



Institute for Plastination

Guide for Donors

Body Donation for Plastination

The donor's last will and testament, donating his/her body for Plastination, is not a contract, but rather a living will that can be revoked by either party, without cause. There are no fees to be paid for donating a body, nor will donors or their survivors receive any monetary compensation. The Institute for Plastination (IfP) does not have a legal claim to the body, nor is the Institute legally required to accept the body.

How to Donate Your Body for Plastination

- (1) Carefully read the information brochure, 'Body Donation for Plastination', and share it with close family and friends to make them aware of your wishes.
- (2) Complete the 'Donating Your Body for Plastination – Donor's Consent' form in duplicate, sign both copies, and return them to the address indicated on the form.
- (3) If you have reason to believe that your survivors may not be in favor of your donating your body, your signature should be notarized on both forms.
- (4) We will countersign the forms and return one of them to you to confirm your intent. You should file this form with your personal documents or give it to a designated executor or doctor for safekeeping. You will also be given a body donor identification card. We strongly recommend that you carry your donor card with you at all times.

When you become a body donor, you should inform your likely survivors of your decision so that they can initiate the rapid transfer of your body to an IfP embalming facility after your death. Examples of people you might choose for this task include relatives, close friends, or your primary care physician.

Procedures and Body Transportation

The following is intended as basic and general information regarding the procedures for body donation, as they will vary from country to country. In North and South America, the IfP partners with authorized embalming facilities that are responsible for embalming and preparing the body before it is transported to the Institute in Germany. Donors in all other countries must have their body shipped directly to Germany. Should the laws in your state, province, or country require that the body be embalmed prior to transportation, the mortuary assisting with the procedure should contact the IfP to receive the necessary instructions for embalming.

When the countersigned consent form is returned to you, an 'Embalming Information Sheet' and the donor card are included, which list the current locations of authorized embalming facilities.



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After your death, the next of kin, executor, hospital personnel, or the individual that was designated to make arrangements for you should:

- Immediately notify your doctor or the local coroner.
- Contact a local mortuary that can coordinate the transport with the IfP.
- Keep the deceased's body as cool as possible until it is transported.

It will be the responsibility of the survivors to arrange and pay for transportation to an IfP embalming facility through a mortuary if there is no appointed IfP embalming facility in the immediate area. The IfP body donor office and the IfP embalming facility can be of assistance to the mortuary if need be, but will not conduct the transport.

Transportation can take place only after the death has been documented and registered according to all legal requirements. The mortuary arranging transport can also assist with fulfilling all of these requirements, which will include filling out the forms to obtain a death certificate and other paperwork required in your country, state, or province.

A death certificate signed by a doctor stating the cause of death must be filed; usually in the county or district where the death occurs, or where the body is found. A coroner will supply a health department or office of vital records and will issue the permit for disposition.

It is your responsibility to ensure that someone is appointed to complete all of these requirements. The steps to be undertaken by the trusted person you designate, as well as the required documentation, are described in detail in the 'Guide for Survivors'. He or she should have access to the following documents:

- A copy or certified copy of your birth certificate.
- A copy or certified copy of your marriage and/or divorce certificate(s).
- A document authorizing said person to request a death certificate. This will be necessary if the trusted person is not a family member.

Other Forms

For educational and research purposes, it is helpful for the IfP to have permission to access the health records of body donors after their death. Also, significantly better preservation results may be achieved if details on the kind and course of disease(s), if any, are known. Thus, it is advantageous for us to have the name and address of the last attending primary care physician of the deceased as well as copies of health records (including x-ray films). If you agree to make these available, you will have to authorize the IfP accordingly in writing. The 'Medical History Release' form is included with the documents for body donors or can also be downloaded from our website. You may, of course, opt to send us copies of your health records during your lifetime. The IfP assures you that the confidentiality of such records will be maintained.



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Prerequisites for the Acceptance of a Donated Body

- (1) You must have died a natural death, i.e., a death not caused by violence, or self-inflicted.
- (2) Your written consent ('Donor's Consent') must be on file. This consent includes a burial waiver.
- (3) The body must be largely intact, i.e., no autopsy may have been performed at an institute of pathology or forensic medicine. Also, the IfP cannot accept bodies severely injured in an accident. In case of an accident resulting in death, the body of the deceased normally will be claimed by the authorities and will be autopsied on their behalf at an institute of forensic medicine. This is generally necessary to resolve questions of liability and insurance claims.

Advanced age or diseases of any kind are **not** unfavorable in terms of body donation. Every single body is a valuable anatomical treasure.

Also, being an organ donor does **not** in any way prevent body donation for Plastination. Because organ donation is a life-saving or life-supporting measure, it takes precedence over body donations. Even after individual organs have been removed, the body will be suitable for Plastination, provided that it is transported to an IfP embalming facility immediately after organ removal.

Amputation of individual limbs does **not** interfere with Plastination, either.

If an infectious disease (e.g., HIV, hepatitis) is present, the IfP will decide on a case-by-case basis whether or not to accept the donated body. In such a case, it is absolutely necessary that the IfP is notified of this prior to transporting the body.

Costs

The IfP does not charge any fees for body donation. There are no burial costs nor, of course, the cost of maintaining a grave.

There will be costs for the issuing of the death certificate, for keeping the body until transport is arranged, for transportation of the body to an IfP embalming facility, and for a memorial service if desired. These costs are the responsibility of the survivors of the body donor and are only paid to the mortuary or agency designated by the survivor. There is no payment to the IfP.

We will be happy to answer any other questions you may have.

In North and South America

E-mail: bodydonation@plastination.com

Call: +1 213.291.9572

In Germany and rest of the world

Write to: Im Bosseldorn 17, 69126 Heidelberg, Germany

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Call: +49 6221-3311-50

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(for urgent inquiries outside of regular office hours)

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