



International Association of Coroners & Medical Examiners

Collaboration · Education · Accreditation

Dedicated to the promotion of excellence in medicolegal death investigation through collaboration, education, and accreditation.

Collaborating with Organ, Tissue, and Eye Donation Organizations Position Paper

Background:

Donated organs and tissues are used for transplant, therapeutic purposes, research, and medical education. These gifts save lives, improve health, and promote the advancement of medicine. Organ procurement organizations, tissue procurement organizations, and eye banks, hereafter referred to as *donation organizations*, facilitate these donations. Potential donors are often under the jurisdiction of a medicolegal death investigation authority, such as a coroner, medical examiner, forensic pathologist, or justice of the peace, hereafter referred to as *medicolegal death investigation authorities*.

Relation to IACME mission statement: The IACME is dedicated to promoting excellence in medicolegal death investigation through collaboration, education, and accreditation. Proactive *collaboration* between donation organizations and medicolegal death investigation authorities is imperative to ensure the best possible outcomes for all stakeholders, including donor families and potential recipients.

IACME Position: Cooperative relationships and information sharing between medicolegal death investigation authorities and donation organizations are mutually beneficial.

- Donation organizations obtain detailed information during risk assessment interviews, physical examinations, laboratory and radiographic assessments, and general communication with families. This information may supplement the medicolegal death investigation and inform the cause and manner of death determination.
- Medicolegal death investigation authorities often possess information that is critical for donor eligibility determination. Prompt communication of this information increases decision-making accuracy and efficiency.

Conclusion: Medicolegal death investigation authorities should form proactive cooperative relationships with donation organizations and support donation efforts when possible.

Select References:

Forensic Technology Center of Excellence. Whitepaper: Information sharing between medicolegal death investigation offices and organ and tissue recovery organizations. (2023, December). Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International.
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