

Who is HonorBridge?

HonorBridge is the federally designated organ procurement organization serving 78 counties of North Carolina and Danville, Virginia.

We are a non-profit agency governed by a voluntary Board of Directors. We coordinate the organ and tissue donation process, provide public and professional education, as well as bereavement services for donor families.

*"If Jukiya's heart beats in someone else, Jukiya is still going on in that person."
- Grandmother of donor Jukiya*

How does HonorBridge support funeral directors?

HonorBridge has a licensed funeral director who serves as Funeral Home Liaison.

HonorBridge attaches a toe tag to donors to indicate organs and tissues recovered, and to identify areas that may require special attention.

HonorBridge provides funeral homes with an estimated organ and tissue recovery timeline to reduce delays and miscommunications. We also operate a 24-hour communications center to answer inquiries from funeral homes. Call **1-800-252-2672**.

*"I wear my new heart like a badge of honor. I don't know what I've done to deserve this second chance, but I'm not going to waste it."
- Skid, heart transplant recipient*

What can be donated?

- Organs: heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, pancreas, and intestine.
- Tissue: bone, skin, heart valves, veins, ligaments, tendons, eyes and corneas.

How does the donation process work in North Carolina?

The organ shortage is a growing national healthcare crisis. Federal regulations (June 1998) help save and improve more lives through donation by requiring hospitals to notify HonorBridge of:

1. Every cardiac death;
2. Every imminent death due to a severe brain injury; or
3. Any time a family initiates discussion about donation.

It is HonorBridges' responsibility to determine if a patient meets the requirements for donation, and only a HonorBridge staff member or a formally trained Designated Requestor may talk to families about their options for donation

*Thanks to tissue donation, I am now able to live a very active lifestyle of dancing, hiking, kayaking and sailing. Organ and tissue donors are extraordinary people. I can't think of a greater gift than that!
- Terri, tissue recipient*

How great is the demand for donation?

There are more than 122,000 patients on the waiting list for an organ, 3,500 of whom are in North Carolina. A new name is added to the list every 10 minutes. At least 18 people die each day while waiting. Because of tissue donation more than 1.5 million people have restored sight or mobility.

*"I now have hope for an improved quality of life. With energy replenished, I can now raise my boys. Every day of life is a blessing."
- Karen, kidney transplant recipient*

How do HonorBridge and the North Carolina Eye Bank work together?

The North Carolina Eye Bank provides expertise in the recovery of ocular tissue, while HonorBridge is able to provide similar expertise with musculoskeletal tissue. The two organizations collaborate, allowing maximum efficiency for the donation process and providing better service to hospitals, families, and the community at large.

How can a person designate donation in North Carolina?

North Carolina residents can register to be a donor by choosing to put the heart symbol on their driver's licenses, or by registering online at www.DonateLifeNC.org.

*"Life is a circle, and being a donor - just brings it right back around. It is extremely hard to lose a loved one, especially a child, but donation gives you comfort in knowing that your child, made a huge difference. You can be a hero - You can save lives!"
- Michelle, mother of Maddie, a recipient and donor*

What are recent changes in Donor Legislation?

In October 2007, HB 1372 became a law converting the existing heart symbol on the driver's license to first-person, legal consent for organ and eye donation. The law also granted first person legal consent to people choosing donation through a donor registry.

A donor's registration information can only be accessed by the state's organ and eye procurement organizations at the time of death. If a person has given first person consent, the procurement agencies work with families to walk them through the process of honoring their loved one's wishes.

What do funeral directors contribute to this Gift?

As a funeral director, you play an integral role in donation. As the donation process is ending, another process has already begun with the funeral arrangements. You can facilitate a positive donation experience for the families we share.

Many donor families report that donation has given meaning to their loss. The value of the services and support you provide to our shared donor families is an immeasurable part of the gift of life.

“Our daughter Dana needed a heart transplant to save her life. She died waiting for that second chance. Wanting her to be a donor was easy. It comforts us to know that she helped others as we had hoped someone could help her.”

- Valerie, donor mother

What concerns may Funeral Directors have about donation?

HonorBridge recognizes that you need information and assistance to support your role in the donation process. Organ and tissue donation can pose challenges to you as a Funeral Director, such as possible delays in funeral arrangements or vascular disruptions that can affect your practices.

HonorBridge understands your concerns. By tying off severed vessels, carefully positioning prosthetics and employing conscientious recovery techniques, the organ and tissue recovery teams can help you achieve the desired results. It is HonorBridges' goal to make its staff aware of the effects of organ and tissue procurement on your practices.

By the numbers

122,000: The number of people on the national transplant waiting list

3,500: The number of people on the waiting list in North Carolina

18: The number of people who die every day while waiting for a transplant

10: The number of minutes it takes for a new name to be added to the transplant list

50: The number of people who can be helped by one tissue donor

8: The number of people who can be saved by one organ donor

3: The number of ways you can sign up to be an organ donor

0: The number of racial barriers or age limits for organ donation

Your Part of the Gift: A Guide for Funeral Directors



“When I was born, the doctors predicted I wouldn’t live. If it hadn’t been for organ donation, I would not have recently celebrated my 35th birthday. More importantly, I would not have had the chance to live the most wonderful life anyone could ever hope for.”

- Tiffany, Double Lung Recipient



24 Hour Communications Center: 1-800-252-2672

HonorBridge.org/Partners/Funeral-Home

DonateLifeNC.org