



Body Donation for Plastination

Guide for Survivors

The following is intended as a basic guide and general information regarding the procedures required after a body donor has died so that the body will reach the Institute for Plastination (IfP) in a timely manner. Details of the procedures will vary from country to country. In case of any questions, survivors of body donors should contact the IfP for assistance and clarification.

As a relative or trusted person of a body donor for plastination, you are being asked to help fulfill the last wishes of the deceased body donor and to complete the required paperwork, as well as to initiate rapid transportation of the body to an embalming facility approved by the IfP. This guide describes the required formal procedures and is intended to help you fulfill these tasks.

IfP Contact Information

In Europe

German Body Donor Office
Institute for Plastination
Rathausstrasse 11
69126 Heidelberg, Germany

Mon.-Fri. between
9 a.m. and 4 p.m. (GMT +1)

Phone +49 6221 33 11 50
Fax +49 6221 33 11 45

Outside of normal office hours,
please call +49 160 74 55 188

In North America

North American Body Donor Office
PO Box 14504, Portland, OR 97293

Phone 213 291 9572
Fax 213 291 9582

Embalming Facility
Snyder's Embalming, Jon Snyder
606 West Fremont Street,
Upland, CA 91784

Phone 909 985 0525
or 888.4.EMBALM
Pager 310 501 3000
Fax 866 614 8320

Procedures Required Immediately after Death Has Occurred

If the donor died at home, you should call the primary physician of the deceased or another doctor on call, who will attest to the death and who will issue a written attestation of death. If the death occurred at a hospital or a care facility, the institution in question will take care of this task.

Next, you should notify one of the body donor offices of the Institute for Plastination (IfP) by phone as soon as possible. The Institute's employees are experienced in dealing with deaths and the accompanying formal issues and will help you if necessary.

The IfP will work with you to arrange for the transportation to an approved IfP facility as soon as possible. Until the body is picked up, you should take care that it is kept as cool as possible. This means:

- avoiding direct exposure to sunlight,
- not covering the body with warm blankets, but only a simple sheet at most,
- turning off radiators/heating facilities, where applicable,
- opening windows (in case of cool temperatures outside).

Currently, our facility to accept donors in North America, is in California through a licensed embalming facility, Snyder's Embalming. A local mortuary can assist you with special arrangements to transport the body to Snyder's Embalming, if needed. All costs due to any third party mortuary or for any transport to Upland, CA, must be paid for directly to the company transporting the remains and will not be covered by the IfP.

In Europe, all bodies shall be shipped to the facility in Heidelberg. Within Germany, the pick-up and transportation of the bodies is free.

During warm seasons, transportation to the IfP embalming facility should not happen any later than 2 to 3 days after death has occurred. During cold seasons, or if the body is temporarily kept at a refrigerated mortuary, transportation to the IfP embalming facility should occur no later than 10 to 12 days after death.

Formal Procedures and Transportation

Transportation will only take place after the death has been documented and registered according to all legal requirements and the body has been embalmed according to the requirements of the IfP.

An original, certified copy of the *death certificate* must be submitted to the IfP or the funeral home handling the transportation of the body. It will accompany the

body to its final destination. The death certificate will remain with the IfP in our official records. The death certificate should be requested from your local office of vital records. Please note that you will need additional copies of the death certificate, e.g., for cancelling the deceased's health insurance and retirement insurance. To obtain a death certificate, you must complete an application and submit it along with any other specified documents (e.g. the deceased's birth certificate). A local funeral home or mortuary may also assist you in obtaining a death certificate through the office of vital records. In most states and provinces, the person requesting the death certificate will need to present a government issued ID.

Any other required paperwork such as *pre-need disclosure* or an *embalming authorization form* is provided by a mortuary at time of death. If you are unable to deal with these formal procedures yourself, you may choose to hire a local funeral home to do so. You will be responsible for the ensuing cost.

Check List

- ✓ Call a physician who will attest to the death and issue a written attestation of the death.
- ✓ Notify your nearest IfP Body Donor Office by phone.
- ✓ Keep the body as cool as possible until it is picked-up for transportation to the IfP or an IfP embalming facility.
- ✓ Obtain a certified copy of the death certificate from the local office of vital records.
- ✓ Submit the death certificate and attestation of death to the mortuary or the company responsible for picking up the body.
- ✓ Complete any other required paperwork such as *pre-need disclosure* or an *embalming authorization form*.

Costs

The IfP does not charge any fees. Until further notice, the IfP also will assume the cost of transporting bodies to the IfP in Germany from official embalming centers. There are no burial costs nor costs of maintaining a grave. The survivors of the deceased will merely be responsible for:

- The administrative fees for filing and receiving the paperwork needed for the donation, including the issuing of the death certificate by the office of vital records.
- If necessary, the cost of temporarily transporting the body to a local mortuary.
- The cost of transporting the body to an IfP embalming facility.
- The cost for a memorial service, if one is desired.

To help cover these expenses, it is advisable to inquire about insurance the body donor may have taken out to cover those expenses.

Reasons Precluding Body Donation

- No autopsy by an institute of pathology or of forensic medicine may have been conducted on a body donated to the IfP. Severely injured bodies from accidents cannot be accepted for plastination.
- Organ donation does not preclude plastination. Because organ donation is a live-saving procedure, it takes precedence over body donation. But 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.
- The presence of an infectious disease (e.g., hepatitis, HIV) does not present an obstacle either. However, it is absolutely necessary that the IfP is notified of such a condition prior to transportation.

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 giving any reasons. 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.

