fee)

Sponsors Needed: 1 Full Member in good standing

Privileges: Non-voting, not eligible for Emeritus status

3. STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

For students pursuing degrees or careers related to forensic toxicology.

Dues: \$40/calendar year (applied toward application fee)

Sponsors Needed: 1 Full Member in good standing or academic advisor

Privileges: Non-voting, reduced dues

4. RETIRED MEMBERSHIP

For Full or Charter Members with at least 10 years of membership, aged 65 or older.

Dues: No fee (optional \$40/year for JAT subscription)

Sponsors Needed: None

Privileges: Voting rights

5. EMERITUS MEMBERSHIP

For Full or Charter Members with at least 25 years of membership, aged 65 or older.

Dues: No fee (optional \$40/year for JAT subscription)

Sponsors Needed: None

Privileges: Voting rights

SOFT MEMBERSHIP: UPDATE TO MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & PROMOTION PROCESS

HOW TO APPLY OR PROMOTE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

STEP 1: SELECT YOUR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

Determine the level you qualify for or wish to promote to. Review the requirements and sponsorship needs above.

STEP 2: CONTACT YOUR SPONSORS

Reach out to the required sponsors for your application. Sponsors must be Full Members in good standing. Students may use an academic advisor as a sponsor.

[COMPLETE SPONSORSHIP FORM HERE](#)

STEP 3: SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

Complete the online application and pay the required fee:

- \$150: Full or Associate Membership
- \$40: Student Membership
- \$40 JAT Subscription: Retired or Emeritus Membership

During the process, upload your CV/resume, sponsor forms, and provide all necessary details.

[SUBMIT YOUR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION HERE](#)

[SUBMIT YOUR PROMOTION APPLICATION HERE](#)

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

- Applications are reviewed monthly by the Membership Committee.
- Allow **4–6 weeks** for processing.
- You will receive an email with the committee's decision and your membership account will be updated.
- *If you would like to have your application considered ahead of registration for the Annual Meeting, please ensure materials are submitted by the Abstract Deadline of June 6, 2025.*

- Madeleine Swortwood

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
MADELEINE SWORTWOOD, CHAIR
SARAH MARTIN
JUSTIN GRODNITZKY
MARISSA FINKELSTEIN

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Unlock a treasure trove of knowledge with our **live and on-demand webinars**, designed for forensic toxicologists at every stage of their career. Whether you're a seasoned professional or just starting out, these sessions are crafted to enrich your understanding of cutting-edge topics and industry challenges.

WHY JOIN?

- **Exclusive Access:** Dive into expert-led discussions and practical insights.
- **Affordable Learning:** Webinars are offered at a special rate:
 - \$25 for SOFT Members
 - \$35 for Non-Members
- **On-Demand Flexibility:** Learn on your schedule with recorded sessions.

EXPAND YOUR EXPERTISE WITH SOFT WEBINARS – LIVE & ON-DEMAND!



AVAILABLE WEBINAR TOPICS:

- **Instrumentation Insights:** [Pros & Cons of Various Instrumentation Types for NPS Detection](#)
- **Postmortem Challenges:** [Navigating the Current Challenges in Postmortem Toxicology](#)
- **NPS Exploration:** [The What, Where, and How of Novel Psychoactive Substances](#)
- **Methodology Mastery:** [Development, Validation, and Verification of Qualitative Methods](#)

SOFT MEMBERS-ONLY PERKS:

- **JAT Editor's Choice Articles** – [Curated insights from the Journal of Analytical Toxicology](#)
- **Legacy Luncheon Series** – [Connect with industry legends and learn from their journeys](#)
- **Funding Forensics:** [Navigating Resources for Enhanced Toxicology](#)
- **Oral Fluid Testing:** [Roadside and Laboratory Drug Testing Insights](#)
- **Diversity in SOFT:** [Current State of Culture, Values, and Diversity in Our Field](#)

DISCOVER THE LEGACY LUNCHEON SERIES - WHERE THE PAST INSPIRES THE FUTURE

Dive into the stories, triumphs, and transformative moments that have shaped the field of forensic toxicology. The **Legacy Luncheon Series** offers a unique opportunity to connect with pioneers who have paved the way for the future, sharing their personal journeys, challenges, and invaluable lessons. This isn't just another webinar – it's a celebration of history, innovation, and the enduring spirit of learning.


WHY ATTEND?

- **Inspiration:** Gain insights from the remarkable journeys of industry legends.
- **Knowledge:** Explore the pivotal moments that defined our field.

SERIES DETAILS

- **Format:** 1-hour webinar
- **Schedule:** On-Demand Recording
- **Cost:** FREE for SOFT members!

JOIN US AS WE HONOR THE LEGENDS OF FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY AND INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION!



ON-DEMAND LEGACY LUNCHEONS

- Dr. Bill Anderson: *"Toxicology: Rocky Top to Reno, A 50-year Journey"*
- Dr. Vina Spiehler: *"From Beckman Instruments (BI) to AI Expert Systems"*
- Dr. Graham Jones: *"(Why) I Never Wanted to Become a Forensic Toxicologist"*
- Dr. Bruce Goldberger: *"Synergy in Forensic Toxicology"*
- Dr. Marilyn Huestis: *"Three Decades of Cannabinoid Pharmacology Through Controlled Human Studies"*
- Patrick Harding: *"The Legacy of the Robert F. Borkenstein Courses"*

Invest in Your Professional Growth - Join a thriving community of learners and take your expertise to the next level. Whether live or on-demand, these webinars are your gateway to staying ahead in the ever-evolving field of forensic toxicology. **Register today and unlock the knowledge that drives innovation!**

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

The annual SOFT meeting was held in Portland, OR, almost 22 years ago. We are thrilled to join everyone in Portland once again for the SOFT 2025 meeting! We will convene in Portland on October 26-31, 2025, at the **Oregon Convention Center (OCC)**. The venue is ideally located just steps from the light rail (MAX) and has access to everything Portland offers.

There are two hotels to choose from: the **Hyatt Regency Portland and Hotel Eastlund**. Both are across the street from the OCC, providing easy access for everyone. With its distinct twin spirals visible from downtown, the OCC has large open spaces inside and outside, allowing for excellent networking opportunities. The artwork within the OCC is all local and Portland-themed, and the meeting rooms are spacious and well-equipped with A/V and Wi-Fi. The OCC is the perfect location to get your toxicology thinking hats on. Our top-notch Food and Beverage Team will meet all your dining needs. All you need to do is attend!

