

Organ and Tissue Donation Registration to Transplantation Step-by-step Process

1. In Illinois, a person registers to be an organ and tissue donor with a valid Illinois driver's license or state ID by visiting a Driver Services facility, visiting LifeGoesOn.com or calling 800-210-2106.
2. The person is involved in a life-threatening situation and taken to a hospital where their condition is evaluated.
3. After all lifesaving efforts are exhausted and brain death has been declared, the individual is placed on or kept on a ventilator in order to preserve the organs for possible donation.
4. Hospital staff contacts the organ procurement organization (OPO) to report the death.
5. The OPO staff arrives at the hospital and talks to the donor's family and others about the possibility of donation.
6. The OPO contacts the Secretary of State's office, which maintains the donor registry, to determine if the person is a registered donor.
7. If the individual is in the donor registry, the OPO staff will meet with the family, explaining the donation process, supporting the family with the decision and answering any questions.
8. If the individual is not listed in the registry, the OPO staff will ask the family for permission to donate, answer any questions they have about the process and help them make an informed decision.
9. The United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) manages the candidate waiting list and the allocation of organs. Organs are allocated to waiting patients by medical criteria.
10. Organs are surgically removed from the donor, in a very respectful surgical procedure, and transported to candidates who are waiting for them at transplant centers. The donor's body is very carefully restored afterwards. There are no visible signs of donation.
11. Candidates receive their lifesaving transplants, and the donor's family can proceed with their end-of-life plans to ensure their loved one's wishes are fulfilled.
12. Transplantation saves tens of thousands of lives each year. A single donor can save and restore 25 lives or more through organ and tissue donation.