

Donation Arrangements Made Before Death

§ If you have a will it is recommended that a copy of the donation form be included. Discuss your plans with your attorney.

§ Make known your desire for body donation with your next of kin to ensure that your wishes are honored. At the time of death have the donation form readily available so that the donation process can take place in a timely manner.

§ In the absence of next of kin make sure that a close friend or other responsible person is aware of your wish to have your body donated to the FOReSt.

§ Make arrangements with a funeral home to receive your body after death, to transport it to the FOReSt, and to create and file your death certificate. A funeral home has the appropriate license and vehicle to transport your body to our facility. Funeral directors are also accustomed to creating and filing death certificates and have facilities for keeping bodies in cold storage until the transfer to the FOReSt can be made. We reserve the right to refuse a body that does not come to us via a licensed funeral director. The cost of transportation and other services provided by a funeral home are your responsibility.

§ Before a body donation can be received at the FOReSt a certified copy of the death certificate must be provided.

§ It is imperative that your body not be embalmed. An embalmed body cannot be accepted as the embalming process inhibits decomposition and the usefulness of your body as a donation to our facility.

§ The FOReSt will not accept a donation of an uncremated body that has been diagnosed with communicable disease. These diseases include, but are not limited to: smallpox, plague, HIV infection, hepatitis A infection, hepatitis B infection, hepatitis C infection, MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus), rabies, or Jakob-Creutzfeldt. A person with a communicable disease may be donated if the body is cremated (see Cremation Information).

§ Weight is a factor we have to consider when accepting a donation due to the fact that we will hand carry your body into our facility. If you weigh in excess of 250 pounds at the time of death we reserve the right to refuse your body. If weight might be an issue, consider cremation. We will accept cremated remains (see Cremations Information).

§ A body may be rejected if it has been modified in a manner that reduces the scientific usefulness of the body.

§ If at the time of death your next of kin do not choose to honor your wishes, the FOReSt will not go against the wishes of your next of kin.

§ If you plan to have your organs donated make arrangements for your body to be transferred after the organ donation process.

§ If an autopsy has been performed, your remains may still be donated to the FOReSt.

§ It is normally the procedure that after decomposition has taken place your skeletal remains are cleaned and properly stored in the Western Carolina Human Identification Laboratory collections for future teaching and research. If you desire cremation or that your remains be returned to your next of kin for disposition the cost will be borne by the Estate or the next of kin.

§ While decomposition research is the primary focus your remains may be used for other teaching and research purposes. If you desire that your remains only be used in decomposition study please inform the Director of the Forensic Osteology Research Station of your wishes in writing.

§ It is highly recommended that in the event that the FOReSt cannot take your body as a donation (for example: if there has been a diagnosis of a communicable disease) that you have an alternate plan for the disposition of your body.

§ You are always free to change your mind regarding your desire to donate your body after death. Please inform us if this changes any time in the future.

Contact Information

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