The Hyatt Regency is directly across the street from the OCC. It opened its doors in 2019 and remains a new and sparkling hotel. There is a restaurant, grab-and-go options off the lobby, a lobby bar, and a 24-hour fitness center—perfect for detoxing after the Nite Owl gathering. The Hotel Eastlund is a boutique hotel steps from the OCC. In addition to a café in the lobby, the hotel has a rooftop bar with stunning views of Portland. Both hotels are right on the MAX light rail line, providing access to all the fun adventures Portland offers.

HYATT REGENCY PORTLAND

SOFT Room Block Rate: \$229
Distance: .02 miles/4 min
Room block opens June 2025



HOTEL EASTLUND

SOFT Room Block Rate: \$209
Distance: .02 miles/5 min
Room block opens June 2025



**OREGON CONVENTION CENTER
OCTOBER 26 – 31, 2025**



PLANNING COMMITTEE



**HOST
SARA SHORT**



**HOST
AMY MILES**

Scientific Program Coordinators

Kayla Neuman - WI State Lab of Hygiene
Tyson Baird - Sedgewick Co Regional Forensic Science Center

Workshop Program Coordinators

Mary Lynn Heffington - Arkansas State Crime Lab
Dani Mata - Orange Co Crime Lab

Volunteer Coordinators

Chelsea VanDenBurg - Oregon State Police Lab
Brianna Lehr - Oregon State Police Lab
Dawn Sklerov - Washington State Patrol Toxicology Lab

Food & Beverage Coordinators

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Denice Teem - Oakland County ME's Office
Delisa Downey - Virginian Dept. of Forensic Science

Mobile Application Coordinators

Rusty Lewis - Federal Aviation Administration
Roxane Ritter - Federal Aviation Administration
Sunday Hickerson - Federal Aviation Administration

Audio Visual Coordinator

Frank Wallace - Wallace Consulting Solutions

Young Forensic Toxicologists Chair

Elisa Shoff - Miami-Dade ME's Office

JAT Special Issue Editor

Rebecca Wagner - Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science

Fun Run Coordinator

Shannon Palladino - Oregon State Police Lab

Exhibitor Liaison

Sarah Riley - St. Louis University School of Medicine

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

The Planning Committee is slowly ramping up, getting into the monthly meeting schedule, and understanding the timeline for the SOFT meeting. The **Scientific Program Coordinators Kayla Neuman and Tyson Baird** will solicit abstracts to fill the sessions with innovative and informative topics. **Mary Lynn Heffington and Dani Mata, the Workshop Program Coordinators**, will look to our members to provide exciting and practical workshops for the attendees. Planning is underway for the Wednesday night out and other events that make the annual SOFT conference unique. Beth and CC are always there to steer the team and ensure everything runs smoothly.

In a world where virtual meetings have become the norm, the annual SOFT conference allows everyone to network and meet the people behind the little virtual video squares. We are excited to see you in Portland later this year!

-Sara & Amy



2025 JAT SPECIAL ISSUE

SPECIAL ISSUE EDITOR:

[Rebecca Wagner, Ph.D.](#)

Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science

INSTRUCTIONS & DEADLINES:

- **Titles & Abstracts are due by March 3:** [SUBMIT HERE!](#)
- **Final manuscripts are due by March 17:** [SUBMIT HERE!](#)
(Manuscripts should be submitted through Manuscript Central, please check the box for the SOFT Special Issue when submitting)

I am honored to serve as your 2025 Journal of Analytical Toxicology SOFT Special Issue Editor. As we dive into the new year, please be cognizant of the quickly approaching Special Issue deadlines. Please email your title and abstract by March 3, 2025. Your completed manuscripts will be due in Manuscript Central by March 17, 2025. I am excited to highlight your contributions to the field of forensic toxicology!

If you are interested in being a reviewer or have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I look forward to working with you!



Becky Wagner



OREGON CONVENTION CENTER
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ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

COORDINATORS: DANI MATA & MARY LYNN HEFFINGTON
PROPOSALS DUE BY APRIL 11! - [SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL HERE!](#)
CONTACT THE WORKSHOP COORDINATORS

With the new year comes new opportunities for SOFT to provide a unique list of workshops for the 2025 SOFT Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon! We want to offer a fully inclusive spectrum of workshops for all skill levels and in all areas of forensic toxicology. The most productive workshops result from workshop chairs who want to learn more about a particular topic.

All proposals should be for a half-day workshops. Full-day workshops are still possible; they just need to be broken into a Part 1 and Part 2 and have separate submissions.

In the feedback survey following the 2024 SOFT meeting in St. Louis, attendees expressed the most interest in the following general topics:

- Novel Psychoactive Substances
- Expert Witness Testimony
- ASB Standards
- Postmortem Toxicology
- Method Development and Validation
- Mental Health in the Workplace
- Process Improvements
- Pharmacology
- Blood and Breath Alcohol

Workshops are always a highlight of our annual meeting, and we need your help in making that happen. Help us accomplish our endeavor by giving 2025 attendees a great set of options to develop and advance our expertise, expand our peer network, and broaden our knowledge. Please notify the workshop coordinators if you plan on submitting a proposal or have any questions about the submission process. We are also happy to discuss possible topics with anyone who is interested in chairing a workshop for 2025. We look forward to seeing you in the City of Roses!

All workshop proposal submissions are due Friday, April 11, 2025.

Your 2025 Workshop Program Coordinators,



DANI MATA
WORKSHOP COORDINATOR



MARY LYNN HEFFINGTON
WORKSHOP COORDINATOR

[SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL HERE!](#)



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ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

EXHIBITING & SPONSORSHIP

[CONTACT: CC WATSON, OPERATIONS MANAGER](#)

[JOIN THE EXHIBITOR CONTACT LIST HERE!](#)

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES:

- Booth Reservations Open: February 28
- Payment Due by April 1
- Refund Request Deadline: April 1
- Booth Assignments Begin: May 2025
- Hotel Room Block & Registration Open: June 25
- Exhibitor Kit Distributed: July 2025
- Booth Staff Registration Due By October 17

We are thrilled to invite you to join us as an exhibitor and sponsor for the SOFT 2025 Annual Meeting, taking place in Portland, Oregon, from October 27 - 31, at the Oregon Convention Center.

The SOFT Annual Meeting brings together forensic toxicology professionals from around the globe for a week of cutting-edge workshops, engaging scientific presentations, and unparalleled networking opportunities.

As an exhibitor or sponsor, you'll have the opportunity to:

- Showcase your products and services to hundreds of forensic science professionals.
- Build relationships with key decision-makers in the field.
- Enhance your brand visibility through sponsorship opportunities tailored to your goals.

Portland, known for its vibrant culture, innovative spirit, and natural beauty, will provide an inspiring backdrop for this event. With an anticipated attendance of over 900 professionals, your involvement will make a significant impact on the success of the meeting and your business.

