



# Guide for Donors

## Body Donation

***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 at any time and 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.***

## 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 also 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 the IfP 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 to Germany

The following is intended as basic and general information regarding the procedures for body donation from countries in Europe and other continents, except North and South America. Specific laws and procedures will vary from country to country.

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

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

It will be the responsibility of the survivors to arrange and pay for the transportation to Germany. The IfP can be of assistance to the mortuary if need be but will not conduct the transport. Once in Germany, the IfP offers a free pick-up service from any city to our Plastination facility. Transportation can take place only after the death has been documented and registered according to all legal requirements. The mortuary arranging the 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 a body is found. A coroner will supply a death department and will issue the permit for disposition.

It is the donor's 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:

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

In most countries, except some European countries, it is required that the body be embalmed according to the instructions of the IfP prior to transportation.

The mortuary assisting with the procedure should contact the IfP to receive the necessary instructions for embalming.

In addition to the death certificate, an international toe tag will be needed. The toe tag is only issued after the body has been sealed in a zinc coffin. The qualified physician in charge should approve the sealing. The mortuary can then assist with the transportation of the body across borders.

## 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 appropriate form is included with the documents for body donors. You may, of course, opt to send us copies of your health records during your lifetime. We assure you that we will maintain the confidentiality of such records.

## Prerequisites for the Acceptance of a Donated Body

- (1) You must have died a natural death, i.e., a death not caused by violence.
- (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 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 donated to us is a valuable anatomical treasure.

Also, being an organ donor does **not** in any way prevent body donation for Plastination. Because organ donations are life-saving or life-supporting measures, they take precedence over body donations. Even after individual organs have been removed, the body will be suitable for Plastination, provided that it is transported to the IfP 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 refrigerating the body until pick-up, if necessary; for transportation of the body to Germany, and for a memorial service, if desired. These costs are the responsibility of the survivors of the body donor.

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

**In Germany and rest of the world**  
(except North and South America)

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