

Activation of Medical Examiner/Coroner Authority to Make Anatomical Gift

A process for authorizing organ donation

If a legal next of kin (NOK) or close friend cannot be located or a patient is unidentified Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network will implement the *Activation of Medical Examiner/Coroner Authority to Make an Anatomical Gift* process.

Per the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act (UAGA), when no legal NOK is present, the party legally responsible for disposition of the body is responsible for authorizing donation.

The Gift of Hope onsite team will:

- Ask the hospital to contact law enforcement to fingerprint and identify the deceased, if the individual is unidentified.
- Work with hospital representatives, such as social worker, Ethics or Legal to locate NOK. Complete the *Activation of Medical Examiner/Coroner Authority to make an Anatomical Gift* form.
- Ask the hospital to provide mechanical support of the patient to allow for the search and authorization process.
- Coordinate with Gift of Hope Partner Relations to contact the Medical Examiner (ME)/Coroner.
- Perform additional online searches for publicly available information to locate legal NOK or close friends.

Gift of Hope Partner Relations will:

- Serve as the primary contact for the ME/Coroner, law enforcement and State's Attorney.
- Request ME/Coroner assistance in locating legal NOK and/or work with law enforcement to identify the patient.
- Guide the Gift of Hope staff on site through the activation process.
- Facilitate timely communication among all parties, review the *Activation Form* and request authorization for donation from the ME/Coroner.

The State's Attorney's office will:

- Work with Gift of Hope and the ME/Coroner's office to ensure understanding of the authorization process.
- Maintain communication with the Gift of Hope team for real-time updates.

The ME/Coroner's office will:

- Work closely with Gift of Hope Partner Relations to share all searches attempted and information found.
- Utilize coroner NOK search resources like LexisNexis® and TLO.
- Work with law enforcement and/or State's Attorney's office when needed.
- Respond to the faxed Request for Release document from the Gift of Hope Organ Recovery Coordinator.
- Review *Activation Form* with Partner Relations and provide authorization for donation.

Hospital staff will:

- Notify Gift of Hope of a potential donor who is unidentified or has no identified legal NOK.
- Quarantine all admission blood and tissue specimens.
- Maintain mechanical support until Gift of Hope provides further direction.
- Contact appropriate hospital representatives for further direction and hospital policy for unidentified patients or those with no known legal NOK.
- Hospital staff will contact law enforcement to fingerprint an unidentified patient.

Law enforcement will:

- Respond to hospital notification of an unidentified patient
- Fingerprint the patient for identity search.
- Attempt to identify patient according to standard protocol.