

STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
Health AND **Human**
SERVICES

Anatomical Gift Public Awareness Annual
Donation and Compliance Report

December, 2023

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INTRODUCTION

In 1996, the Iowa Legislature created the Anatomical Gift Public Awareness and Transplantation Fund. County treasurers seek contributions to the fund when Iowans register or renew motor vehicle registrations. In 2004, an organ and tissue donation awareness license plate was created for Iowa motorists. A \$35 charge for the plate plus \$10 renewal fee, in addition to the normal fee, is provided to the awareness fund.

Iowa Donor Network (IDN) is a non-profit organization that operates as the primary contact for organ, tissue, and eye donation services for the state of Iowa. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have certified IDN to function as the single organ procurement agency in the state of Iowa. IDN also serves as the tissue (eyes, skin, bone & tendons) recovery agency for the state of Iowa. Lion's Eye Bank (ILEB) conducts cornea recovery, processing, evaluation, and distribution services. Both organizations cooperate closely with Iowa hospitals, hospice, and emergency medical services, as well as the public, to promote and accomplish organ, tissue, and eye donations.

Iowa Code Chapter 142C.17 requires the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), in conjunction with any statewide organ procurement organization, to submit an annual donation and compliance report.

Summary

Organ, tissue, and eye donation programs continue to serve a significant number of Iowans. As of November 1, 2023, 632 people in Iowa are waiting for lifesaving organ transplants. New corneal transplant techniques are being performed earlier in the course of a blinding eye disease, increasing the demand for corneal tissue. Researchers are utilizing eye tissue more effectively to find cures for blindness. Efforts to increase public awareness and acceptance of organ, tissue and eye donation must continue and should be fostered by every practicing nurse, physician, social worker, paramedic, law enforcement official, hospital administrator and funeral director in Iowa. The Iowa Donor Network, the Iowa Lions Eye Bank and the Iowa Department of Public Health will continue to promote organ, tissue, and eye donation, and explore ways to increase public awareness of the opportunity to donate.

ORGANS, TISSUES, AND EYE DONORS

The number of Iowa organ and tissue donors for January through September of each year is as follows:

Year	<u>Organ</u> Donors	<u>Tissue</u> Donors
2023	96	745
2022	83	739
2021	91	736
2020	72	659
2019	66	689

The number of eye transplant and research donors, January through September:

Year	<u>Eye Transplant</u> Donors	<u>Eye Research</u> Donors
2023	543	218
2022	480	199
2021	455	204
2020	447	161
2019	515	174

Consistent with requirements of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), IDN receives a referral call on every death in Iowa hospitals. Not every referral results in donation; consent for donation and medical suitability must also be considered.

A single organ donor can save up to lives and a single tissue donor, on average, can enhance the lives of 75 or more people. There are various types of tissue donations including: tendons, heart valves, veins, skin, bones, and corneas. Eye donations for transplant increased by 1.76% in 2021 and research donations increased by 21%, despite still feeling the impact of the pandemic in terms of increased numbers of donor deferrals due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. **Each transplant eye donor** can provide the gift of sight to two people. Iowa Lions Eye Bank (ILEB) and the University of Iowa Institute for Vision Research (IVR) use eyes donated for research by Iowans to develop new transplant techniques and potential treatments for blinding eye disease.

ILEB at the University of Iowa is conducting ground-breaking research that aims to improve corneal transplant outcomes and prevent corneal blindness. The research is made possible by the generous support of the National Eye Institute, the University of Iowa Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, and grateful patients.

The ILEB keratoplasty research laboratory focuses on discovering novel pathways in disorders affecting the corneal endothelium and novel treatments to prevent cell death in a variety of diseases, including Fuchs endothelial corneal dystrophy and diabetes mellitus. IVR makes research tissue from Iowans available to their programs: Carver Family Center for Macular Degeneration; Glaucoma Research; Pediatric Genetics; Center for Bioinformatics and Computational Biology Visual Rehabilitation/Disability; Program in Stem Cell Biology; and the VA Center for Prevention and Treatment of Visual Loss. Through the generous gift by Iowans of ocular tissue for research, the precious gift of answers to the goal of eliminating blinding eye disease will be a reality in the future.