Opportunities include:

- Exhibit booth space in the bustling exhibit hall.
- Sponsorship of key events, such as lunch and learns, networking receptions, or SOFT 2025 give-away items.
- Unique branding options to ensure your company stands out.

We look forward to welcoming you to SOFT 2025 and working together to create another exceptional event!

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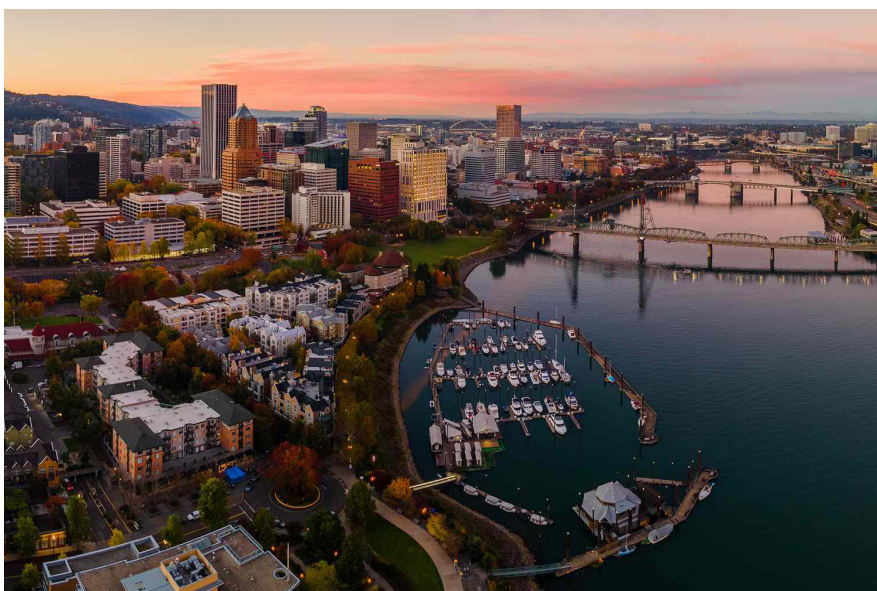
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Be sure to check your email & the SOFT website for the latest meeting updates and news!

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

Call for JAT Special Issue Titles/Abstracts: Mar 3

JAT Special Issue Papers Due: Mar 17

Call for Abstracts: Mar 19

Workshop Proposals Due: Apr 11

Abstract Submissions Due: Jun 5

Registration & Room Block Open: Jun 25

Late Registration Begins: Sept 12

Onsite Registration Begins: Oct 16

SOFT 2025: Oct 26 – 31





YOUNG FORENSIC TOXICOLOGISTS COMMITTEE

Hello fellow SOFT members!

The Young Forensic Toxicologist (YFT) committee is excited to welcome three new members to the committee this year: **Sarah Toma** from United States Drug Testing Laboratories, Inc., **Mahagani Thomas** from the Vermont Forensic Laboratory, and **Lindsey Vosters** from the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. We're excited to see what we can accomplish together this year!

The committee would like to thank **Erin Strickland** for her time and effort spent as the chair of the committee for 2024. Erin will transition to Immediate Past Chair as we welcome **Elisa Shoff** as the Chair for 2025. **Whitney Brown** will serve as the Vice-Chair and **Erika Phung** as the Secretary.

The YFT committee is actively planning activities for 2025 and we look forward to sharing them with you in upcoming issues of ToxTalk! If you have any questions or suggestions for the committee please reach out to us at YFT@soft-tox.org.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Elisa Shoff, M.S., D-ABFT-FT
2025 YFT Chair

Elisa Shoff is a board-certified (D-ABFT-FT) Forensic Toxicologist II at the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner Department (MDME) in Miami, FL. She currently serves as the Training Coordinator and principal toxicologist responsible for method development and validation.

Elisa graduated from Arizona State University in 2009 with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, and in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science from the University of Central Florida. She then received her Master of Science in Forensic Toxicology from the University of Florida. Elisa began her career in toxicology as an intern for the MDME in May 2013. In March 2014, she was hired as a Forensic Toxicologist I, and was promoted to a Forensic Toxicologist II in September 2015.

Since entering the field, she has presented her research at multiple national and international meetings, focusing on the screening of NPS stimulants/hallucinogens and NPS opioid compounds in postmortem specimens. She has also published her research in both the Journal of Forensic Toxicology (JAT) and

the Journal of Forensic Sciences (JFS). Elisa was also the recipient of the Young Scientist Meeting Award (YSMA) for the 2018 SOFT/TIAFT joint meeting in Boca Raton, FL. Elisa is currently a member of SOFT, the American Academy of Forensic Science (AAFS), the International Association of Forensic Toxicologists (TIAFT), and the American Society of Mass Spectrometry (ASMS). She also currently holds positions as the SOFT Young Forensic Toxicologists (YFT) committee chair, and a member of the SOFT NPS Committee. When she's not a toxicologist, Elisa enjoys reading, cooking, and trying to understand her 8-year-old daughter's "gen alpha slang".

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

The Young Forensic Toxicologists (YFT) Committee, established in 2009, is dedicated to fostering education, networking, and collaboration among early-career forensic toxicology professionals. By providing a platform for professional growth and community building, the committee aims to support the next generation of leaders in the field.

Each year, the YFT Committee plays a vital role in the Society of Forensic Toxicologists (SOFT) Annual Meeting by organizing several key events. These include the YFT Symposium, which offers insights into cutting-edge research and advancements in forensic toxicology; the Professional Development Fair, a unique opportunity for members to engage with mentors and industry experts; the prestigious Leo Dal Cortivo Awards, recognizing outstanding achievements in poster and platform presentations; and the Student Enrichment Program, designed to inspire and empower students to pursue careers in forensic toxicology.

Beyond the Annual Meeting, the YFT Committee remains active throughout the year, contributing to the broader forensic toxicology community. The committee hosts continuing education webinars, which cover a variety of timely and relevant topics, collaborates on SOFT workshops to enhance technical and practical expertise, and provides valuable content for the SOFT newsletter, ToxTalk.



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REGION 5: SABRA JONES, sabra@soft-tox.org

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REGION 9: KRISTEN BURKE, kristen@soft-tox.org

[VISIT THE RTL WEBPAGE!](#)

REGIONAL TOXICOLOGY LIAISON - JANUARY 2025 UPDATE

REPORT AUTHOR: AMY MILES, PROJECT MANAGER

At the end of October, the RTLs attended the annual SOFT conference in St. Louis, Missouri. The conference is an incredible opportunity to reunite with friends and colleagues. The RTL program updated the SOFT Board of Directors and the attendees on activities over the last year and upcoming announcements. The RTLs received several requests to expand the program and provide more training, specifically on leadership. The RTLs are working on both of these requests.

