



Life

Goes On

Be an organ/tissue donor

Jesse White • Secretary of State
WWW.CYBERDRIVEILLINOIS.COM

Building a
Community
Organ/Tissue
Donation
Awareness
Program

In 1999, my office implemented a pilot program to increase awareness about organ/tissue donation and the number of people who participate in the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry. Peoria was the first site for the program and the results were very encouraging — a 5 percent increase in that facility's driver's license registry.

Activities were held in April, which is National Donate Life Month. Members of the city and county governments, business and labor leaders, civic organizations, clergy, medical personnel, procurement agencies, transplant recipients, donor family members and other volunteers joined together to spread the word about the lifesaving benefits of donation and transplantation.



Because of the success of the “Life Goes On In Peoria” campaign, we expanded the program to other cities, including Bloomington, Springfield, Carbondale and Champaign, to name a few. As a result, registry participation rates at many of these facilities have increased to 60 percent — 20 percent more than the 49.3 statewide average.

This guide serves as a resource for communities wishing to implement a “Life Goes On Cities” program, which has become a model for other states. Through this unique program, we can help the 5,000 people who are on transplant waiting lists right here in Illinois. Our goal is to reach every citizen in Illinois with information about organ/tissue donation. Perhaps with your help, the day will come when no family has to suffer the agony of waiting for a loved one to receive a much-needed transplant.

For more information, please call 217-782-6258.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jesse White".

Jesse White

Secretary of State

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One of the barriers that prevents people from signing up as potential organ/tissue donors is a lack of knowledge. As a respected community leader, you have the power to educate and influence the people in your community about organ/tissue donation. Because of the success of "Life Goes On" cities in Illinois, the Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Program has had many inquiries about the program. This guide has been developed to help you establish a "Life Goes On" program in your community.

Organizing your "Life Goes On" Committee

The Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff will help you organize a "Life Goes On" program in your community. Addresses and phone numbers of the Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff and regional coordinators are provided at the end of this guide. Before meeting with the staff, however, compile a list of possible committee members from your community. It is important to make your committee as diverse as your community. Each group will contribute something different to your efforts, and the more involvement you get, the more successful your efforts will be.

Following are some ways to get representation from various community groups that should have representation on your committee, and ideas on how they can help support your organ/tissue donation awareness efforts.

Business — Most businesses are members of the local Chamber of Commerce. Invite the director of the Chamber of Commerce to join your committee. Businesses also are sources of donations and funding for additional activities. Examples include:

- Providing tray liners to local fast food restaurants (Hardees, McDonalds, Wendy's, etc.)
- Placing messages on marquees at hotels, restaurants, movie theaters, etc.
- Placing posters and banners in local businesses
- Publishing articles in Chamber of Commerce newsletters
- Distributing brochures to businesses
- Providing table tents to local restaurants
- Posting messages on utility bills and privately owned utility company newsletters

Clergy — Contact a priest or pastor of a large community church. The Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff will provide Donor Sabbath materials to share with church leaders. Oftentimes, if a pastor or priest supports a cause, the church members will be happy to participate. Check to see if any of the members are organ/tissue recipients or donor family members. Suggestions for church participation include:

- Placing brochures in church vestibules
- Including information in the Sunday message or sermon about donation
- Publishing articles in church newsletters
- Sending a letter from a particular pastor or priest to other area churches
- Printing messages about donation in church bulletins
- Asking a recipient or donor family member to speak to the congregation about donation
- Asking church organizations such as the K of C or ladies societies to help organize an event
- Posting a message on church marquees

Education — The Regional Superintendent of Schools or a representative from the office should serve on the committee to help open doors to educational outlets. Ideas for reaching out to schools include:

- Providing brochures for students
- Making announcements via a school's public address system
- Providing pens, pencils, crayons or activity sheets to classrooms
- Posting information on bulletin boards
- Providing room decorations for Organ/Tissue Donor Week
- Inviting donor family members and transplant recipients to speak at school assemblies, driver education classes, health classes and science classes
- Providing videos about donation for classes to view
- Creating essay assignments for special class credit
- Sending a letter to parents from the school
- Setting up booths at local sports events

Government — Local elected officials, such as coroners, mayors, county board members, township officials, state representatives, senators, sheriffs, police officers, firefighters and other community leaders are an asset to a committee. They can help organize your project with the following:

- City and county health fairs
- Health Department involvement
- Support from law enforcement agencies
- Employee newsletters
- Bulletin boards
- Distribution of materials
- Mayor and county board proclamations
- City-wide donor days activities
- Recipient and Donor Family Recognition days

Labor — Labor leaders have been a valuable source of help for "Life Goes On" cities. They have a tremendous networking system and are willing to help where needed. Examples of labor involvement include:

- Donating funds for materials
- Publishing newsletter articles
- Inviting speakers to local union meetings
- Helping distribute "Life Goes On" materials
- Hanging banners at various sites
- Providing stories about union members who are transplant recipients or donor family members
- Helping at health fairs
- Hanging posters in union halls

Transplant Recipients/Donor Family Members — Organ/tissue transplant recipients and donor family members are very valuable members of a "Life Goes On Committee." Many of them belong to area support groups and are willing to help organize events, staff informational booths, participate in parades and distribute literature. They help personalize your community-wide efforts by encouraging others to donate. Your local procurement agency can provide names of those in your area who have been affected by donation and transplantation. (See page 3 for a list of procurement agencies.) They also can provide interviews to the press. The Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff also maintains a list of recipients and donor families who have helped with past efforts.

