



**HOWARD**  
**UNIVERSITY**

College of Medicine  
Department of Anatomy

## *ANATOMICAL DONOR PROGRAM*

Department of Anatomy  
Howard University  
College of Medicine

### *What is the purpose of an Anatomical Gift to Howard University?*

Anatomical gifts represent our most important teaching resource. The Department of Anatomy, Howard University College of Medicine (HUCM) is responsible for teaching and training the next generation of physicians, dentists, healthcare specialists, and scientists. In addition, Departmental faculty engage in biomedical scientific research and outreach programs promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Finally, the Department is involved in the continuing education of health care practitioners and in the development of novel clinical approaches. All of these missions are dependent upon donations.

### *Is there a need for donations at Howard University?*

Yes, there is an urgent and continual need for donations. Howard trains many of the best and brightest physicians, dentists and other health care professionals. In order to have the best training program we are in constant need of donations.

### *Can I donate any usable organs or tissues?*

Our Donor Program is a Whole Body Program. While we strongly acknowledge the need for organ and tissue donation, organ donors CANNOT be accepted into our medical education program.

### *What happens if I am a Donor and I die outside of the District?*

If a Donor dies outside of this area, it is possible for the body to be donated to a nearby Medical School or for the family to cover expenses to have the donor transported to Howard University. You may contact us for information about providers local to you.

### *How will my body be received once it arrives at Howard University?*

Very special care will be given to your generous gift. You can be assured that every donor is always treated respectfully, carefully, and sensitively. The faculty, students, and healthcare professionals here are mindful of your serious and generous intention to enhance their educational opportunities to study human anatomy. We are indebted to you for offering such a priceless source of learning. Every student trained at HUCM will deliver superior healthcare to their future patients because of your generosity.

### *Who should be notified of my death? And what happens next?*

When you formally donate your body (by returning the signed and notarized bequeathal forms and receiving your Donor Confirmation Letter) you should inform your family members, physicians, and your hospital or (nursing home). At the time of your death, your physician or family member should notify:

Department of Anatomy  
202-806-6556; 202-806-9869  
Monday – Friday 9:00AM- 5:00PM

### *Are there charges to my estate for services provided by the Donor Program?*

The only expenses involved would be for the Certified Copies of the death certificate.





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## The 5 Steps of Body Donation

### **Step One:**

Read this pamphlet thoroughly, especially the list of Exclusionary Criteria (reasons we cannot accept certain bodies).

### **Step Two:**

Complete the Donor Forms. Of the forms, the Bequeathal Form must be notarized. Please retain a copy of these forms for your records.

PLEASE NOTE: All of our enrollments are being handled by e/mail. Once the forms are completed, please e/mail all forms to both: [stephen.cosgrove1@howard.edu](mailto:stephen.cosgrove1@howard.edu) and [sulman.rahmat@howard.edu](mailto:sulman.rahmat@howard.edu)

### **Step Three:**

Once we received your Donor Information and Bequeathal forms, we will mail you a Donor Letter indicating your acceptance and enrollment in the program.

### **Step Four:**

Inform your family of your decision to donate and give a copy of your donor letter to your family. Because it will be the responsibility of your Next of Kin to release your remains to us, it is important that your plans for body donation be understood and accepted by this person. Please be certain to provide your Next of Kin with a copy of the enrollment forms and Door Verification Letter.

### **Step Five:**

When the program is needed, your family member or executor should contact the Howard University, Department of Anatomy, Anatomical Donor Program at (202) 806-6556, or (202) 806-6569. If death occurs during outside of our business hours, the answering machine message will provide instructions on who to call for assistance.





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*Howard University, School of Medicine, Department of Anatomy Anatomical Donor Program*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### *How can I become a Donor?*

Complete the Donor Bequeathal, Vital Statistic Information, and the Brief Medical History forms. Have the donor bequeathal form signed and notarized by a public notary and return the forms to Howard University, College of Medicine, Department of Anatomy, Anatomical Donor Program. Once received, you will receive a letter acknowledging your registration. Please be sure that your next of kin is aware of your intentions. It is very important that your plans for body donation be understood and accepted by this person. Often, it is helpful to provide your Next of Kin with a copy of your enrollment forms.