Chris Heartsill (R7 RTL) completed the toxicology partner meetings for each of the region's states. The meetings included law enforcement, prosecution/defense attorneys, judges, SHSOs, and toxicology laboratories. The meetings gathered the highway safety partners and discussed current successes, challenges, and opportunities for collaboration and change. A report has been produced from each meeting, and the RTLs will monitor the progress of the deliverables based on the outcome of the meetings.

The RTLs were asked to assist in planning the 2024 National Alliance to Stop Impaired Driving ([NASID](#)) conference. In addition to helping with the planning, **Sabra Jones (R5 RTL)** moderated a panel on "Mental Health and Impaired Driving Research, Practice and Policy: The "What" vs. The "How". Often, we forget that forensic toxicology provides support to others outside of the judicial system. Jones' panel addressed the need for comprehensive treatment court assessments and areas of improvement. **Amy Miles (PM)** convened a panel on the gaps in toxicology data and how this affects law enforcement, prosecution, and the judiciary/treatment courts. All of the RTLs attended, and the conference was perfect for them to network and further promote the program. As a result, **Kristen Burke (R9 RTL)** was asked to submit two proposals for the Arizona Treatment Courts Conference.

The most exciting news from 2024 is the expansion of the RTL program. The RTLs are in the early stages of the expansion, and more news from SOFT will follow!

If you have any questions or suggestions for the RTL team, please reach out!

Amy Miles

ABOUT THE RTL PROGRAM

In September 2021, SOFT was awarded the Regional Toxicology Liaison (RTL) Demonstration Project grant by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). This cooperative agreement aims to benefit state toxicology programs through increased support, communications, resources, criminal justice system coordination; decreased processing time of toxicology samples; and better data reporting. The project will support the establishment of Toxicology Liaisons that support states in NHTSA regions 5, 7, and 9 (<https://www.nhtsa.gov/about-nhtsa>), to assist with training, collaboration, and the standardization of testing across state labs and the reporting of data to better understand the scope of the drug-impaired driving problem. The RTL Program is overseen by Project Manager, Amy Miles and currently has three Liaisons; Sabra Jones - Region 5, Chris Heartsill - Region 7, and Kristen Burke - Region 9.

PROFESSIONAL MENTORING PROGRAM

The Professional Mentoring Committee wishes everyone a Happy New Year as we work to match the incoming mentoring pairs for this year. We have received **45 applications from mentees and 44 for mentors with 6 pairings continuing for 2025**. Once pairings are finalized, we will host our program kick-off and be underway for an exciting new year! We would also like to welcome our new committee members **Melissa Rodriguez, Dani Mata, Rachel Lieberman, and Eduardo de Campos**.

As always, the beginning of the year is a time to think about goals. For those in the mentoring program, this is something that will be done within the pairs. As a reminder, there are links to resources included on the Professional Mentoring Program page on the SOFT website.¹ This will help new and seasoned pairs make sure their pairing is a success in 2025.

1. [Professional Mentoring Program](#)

Whether or not you are participating in this program, now is the time to think about what you would like to achieve this year. For many people a large goal is to get more involved in the Toxicology community by presenting and publishing. How does one reach this goal?

SOFT provides many opportunities for those wanting to start testing the waters. If you are working on a research project or find an interesting case study within your casework, write an abstract and submit it for the upcoming meeting. Posters and Platform presentations are a great start to gaining those skills of sharing your information with the toxicology community. This will also allow you to receive feedback that can be used for the next step of turning that project into a manuscript.

Not sure how to write an abstract or manuscript? Use the resources available to you. First, even if you are not participating in the mentoring program talk to those in your lab or the contacts you have made by participating in the SOFT annual meeting or webinars. Networking is an important tool that allows you to have contacts who are more than happy to answer questions or connect you to the right person for your question. You can also volunteer to review abstracts.

One other resource is your JAT subscription and the JAT Editor's Choice article to get experience in reading articles and use them as resources when setting up your own manuscript. Next, pick the journal you would like to submit to and make sure to review their requirements for submitting manuscripts before you start writing.² From there take advantage of those contacts within your company and in the SOFT community to review and gain feedback so you can submit a manuscript that will be accepted.

2. [Instructions to Authors | Journal of Analytical Toxicology | Oxford Academic](#)

We want to wish everyone good luck with their goals in 2025 and excited to see where the year takes everyone.

PROFESSIONAL MENTORING PROGRAM GOALS

To engage members in the mission of SOFT by:

1. **Developing and nurturing future leaders of the organization**
2. **Providing a forum for one-on-one career advice**
3. **Offering a forum for mutually beneficial knowledge transfer for the purpose of supporting and advancing the organization and the forensic toxicology field.**

SOFT/AAFS ORAL FLUID COMMITTEE: SOFT ORAL FLUID WORKSHOP AND PRESENTATIONS SUBMITTED BY: KRISTEN UMSTEAD

The SOFT/AAFS Oral Fluid Committee sponsored a workshop during the 2024 SOFT Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. Highlights of that workshop along with other presentations regarding oral fluid testing are included below with the presenter's information.

Workshop 10: Presenting Oral Fluid Drug Testing Results in Court

Chairs:

- Amanda L.A. Mohr, MS, Director, Center for Forensic Science Research and Education, mandi.mohr@cfsre.org
- Nathalie A. Desrosiers, Ph.D., Team Leader, Toxicology Services, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, nathalie.desrosiers@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

Speakers:

- Jennifer F. Limoges, MS, Associate Director/Toxicology, NYSP Forensic Laboratory System, jennifer.limoges@troopers.ny.gov
- Suman Rana, Ph.D., Founder/Chief Toxicologist, THINKTOX, srana@thinktoxicology.com
- Bill Lindsey, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, Alabama TSRP Program, william.lindsey@alabamada.gov
- Curt E. Harper, Ph.D., Chief Toxicologist, Alabama Department of Forensic Science, curt.harper@adfs.alabama.gov

The purpose of the Oral Fluid Committee is to provide scientifically based information and resources regarding the utility of oral fluid analysis for other toxicologists, law enforcement, prosecutors, defense attorneys and the public. The use of oral fluid as a biological matrix for drug testing in impaired driving cases has a longstanding history outside the United States. Within the United States, oral fluid drug testing has gained traction with most states having provisions in either implied consent or testing statutes authorizing the use of oral fluid testing for screening and/or evidentiary purposes. Many states now offer oral fluid drug testing programs. In Canada, there are oral fluid screening devices authorized for the detection of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cocaine. With the increase in oral fluid drug testing results, inevitably these results will end up in a courtroom setting. The objective of this workshop was to provide context for justifying that oral fluid drug testing in impaired driving cases is not a new or novel concept. Further, the workshop explored the interpretation of oral fluid results as well as provided context to present these results in courtroom setting from both a prosecutor and toxicology perspective.

