

Dear Prospective Donor,

Thank you for requesting information about donating your body to the University of Washington's Willed Body Program. We have prepared the following Information Letter to answer the questions you may have. We understand that this letter states many conditions and refers to legal requirements. In order to benefit fully from the exceptional gift you are providing to us, it is important for all of us, you, your family, and the University, to have a mutual understanding and agreement about the donor process. Please review the following carefully.

How can I donate my body to the University?

To donate your body after death to the School of Medicine you must completely fill out, sign and return the accompanying donor form. The form must also be signed by two witnesses. We strongly recommend that you discuss your intentions with your family so they will understand your wishes and our procedures. Having this type of discussion in advance avoids misunderstandings after your death that may be upsetting to your loved ones. You may also want to discuss your plan to donate your body with your attorney.

Once you have completed the form, send the original signed form to us and keep an additional copy with your personal papers. Give another copy to your next of kin, the personal representative for your estate, your attorney, and/or your physician. When we receive your completed form we will send you an identification card that says you wish to give your body to the University. We suggest you carry this card in your wallet.

Can I change my mind about giving my body to the University?

You may decide to withdraw your donation at any time. You can do this by notifying us in writing of your change of intention.

Can the family request an early return of the remains once a donor is in your program?

Unless the remains are requested by the Medical Examiner for examination purposes, remains may not be requested for an early return.

Is there any reason the University may not be able to accept my body?

It is important to understand and share the reasons for which the School of Medicine may refuse to accept a donation to avoid misunderstandings after your death.

The School of Medicine may refuse a body for certain legal and medical reasons or needs of the University. The reasons for which a donation may be declined include but are not limited to:

- The cause of death mandates intervention by the Medical Examiner as provided by state law
- Decomposition of the body because of time or place of death
- Dispute of donation by family members
- Infectious diseases, including HIV, Hepatitis B or C, Tuberculosis, Jakob-Creutzfeldt Disease (Rapid Dementia), MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)

- Gross fungal or other skin conditions
- Significant bedsores, skin ulcers or extensive burns
- Obesity or emaciation
- Extensive surgical history and metastatic cancer
- Recent unhealed surgical wounds
- Liver disease with jaundice or excess abdominal fluid (ascites)
- Autopsied remains
- Embalmed remains

You should also be aware that the School of Medicine does not accept donations beyond the limited boundaries of the Seattle area without financial assistance. We accept donations from outside our limited area only when the family agrees to pay costs in excess of our usual local transportation costs. These limitations are subject to change depending on the needs of the program and the budgetary resources of the University. The School of Medicine has a continuing need for donations to the Willed Body Program and carefully reviews all possibilities to utilize donations for educational or research purposes before refusing a donation.

We cannot guarantee in advance that your body will be accepted for donation. We urge you to make alternate arrangements and to inform your family so there will be no misunderstandings in the event your donation is declined.

Does my family need to do anything after I die?

Your family, hospital or care facility should call the Willed Body Program at 206-543-1860 immediately after your death for further instructions. This number is operational 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. The school of Medicine will make all arrangements for transporting your remains to the University from the location of your body at the time we are notified, this is usually your home, nursing home or a hospital. The School of Medicine will arrange and pay only for transportation of the body from one location.

We cannot accept bodies that have been embalmed before we are contacted.

Since we need to receive your body as soon as possible after death, this usually precludes a funeral service. Your family, of course, may make any arrangements they desire for memorial services. The University, however, cannot pay for the cost of these services.

Will my family be told of anything discovered or learned about me during the study of my body?

It is not the intent of our studies to determine the cause of death or to provide information to your family regarding your cause of death or whether you had any medical conditions.

At the time of death an attending physician must sign the death certificate or the matter comes under the jurisdiction of the Medical Examiner or Coroner as provided by local law. Under state law only a pathologist has the authority to determine the cause of death beyond that stated by the attending physician.

What will happen to my body when the University has finished using my body?

At the conclusion of our studies, which may take up to three years to complete, there are two alternative procedures for the final disposition of your cremated remains. Option 1: Burial in the University-owned community plot, or Option 2: Private burial by family arrangement.

Option 1:

Burial in the University community plot at Evergreen-Washelli Cemetery involves no cost to you or to your estate. This is a community grave site marked by a plaque inscribed: "In dedication to those who have donated their remains for the advancement of medical science and education". Burial of cremated remains should be considered final as the cremated remains are not recoverable. The University does not place individual markers, but there is a community stone available at the site. If the family wishes to have individual memorialization they can arrange with the cemetery office (206-362-5200), **at the family or estate's expense**, to have your name, and dates of birth and death engraved on the community stone.

Option 2:

If you desire private arrangements, we can send your cremated remains, after our use, to a specific funeral director or cemetery of your choice. The cost of transporting your cremated remains is paid by the University of Washington if the destination is within the United States or Canada. However, you must arrange and pay for the final resting place or plot.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please be sure you have initialed the appropriate line on the Donor Registration Form to designate your burial plans.

Annual Burial Ceremony

The University of Washington has an annual burial ceremony at Evergreen-Washelli Cemetery and Funeral Home. Generally this takes place in late August or early September. This annual ceremony is open to all who would like to attend; we welcome your friends and family.

If you need any further information or should have questions in the future, please contact Mavis Carpio Montgomery, Program Operations Specialist for the Willied Body Program in the Department of Biological Structure at 206-543-1860.

Thank You

We are grateful to you for your thoughtfulness, and generosity in considering the matters in this Information Letter. We have included a Donor Checklist for your convenience. A Registration Form is enclosed to formalize your request with the University.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel O. Graney, Ph.D.
Director, Willied Body Program

Mavis Carpio Montgomery,
Program Operations Specialist
Willied Body Program

DONOR CHECKLIST

1. Tell your family and your physician that you have decided to donate your body to the University of Washington after death. Your discussion should include the following information:

- The conditions for acceptance of your body for donation indicated in the Information Letter
- How to contact the Department of Biological Structures
- How to arrange for transportation of your body to the University of Washington
- Your wishes for the final disposition of your body
- Your wishes if your body is not accepted as a donation

2. Provide a copy of your Donation Agreement and Donor Information Packet to:

- Your family members
- The personal representative for your estate
- Your primary care physician and to any hospital upon admission
- Your attorney
- The University of Washington

3. Decide who the personal representative of your estate will be. This is the person who can make decisions about the disposition of your remains after your death.