### *May I change my mind about the donation even after I have received my Uniform Donor Card?*

Yes, you may change your mind about the donation by destroying your donor card and notifying us in writing of your decision to revoke the donation. You may also wish to inform your Next of Kin.

### *Will Howard University pay me or my family for my body?*

No. Howard University does not “purchase” bodies for medical education. Purchasing bodies is prohibited by law.

### *What will happen at the time of my death?*

When death occurs your Next of Kin should immediately notify us. Please contact our office at 202-806-6556, or 202-806-6569. A message on the recording will inform you who to call if it is after hours. At that time, arrangements will be made for transporting the decedent. The College of Medicine reserves the right to decline any anatomical gift. For this reason, alternative arrangements should be made in the event the gift cannot be accepted. PLEASE SEE OUR LIST OF EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA to determine if you are eligible for our program.

### *What is the procedure if I have not registered in advance and a death has occurred?*

We certainly encourage registering for the program in advance. Everything proceeds much easier when the registration is in place. If you have not registered in advance, we *may* be able to accept the donation. Please contact us at (202)806 9869 or by e/mail at: [stephen.cosgrovel@howard.edu](mailto:stephen.cosgrovel@howard.edu). The mortuary provider can only provide assistance if a donor registration is in place prior to the passing. All other arrangements must be made with our representatives.

### *May my family have my personal effects returned to them?*

Yes. The family may pick-up your personal effects upon request. They must sign for the items and bring a container or shopping bag to place your personal effects in. The University does not mail or deliver personal effects to family members. Your family members must pick up the items once requested to be returned. **We require that your family remove all personal effects before being admitted into the Anatomical Donor Program. We cannot assume responsibility for any items of value (jewelry, cash) that are left with the decedent.**

### *What if the members of my family or I would like funeral services to be conducted?*

If the body lies in state for an immediate viewing (with 12 hours of death), your family should engage the funeral home with cold storage facilities for the remains, but there should be NO EMBALMING. Standard embalming materials render the body unusable for anatomical study.

### *What is the age limit for donating my body?*

Adults eighteen years of age and over may elect to make anatomical donations to Howard University. However, please see the list of exclusionary criteria on page eight of this packet for reasons why we may not be able to accept a particular body.





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## *How long will my remains be used in the program?*

Generally speaking, the family may expect that the donor will be with us for 12-24 months following the Donor's passing. Depending on a number of factors, this time frame may vary, but we try to be as close to the stated time frame as possible.

## *What happens at completion of the anatomical session?*

When studies have been completed, the remains are individually cremated. Following the cremation, the family will be contacted to make arrangements for the return of the remains. The family may come to the University to pick up the remains or they may be sent to the address provided on the Bequeathal Form. If a family member chooses not to have the cremated remains returned, they will be interred in Howard's plot at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Suitland, MD.

## *What if my death occurs some distance from Washington, DC?*

If death occurs more than 35 miles outside the greater Washington Metropolitan Area, your family may contact a nearby medical school and arrange to send the remains there. We would relinquish our claim to the donation. However, if the family wishes to donate to our program, the costs of transporting the decedent to Howard are at the expense of the family. We are happy to advise you in these situations.

## *Will anatomical/pathological findings be reported to family members?*

The program does not issue reports on any findings during these studies.

## *What is the procedure regarding the Death Certificate?*

Following the Donor's passing, the mortuary provider will begin the preparation of the Death Certificate. Once the physician completes the medical information and we complete the information from the Donor Information Sheet, the Certificate will be filed with the local health department. Before the document is filed, we ask that you review the document for accuracy. The program or mortuary provider is not responsible for errors if the document is not reviewed and approved by the family. The certificate is then filed with the appropriate state agency. You may then contact the local agency where the certificate was filed to purchase copies of the certificate. The mortuary provider usually can do this for the family, but there is a fee for their service. The Anatomical Donor Program does not file or provide copies of the death certificate. Please be aware that copies of the Death Certificate are usually not available until 10-14 days AFTER the death of the donor.