S-13 – New York State Police's Evidential Oral Fluid Testing Pilot Program

Jennifer F. Limoges*, Amanda M. Cadau, Seth J. Tracy

NYSP Forensic Investigation Center, Albany, NY, USA

- In September 2023 the New York State Police (NYSP) launched an evidential oral fluid pilot program to allow stakeholders to adapt to the alternate specimen type, identify any hurdles to broader implementation, and to collect blood and oral fluid correlation data.
- As of July 31, 2024, testing was completed for 196 blood-oral fluid pairs. There was an overall correlation rate of 97% in which at least one drug matched in both samples.

S-18 – Evaluation of Securetec DrugWipe S as an Approved Roadside Oral Fluid Device in Alabama

Kristin Umstead*, Jasmine Maxwell, Curt E. Harper, Ph.D.

Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences, Hoover, Alabama, USA

- The Securetec DrugWipe tests for cocaine, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, opiates, amphetamine, methamphetamine, and benzodiazepines and was deemed fit for purpose for use within the state of Alabama as a screening

device for probable cause similar to a preliminary breath test (PBT) for ethanol.

- This evaluation was performed using both authentic and simulated oral fluid samples and performance parameters evaluated included sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value (PPV), negative predictive value (NPV), and accuracy with all parameters exceeding 80%.

S- 33 – Opioids in Overdose Cases in Alabama (2022-2024)

Keeyahna Foster*, Clarissa Lawen, Curt E. Harper, Ph.D.

Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences, Hoover, Alabama, USA

- Oral fluid specimens were analyzed utilizing an in-tip Dispersive Pipette extraction (DPX) technique by a Hamilton Starlet automated system when blood specimens were presumptive positive for heroin.
- ADFS data has shown that there appears to be a consistent decline in 6-MAM in cases from 2020 to 2023, implying a decrease in heroin use.

S- 37 – Trends in Tranq: Prevalence of Xylazine in Oral Fluid Toxicology in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana

Chris Thomas*, Ankita Mondal, Matthew Levitas, Corey Widman, Bridget Lemberg

Forensic Fluids Laboratories, Kalamazoo, MI, USA

- Examined xylazine patterns of use and spread across 13 months of oral fluid toxicology data beginning in March 2023 for Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana.
- On average over the entire span, xylazine was found in 3.41% of the total 55,691 analyzed samples.
- Of the xylazine positive samples, fentanyl was present 96.5% of the time. In addition, 86.2% of xylazine samples indicated some degree of polydrug use where at least two other drug classes were present.

S- 55 – In Vitro Formation of 6-Monoacetylmorphine (6MAM) in Oral Fluid Post Collection in the Presence of Morphine and Aspirin

Omran Muslin*, Michael Smith, Sarah Bartock

Quest Diagnostics, Chantilly, OR, USA

- Analysis of negative controls and fortified morphine samples without aspirin yielded no detectable levels of 6MAM. Fortified specimens containing morphine and aspirin stored for 4 days at 37°C exhibited measureable concentrations of 6MAM.
- The findings indicated an approximate 0.5% conversion rate of morphine to 6MAM in oral fluid samples supplemented with extremely high aspirin concentrations (having an entire aspirin pill present in 1 mL of expectorated oral fluid would be unusual). More studies are required to assess the relevance, if any, of this conversion in everyday testing.
- The presence of a 3MAM peak can be used to distinguish this conversion from heroin use

S- 59 – Determination of Drugs and Metabolites in Oral Fluid: Comparison of Different Extraction Procedures

Melissa Koffer, Melissa Orr, Gisselle Rosas, Alexis Palma, Marta Concheiro-Guisan*

John Jay College, CUNY, New York, NY, USA

- Presented three method validations and provided three alternatives to test oral fluid for drugs and metabolites, including THC in the drug panel.
- LLE was determined to be the best method due to the sensitivity, robustness, and costs compared to SPE and SLE.

SOFT/AAFS DRUGS AND DRIVING COMMITTEE UPDATES SUBMITTED BY STEPHANIE OLOFSON AND SETH TRACY

The SOFT/AAFS Drugs and Driving Committee sponsored a special session during the 2024 AAFS Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado. Highlights of the presentations are included below. The email address is for the presenting author and they can be contacted if there are additional questions or requests for more information.

Ketamine in Driving Under the Influence of Drugs (DUID) Cases: 2015–2023

Amanda D’Orazio, MS, NMS Labs, Horsham, PA, Ayako Chan-Hosokawa, MS, NMS Labs, Horsham, PA

Amanda.dorazio@nmslabs.com

- Ketamine [(R,S)-ketamine] is a dissociative anesthetic initially developed as a safer alternative to phencyclidine (PCP); however, was found to have significant adverse effects and potential for abuse.
- Of approximately 148,000 blood DUID cases submitted to the laboratory for analysis between January 2015 and April 2023, 78 submissions confirmed positive for ketamine and/or norketamine.
- A total of 13 submissions were identified as illicit ketamine use, where the ketamine concentration range was 86-400 ng/mL (mean \pm SD = 251 \pm 127 ng/mL, median = 245 ng/mL) and norketamine was 47-810 ng/mL (mean \pm SD = 276 \pm 262 ng/mL, median = 145 ng/mL).
- Fifteen submissions were individuals confirmed to have received ketamine due to medical intervention, where the ketamine concentration range was 40-2200 ng/mL (mean \pm SD = 667 \pm 676 ng/mL, median = 430 ng/mL) and norketamine was 42-580 ng/mL (mean \pm SD = 290 \pm 165 ng/mL, median = 325 ng/mL).
- The concentrations of ketamine between illicit and medical use overlapped despite lower mean and median concentrations in illicit use.

DUID Cannabinoid Investigations: Blood, Oral Fluid, or Urine—Which Is the Superior Specimen?

Curt Harper, Kristin Umstead, Clarissa Lawen – Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences; Gil Sapir – JD, MSc (Attorney at Law)

curt.harper@adfs.alabama.gov

- In 2022, delta-9-THC or THC metabolites was the most common drug in DUID cases, with a 41% prevalence.
- Based on the five-year review, blood or oral fluid, but not urine, can provide important information on the potential source of impairment and recency of cannabinoid use.
- The ability to collect oral fluid proximate to the time of driving (e.g., at the roadside) presents a distinct advantage.
- The use of oral fluid may particularly appeal to states that currently use urine only in DUID testing.