Rules

MEDICARE RULES

In August 1998, the Health Care Financing Administration (now CMS) promulgated regulations designed to increase organ tissue and eye donation. The rules, part of the Hospital Conditions of Participation for the Medicare and Medicaid Programs, require “a hospital to have an agreement with the Organ Procurement Organization (OPO) designated by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), under which the hospital will contact the OPO in a timely manner about individuals who die, or whose deaths are imminent in the hospital. The OPO will then determine each individual's medical suitability for donation. The hospital must also have an agreement with at least one tissue bank and at least one eye bank to cooperate in the recovery, processing, preservation, storage and distribution of tissue and eyes, as long as the agreement does not interfere with organ donation. The final rule requires a hospital to ensure, in collaboration with the OPO with which it has an agreement; the family of every potential donor is informed of its option to donate organs, tissues, and/or eyes, or not to donate.”

IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

On November 16, 2016, Iowa Administrative Rule 641 IAC 122 went into effect. The chapter outlines the current practices for the distribution of funds through competitive grant opportunities. IDPH may offer competitive grant opportunities to Iowa hospitals, non-profit agencies, and state agencies for funds for projects that increase public awareness and encourage Iowans to register as a donor.

Contributions

Contributions provided through county treasurers and the license plate program to the Anatomical Gift Public Awareness and Transplantation Funds totaled \$125,077 for State Fiscal Year 2023. This is a slight increase of \$2,016 from the previous state fiscal year, with a consistent rate of \$0.040 per capita (based on, estimated population of 3,190,369 as per the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census). County treasurers, IDN, ILEB and IDPH continue to explore ways to increase awareness of the contribution opportunity and contributions to the fund.

COMMUNITY GRANTS

For State Fiscal Year 2023, payment from the Anatomical Gift Public Awareness and Transplantation Fund totaled \$180,932. This includes administrative expenses, public awareness activities, and organ transplantation procedures and related patient costs. Of these payments, individual transplant recipient and donor reimbursements totaled \$179,444, with administrative expenses totaling \$1,488.

DONOR REGISTRY

Chapter 1052, Acts of the 2000 General Assembly, authorized the director of IDPH to contract for the establishment of a statewide organ and tissue donor registry. The contract provides for a centralized database and automated system to make organ, tissue and eye donor information available to family members and physicians seven days a week, 24 hours a day. IDN launched the Iowa Donor Registry (www.iowadonorregistry.org) on March 18, 2002. To date, more than 1.6 million Iowans have registered their intention to become organ, tissue and eye donors upon death. In 2007, the Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act was passed by the legislature requiring the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) to provide the Iowa Donor Registry a listing of every Iowan who marked “yes” to donation on a license, permit or identification card. DOT provides monthly downloads to the Iowa Donor Registry as legal consent for donation according to Iowa law. This important legislation increased the number of registrants in the Iowa Donor Registry from an average of 2,000 entries per month to over 30,000 per month. Through digital efforts, IDN has also seen an increase in the number of Iowans registering online. On average, 100 people are registering online per month.

IOWA DONOR REGISTRY APPROPRIATION

During the 2019 Iowa Legislative session, House File 766 appropriated \$100,000 to ensure continued accessibility to IDN on a 24/7 basis. These monies allow a procurement organization to determine whether a donor or prospective donor has made, amended or revoked an anatomical gift. The Registry is also able to compile donation information received by the state DOT, county treasurers and the Iowa Donor Network.

Key Contacts and Partnerships 2023

Kim Reynolds, Governor

Adam Gregg, Lt. Governor

Kelly Garcia, HHS Director

DeAnne Decker, Department of Behavioral Health

Sherry L. Frizell, Department of Behavioral Health

Iowa Donor Network

Lions Eye Bank