## *Is there a program to honor my loved one?*

Every Spring, the Department of Anatomy holds a Donor Memorial Service to honor and express their appreciation to the Donor and their Families. Invitations are sent about two months ahead of the date.

## *How may I help further medical education now?*

Every year, a number of concerned people express interest in furthering medical education and research via financial contributions to Howard University, College of Medicine, Department of Anatomy during their lifetime. Contributions to the Department of Anatomy greatly facilitate the important research, education and running of the Anatomical Donor Program. Contributions of any amount help the Department of Anatomy meet the ever-increasing cost of medical research and education. All contributions are fully tax-deductible.





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## EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA

**Not all bodies of the deceased are eligible for donations. ALWAYS Call Us to Confirm if you are unsure.**

**Howard University CANNOT accept bodies if any of the following conditions exist at the time of death:**

- 1. There has been an autopsy or embalming.**  
*Rationale: An autopsy interferes with normal anatomical relationship. Routine embalming as performed by funeral homes render the body unsuitable for dissection.*
- 2. There has been recent major surgery or excessive life-saving attempts.**  
*Rationale: The anatomical relations are altered.*
- 3. There has been extensive surgery resulting in the removal of limbs or major organs.**  
*Rationale: The anatomical relations are altered.*
- 4. The body was severely damaged in an accident.**  
*Rationale: The anatomical relations are altered.*
- 5. There is a diagnosis of widespread cancer.**  
*Rationale: The anatomical relations are altered.*
- 6. The donor was the carrier of an infectious disease.**  
*Rationale: This is a health hazard to staff, faculty and students. COVID 19, MRSA, CDIFF, HIV and Hepatitis are among these. There are also several other conditions we cannot accommodate.*
- 7. The donor is in fetal position or has contracted limbs.**  
*Rationale: The body must lay flat on a table in order to be placed in our storage area.*
- 8. The donor is obese (e.g., 200 pounds at a height of 5 feet).**  
*Rationale: The body is too large for storage in our storage area containers.*
- 9. Donor died more than three days before donation.**  
*Rationale: The body must be embalmed as soon as possible after death so that there will be proper preservation.*
- 10. Donor is outside of a 35-mile radius from Howard University.**  
*Rationale: This greatly increases the cost incurred by the Medical School. The family may opt to donate the body to a Donor Program within closer proximity or alternatively the family can pay for the transportation costs to have the body sent to Howard University.*
- 11. There is no space available in our mortuary.**  
*Rationale: Storage space in our facility may be limited at times.*





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*How to make a cash gift now.*

- ❖ *Make your check payable to: Howard University, Department of Anatomy*
- ❖ *Designate for: Anatomical Donor Program*
- ❖ *Mail to:*

*Ms. Lynette Thompson  
Administrative Coordinator  
Howard University  
College of Medicine  
Department of Anatomy  
Numa P. Adams, Room 1105  
520 W Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20059*

*How to contribute through your will:*

- ❖ *You may wish to consult your attorney or financial planner about the advisability of including a gift provision in your will. Should you wish to assist us in this manner, your donation will be gratefully received and acknowledged. You may contact the Planned Giving Office located in Development and Alumni Affairs office located in the Howard University Center by calling (202) 238-2340 for further information and assistance.*

*What if I have other questions?*

*If you have additional questions, please contact us at (202) 806-6556 or (202) 806-9869.*

**Thank you for considering this generous donation to Howard University College of Medicine.  
We are here to support and assist you.**

**Dr. Sulman J. Rahmat**  
**Director of Anatomy and Neuroanatomy**  
**Director of Anatomical Laboratories**  
**Director of Anatomical Gifts Program**  
**Department of Anatomy**  
**Howard University College of Medicine**  
[Sulman.rahmat@howard.edu](mailto:Sulman.rahmat@howard.edu)



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