The Detection of Cannabinoids in Exhaled Breath Condensate After Cannabis Use

Jennifer L. Berry,* Cheryle Beuning,* Ashley Brooks-Russell,‡ Tara Lovestead,* Kavita Jeerage*

*Fluid Characterization Group, Applied Chemicals and Materials Division, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Boulder, CO

‡ Colorado School of Public Health, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical, Aurora, CO

jennifer.berry@nist.gov

- Exhaled breath condensate (EBC), an unexplored aqueous breath matrix that contains condensed volatile compounds and water vapor in addition to aerosols, was collected from participants both before and at two time points (0.7 \pm 0.2 h and 1.7 \pm 0.3 h) after observed cannabis use.
- Five different cannabinoids, including Δ 9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), were detected in EBC collected from cannabis users.

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- THC was detected in some EBC samples before cannabis use, despite the requested abstinence period.
- THC was detected in all EBC samples collected at 0.7 h post use and decreased for all participants at 1.7 h.

This work has been published as:

Berry, J. L., Brooks-Russell, A., Beuning, C. N., Limbacher, S. A., Lovestead, T. M., & Jeerage, K. M. (2024). Cannabinoids detected in exhaled breath condensate after cannabis use. *Journal of breath research*, 18(4), 041002. DOI 10.1088/1752-7163/ad6347

Mile High: A Five-Year Review of Fentanyl Trends in Colorado Impaired Driving Cases

Stephanie Olofson

Colorado Bureau of Investigation, Arvada, CO

Stephanie.olofson@state.co.us

- Over the 5 year study period, 1,210 fentanyl positive cases were reported and represented a 4-fold increase in fentanyl positive cases. The greatest number of increases was seen with cases that have more than 10 ng/mL of fentanyl.
- 96% of fentanyl casework was polydrug.
- 63% of fentanyl positive casework reported Methamphetamine. The other most commonly reported drugs were Alprazolam, Bromazolam, Methadone, and Mitragynine.
- Ethanol and THC, the most commonly reported drugs at CBI, have much lower positivity rates in fentanyl positive case work compared to non-fentanyl positive casework.
- Based on the evaluated polydrug case studies, strong CNS depressant effects, consistent with fentanyl usage, were primarily seen, regardless of the other drug classes reported.

Impaired Driving Cases with Bromazolam

Nicholas Tiscione

Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, Toxicology Unit, West Palm Beach, FL

TiscioneN@pbso.org

- Bromazolam has emerged as the most prevalent designer benzodiazepine in seized drug and toxicology.
- Virtually all benzodiazepine cases, designer or traditional, are polysubstance.
- From 2019-2021 in Palm Beach County, FL, 99% of blood impaired driving cases with any benzodiazepine were polysubstance.
- Six out of seven bromazolam blood impaired driving cases were polysubstance, with fentanyl also identified in all six.
- Five out of the six polysubstance bromazolam cases contained at least 3 additional CNS active drugs.
- In one driving case where bromazolam was the only blood toxicology finding, the driver had difficulty maintaining his lane, had droopy eyelids, and slow speech. He was also confused, lethargic, and demonstrated short-term memory impairment.

Upcoming sessions sponsored by the SOFT/AAFS Drugs and Driving Committee Include:

American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) Baltimore, MD

- Drugs and Driving Special Session: February 20, 2025 3:30 pm – 5 pm
- Drugs and Driving Committee Meeting: February 20, 2025 5 pm – 6 pm

International Association for Chemical Testing (IACT) Las Vegas, NV

- Workshop 4: Impaired Driving Involving Designer Benzodiazepines April 10, 2025 1 pm – 5 pm, Presented with the Novel Psychoactive Substances Committee

DESIGNER FENTANYL PRECURSORS LEADING THE WAY TO NEW FENTANYL ANALOGS - THE CASE OF ORTHO-METHYLFENTANYL

Donna Papsun^{1 4}, Sara Walton², Sandrine Mérette^{3 4}, Alex Krotulski^{2 4}

¹NMS Labs, Horsham, PA, USA

²Center for Forensic Science Research & Education, Horsham, PA, USA

³ Provincial Toxicology Centre, Provincial Health Services Authority, Vancouver, BC, Canada

⁴SOFT NPS Committee

Illicit fentanyl has long dominated the headlines as a predominant driving factor in fatal and non-fatal overdoses. Fentanyl-derived substances, such as furanylfentanyl, acrylfentanyl, and cyclopropylfentanyl, emerged and proliferated to varying extents between 2014-2018 and were reported as causal agents in drug-related fatalities¹. After domestic and international control measures by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in 2018, fentanyl-derived substances dropped in popularity and there was a shift towards non-fentanyl synthetic opioids (e.g., nitazene analogues and benzimidazolones)^{2 3}. *para*-Fluorofentanyl was an exception to this trend with its dominant rise in positivity after imposed measures and has been widely reported across the United States (U.S.) and Canada beginning in late 2020, primarily in conjunction with fentanyl. The spread of *para*-fluorofentanyl and its close co-reporting with fentanyl in both toxicology and seized drug exhibits is hypothesized to be related to shifts in availability of precursors for illicit fentanyl manufacturing⁴. As “core” precursor materials are scheduled or become harder to source, chemists are turning towards “designer precursors” to diversify the supply chain, such as *para*-fluoro 4-AP, to ultimately produce *para*-fluorofentanyl⁵. The emergence of *ortho*-methylfentanyl, an active mu-opioid agonist with reported potency and adverse effects similar to that of fentanyl, is linked to that same playbook of shifting precursors to “designer” alternatives and using these designer substances to diversify the illicit fentanyl supply⁶.

ortho-Methylfentanyl was first reported from samples originating from British Columbia, Canada, in November 2023 and identifications have exponentially increased over time (as of December 2024). To date, *ortho*-methylfentanyl has been detected in biological specimens from six other Canadian provinces and at least six states in the U.S.^{7 8}. *ortho*-Methylfentanyl is commonly detected alongside fentanyl and *para*-fluorofentanyl, and more rarely reported without any additional drugs. In 83 postmortem blood samples, the median blood concentration of *ortho*-methylfentanyl was 2.1 ng/mL, with a range of <0.1 to 130 ng/mL⁸. In this subset, 84% of *ortho*-methylfentanyl positive blood samples also reported fentanyl, ranging from 1.6-700 ng/mL (median: 25 ng/mL), and 72% reported *para*-fluorofentanyl, ranging from 0.09-75 ng/mL (median: 3.4 ng/mL)⁸. *ortho*-Methylfentanyl is found at a wide range of concentrations, similarly to fentanyl and *para*-fluorofentanyl; however, concentrations are typically less than 10 ng/mL and are generally less than the co-reported fentanyl concentration. It was first added to the NPS Scope Recommendations released by the Center for Forensic Science Research and Education (CFSRE) and the SOFT NPS Committee in Q1 2024, and by the end of the year was one of the top NPS opioids to include in testing with a suggested reporting limit between 1 ng/mL and 10 ng/mL^{9 10}.

ortho-Methylfentanyl presents analytical challenges due to several isomers that have been previously reported in the literature. *ortho*-Methylfentanyl has two close positional isomeric forms where the methyl group rotates around the aniline ring (*meta*- and *para*-methylfentanyl). However, a methyl group can be moved to other parts of the fentanyl molecule, including the piperidine ring, the phenethyl group, or changing the acyl group. Previously reported isomers have included butyrylfentanyl, isobutyrylfentanyl, and *cis*- and *trans*-3-methylfentanyl. It is recommended that toxicology testing distinguishes *ortho*-methylfentanyl from isomers, as specificity in reporting assists with epidemiological understanding and has interpretation implications due to ranging potencies.

