

Steps to take if you wish to donate your body for medical purposes

1. By the donor in advance:

- a. Discuss the question with family members soon, and make your decision known to your executor(s), to the person to whom you have given power of attorney, or to your next-of-kin. Do not consult a funeral home at this stage.
- b. Choose one of the organizations on the accompanying list, register with them, and then carry at all times any membership card they supply.
- c. Decide on an alternative plan in case, for any reason, your body cannot be accepted, and inform your executor and family about this plan also.

2. When death is near:

If you are under hospice care, or have a less-than-six-months life expectancy, you or one of your family should telephone the organization you have chosen and have an eligibility screening and medical/social history interview with a representative.

3. When death comes:

- a. If death occurs in a hospital or under regular care, a doctor will pronounce the end of life. If it occurs unexpectedly, or where no doctor is available, a member of the family or other person involved should call 911 as soon as possible to get a pronouncement of death from the coroner or other medically qualified person.
- b. Do not call a funeral home. Call the body donation organization as soon as death is officially pronounced, and ask them to arrange for the pick-up and transportation of the body. They will give instructions on what else is needed.

4. Funeral arrangements:

- a. A ceremonial viewing of the body by friends and relatives will not be possible. But a memorial service can of course be arranged at any time, in a church, private building, or funeral home. Eventually the cremated remains can be returned to the family if desired, and used in a funeral ceremony.
- b. Copies of the death certificate will be obtainable a few weeks after death, from the Illinois Department of Public Health. It will be arranged by the organization that accepted the donated body.

5. Donation by the family without prior consent of the deceased:

If the deceased made no specific arrangements for the disposal of his or her body, the executor(s) or next-of-kin can still decide to donate it for medical research. In that case follow the procedures listed under section 3 above, and also contact the deceased's lawyer to see if any additional steps are necessary.

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FCACC
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