



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SECRETARY OF STATE ORGAN/TISSUE DONOR REGISTRY

There is a tremendous need across the United States for more organ/tissue donors. Nationally, more than **121,000 people are waiting** for a transplant.

Today, Illinois has one of the most successful state registries in the country with more than 6 million participants. More than 50 percent of those who visit a driver services facility join the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry.

In 2006, Illinois implemented a “legal consent” organ/tissue donor registry, which ensures a person’s decision to donate will be carried out following death. Previously, the decision was not legally binding and remained with the person's family. As a result, nearly 20 percent of consenting donors had their decisions overturned by family members. With the current registry, an estimated that 100 more lives are saved each year.

But there is still a need for more donors. On average, every 10 minutes a new person is added to the national waiting list. Sadly, many of those people will die waiting for organs. Nationally, more than 8,000 died in 2015 waiting for a transplant. Every day, **22 people on the waiting list die.** An estimated one in 20 Americans will need some type of medical tissue transplant during their lifetime. The reason for the growing list is because transplantation is a viable and successful treatment for organ failure in many individuals.

Currently, approximately **4,700 people in Illinois are on the waiting list** for an organ transplant. More than 300 Illinoisans pass away each year waiting for an organ transplant. More than 80 percent are waiting for a **kidney** and about 12 percent are waiting for a **liver**. Other organs that are needed include the **heart, lungs, pancreas and small intestine**. Needed tissues include **corneas, saphenous veins, heart valves, bones and skin**. Twenty-five people can benefit from a single donor.

The Illinois Donor Registry is confidential. Information contained in the registry is only released to authorized personnel after all efforts to save a person have failed and death has been declared.

Frequently Asked Questions about the Organ/Tissue Donor Registry:

How do I register as an organ and tissue donor?

There are several ways:

- Visit www.LifeGoesOn.com.
- Call the Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Program at 800-210-2106.
- Send a request to the Secretary of State's Organ and Tissue Donor Program, Rm. 451 Howlett, Springfield, IL 62756 and express that you wish to be a donor. Please include your valid Illinois driver's license or state ID number.
- Visit any Driver Services facility through the state.

What information do I need to provide to the donor registry?

- A valid state of Illinois driver's license or ID;
- Full name and home address.

Frequent Barriers to Organ/Tissue Donation:

Race:

- African-Americans and Hispanics are over-represented on waiting lists, but under-represented as potential donors.
- A close genetic match may contribute to increased success in transplants.
- In Illinois, the percentage of African-Americans signing up as organ/tissue donors is half that for the general population.
- More than 60 percent of the transplant candidates waiting for organs in Illinois are minorities.

Religion:

- Some people think their religious views don't support organ/tissue donation. In fact, all major western and eastern religions support organ/tissue donation.

Age:

- Older Americans are the most supportive of the concept of organ donation, but the least likely to register as donors. They think they are too old. In fact, 40 percent of Illinois organ donors in 2015 were over age 50. The oldest cornea recipient was 107 years old, and the oldest organ donor was 85 and successfully donated a kidney.

Medical care:

- Organ donation only happens when the person is diagnosed as legally brain dead.
- Organ donation does not occur until all efforts to save a person have failed.