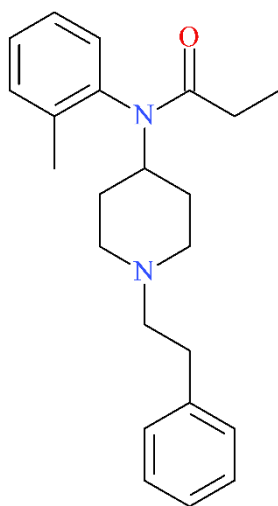
The rise in *para*-fluorofentanyl has been hypothesized to be linked to shifting availability in precursor availability, and *ortho*-methylfentanyl is suspected to be following the same path. The DEA scheduled 4-AP, a commonly used precursor/intermediate for the manufacturing of illicit fentanyl in early 2020, and *para*-fluoro 4-AP, a fluorinated version of 4-AP and precursor for *para*-fluorofentanyl, subsequently emerged as an alternative^{4 11}. Adding a fluorine atom to a molecule has historically been a preferred method by chemists to modify the structure of a compound to evade legislation, but there are other chemical modifications that can be performed. A precursor for *ortho*-methylfentanyl, *ortho*-methyl boc 4-AP, was first chemically identified in May 2024 by CFSRE’s NPS Discovery¹². *Ortho*-methyl boc 4-AP was chemically identified as the material received from China during an investigation by Reuters into the supply chain for manufacturing

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illicit fentanyl. *para*-Methyl boc 4-AP was the suggested and ordered material following questions about manufacturing of carfentanil, according to the investigation performed by Reuters in 2024⁵.

It is too early to tell if *ortho*-methylyfentanyl is an eventual replacement for *para*-fluorofentanyl, or just another fentanyl analog that has emerged into the illicit drug supply to cut illicit fentanyl itself due to the expanding availability of designer precursors. A shift may come if *para*-fluorofentanyl precursor availability plummets, allowing for newer compounds like *ortho*-methyl boc 4-AP to take its place or gain footing in the illicit precursor market. The majority of *ortho*-methylyfentanyl cases are co-reported with multiple psychoactive substances, including fentanyl, *para*-fluorofentanyl and NPS benzodiazepines, like bromazolam and desalkylgidazepam. This may be partially due to regional drug trends and monitoring for multiple emerging substances, including *ortho*-methylyfentanyl and NPS benzodiazepines, helps to track the epidemiological spread of these drugs and product formulations. In the simplest terms, *ortho*-methylyfentanyl is adding complexity to an already complex and dynamic illicit drug market. Forensic toxicologists and affiliated stakeholders should be aware of the expanding fentanyl supply chain and monitor for designer precursors as a means to identify potential new threats, with *ortho*-methylyfentanyl emerging as the most recent threat to public health and safety across North America.

Synonyms: o-Methylyfentanyl, N-(o-tolyl)-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidyl]propranamide

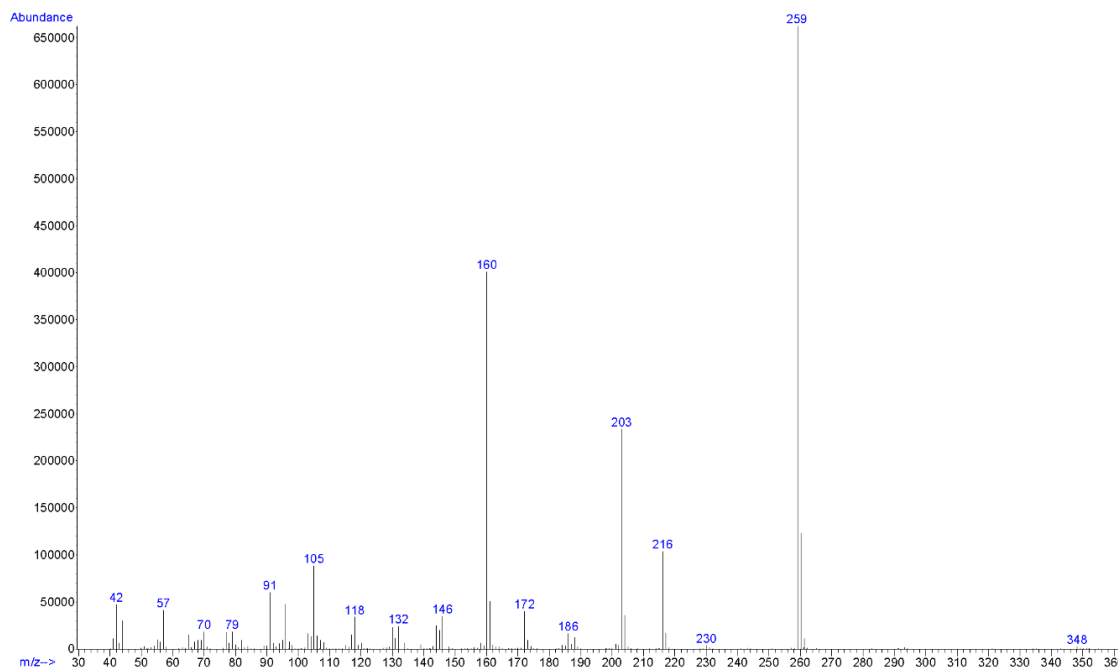


Structure of *ortho*-methylyfentanyl

Nominal Mass: 350.50

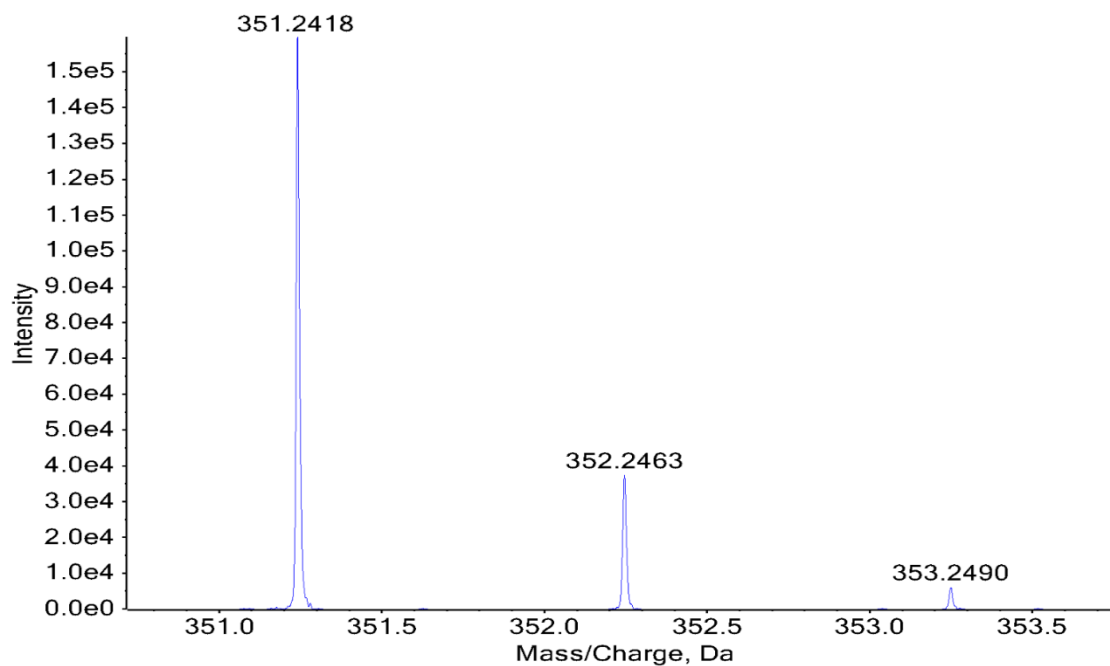
[M+H]⁺: 351.2431

GC/MS Spectrum:

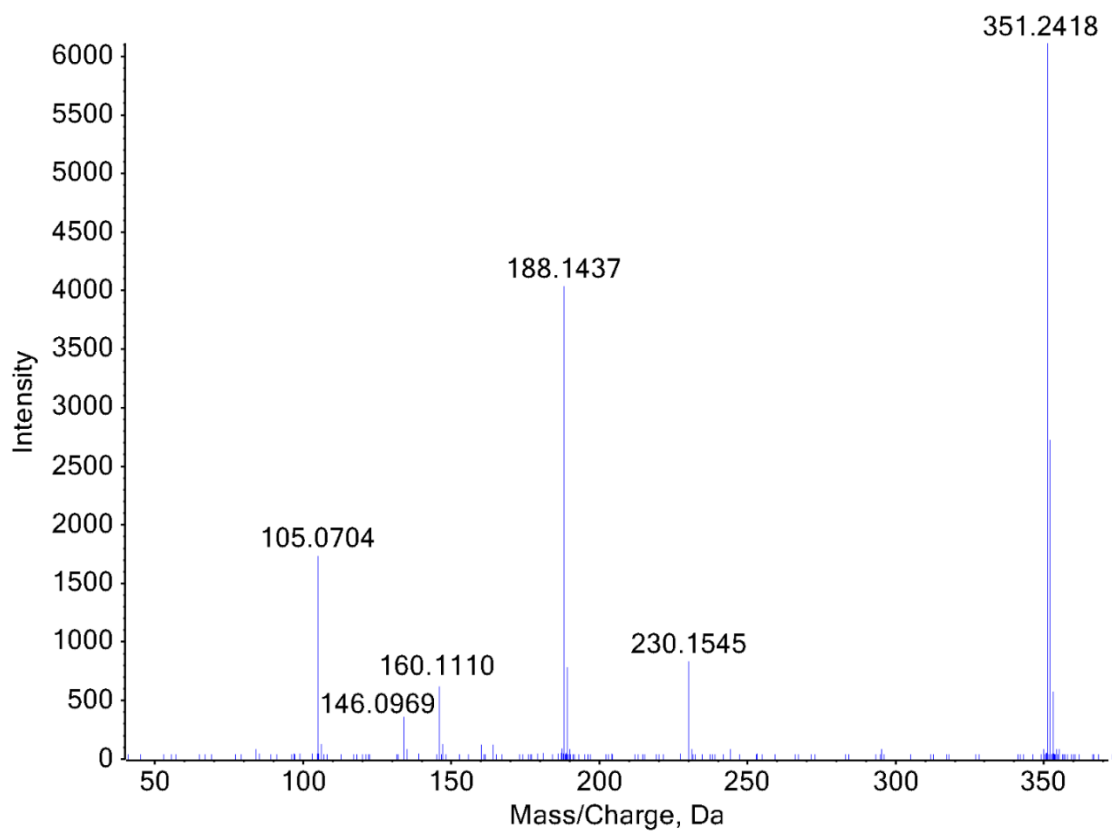


[Source: Agilent 5975 GC/MS, NPS Discovery, Center for Forensic Science Research & Education, PA]

LC-QTOF-MS Spectrum:



SCIENTIFIC CONTENT



[Source: Sciex TripleTOF[®] 5600+ LC-QTOF-MS, NPS Discovery, Center for Forensic Science Research & Education, PA]

Pharmacological Drug Class: narcotic analgesic

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TOXTALK

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2025 PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

Issue 2: Due by May 12, Published week of Jun 9
Issue 3: Due by Aug 13, Published week of Sep 15
Issue 4: Due by Nov 14, Published week of Dec 15

SUBMISSION CATEGORIES

- **Organizational Updates:** News from SOFT, Annual Meeting details, Committee Updates, Award Announcements, Continuing Education Opportunities, and other information valuable to members.
- **Scientific Submissions:** Research articles, case reports, and scientific studies related to forensic toxicology. Submissions must include an abstract. Published abstracts will feature direct links to the full articles.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

- [Submit an Article for ToxTalk](#)
- **Review and Acceptance:** All submissions undergo editorial review. The editorial team reserves the right to edit for clarity, grammar, and style. Acceptance notifications will be communicated promptly.

FUTURE MEETINGS



SOFT/TIAFT 2026
Hilton Chicago
Chicago, IL
September 19-24, 2026
Hosts: Luke Rodda & Andre Sukta



SOFT 2027
Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI
September 26-October 1, 2027
Hosts: Sabra Jones & Dani Mata



SOFT 2028
Baird Center
Milwaukee, WI
October 15-20, 2028
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