Procurement agencies

Each area has a federally designated procurement agency for organs/tissue. Most procurement agencies have area representatives who can provide information, materials and volunteers for your events. Following is a list of procurement agencies in the State of Illinois.

Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network (serving the northern two-thirds of Illinois)

660 Industrial Dr.	One West Old State Capitol
Elmhurst, IL 60126	Springfield, IL 62701
630-758-2600	217-789-9363

Mid-America Transplant Services (Southern Illinois)

1139 Olivetti Executive Pkwy.	Illinois Office — Brian Bush
St. Louis, MO 63132	P.O. Box 190
314-991-8655	Gallatin, IL 62935
	618-268-6025

Illinois Eye Bank

800 S. Wells
Chicago, IL
312-431-3333

American Red Cross Tissue Services

405 W. John H. Gwen Jr. Ave.
Peoria, IL
800-272-5287

Heartland Lions Eye Banks

800 E. Carpenter, Rm. 2231
Springfield, IL 62769
Amanda Nerone
217-757-6050

Other organ/tissue donation organizations

National Kidney Foundation of Illinois

215 W. Illinois, Ste. 1C
Chicago, IL 60610
312-321-1500

American Liver Foundation

180 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60603
312-377-9030

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Organizing your “Life Goes On” campaign

Once your “Life Goes On Committee” is organized you should form subcommittees to discuss ideas and report to the committee. You and your fellow committee members know your community and the people in it better than anyone else. You also know how they will best respond to messages about donation.

Now that you have the core of your committee, your mission is to take the message to your community. To get you started, we have put together a few basic ideas. Take these ideas and let them inspire you to create your own “Life Goes On” city.

Where should the committee meet? — Someone on your committee may have access to an ideal meeting place (i.e., church, municipal building, union hall, hospital). When choosing a location, keep the following in mind: room availability, parking, location, furnishings (i.e., chairs, tables).

How often should the committee meet? — Most “Life Goes On Committees” meet once a month. It is important to settle on a regular meeting date, time and location to make it easier for people to plan ahead. As National Donate Life Month in April approaches, it may be helpful to meet more often to accomplish your goals.

What activities can our community do to raise awareness — Some activities that work well in one area may not be as effective in another, so discuss what activities would be most effective in your community. (See the Raising Public Awareness section below for more information.)

Where can the committee obtain “Life Goes On” materials? — The Secretary of State's office will provide “Life Goes On” materials, including brochures, activity sheets, pens/pencils and tabletop displays. (See page 8 for the Secretary of State Materials Request Form.)

How can our committee raise funds to promote awareness — Local unions, businesses and civic organizations are usually generous in donating funds for community projects. Use local contacts to seek out possible donations. A special fund administered through the Gift of Hope and Mid-America Transplant Services procurement agencies can offer some assistance.

Raising public awareness

April is National Donate Life Month. During this time, your committee should plan events and activities for the community to promote awareness. Below are some events that may be appropriate for your community. Expand or modify these events to fit your specific area.

Appearance from Secretary of State Jesse White — The highlight of your “Life Goes On” city activities may be an appearance by Secretary of State Jesse White. Organ/tissue donation is a personal issue for Secretary White; therefore, he tries to attend many events throughout Illinois.

Green Ribbon Campaign — The green ribbon is the universal symbol for organ/tissue donation. Green ribbons can be tied on trees in parks, atriums, courtyards and car antennas. Also, many municipal buildings have green ribbons tied on trees or light poles near the building. Police officers and other community leaders also have volunteered to wear green ribbon lapels in April. Contact the proper authority for permission to display the ribbons in a public area. The green ribbons should be weatherproof. Sizes vary depending on use. Smaller ribbons work well as lapels for shirts. Longer, thicker ribbons work well for tying on trees and light poles.

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Organ/Tissue Donation Day in the Park — Invite donor families, recipients, community leaders and citizens to the park for a picnic in recognition of the benefits of donation. Plan games and other activities for children, and designate a time for donor families and recipients to share their stories. Send a press release to local media outlets.

Displays — Organ/tissue donor displays are available from the Secretary of State's office for local businesses, hospitals, schools, doctor's offices, malls, libraries and churches. Be sure to get permission from the appropriate people at these locations. (See page 8 for the Secretary of State Materials Request Form.)

Speakers — Community donor families and recipients make wonderful speakers. Many community organizations, churches and schools request people to speak about organ/tissue donation. Reach out to these organizations to set up a presentation at an upcoming meeting or event. The Secretary of State's office also provides speakers for your community. (See page 9 for the Secretary of State Speaker Request Form.)

Church Bulletin Inserts and Letters — Inserts on organ/tissue donation in church bulletins can help raise awareness in the faith community. Contact the church to obtain details. You also may write letters on behalf of your committee and send to religious leaders in your community to encourage them to include a message about donation in their sermon.

Payroll Inserts — Contact the Secretary of State's office for payroll inserts on organ/tissue donation for local business paychecks. Contact local businesses to see if they are interested in including inserts in their paychecks. (See page 8 for the Secretary of State Materials Request Form.)

Organ/Tissue Donor Essay Contest — Sponsor an Organ/Tissue Donor Essay Contest. Ask local students to write a short essay about the benefits of organ/tissue donation. Judge the essays and hand out awards. Ask Secretary of State Jesse White to attend the awards ceremony.

Recipient/Donor Quilt — Ask donor families and transplant recipients in your community to complete a quilt "square" in memory of a loved one or in celebration of the gift of life. When all squares are collected, sew them together to form a large quilt in remembrance and recognition of all donors and recipients. Display the quilt in a store window or other public building.

Organ/Tissue Donor Booth — Set up information booths at community-sponsored events such as health fairs, county fairs, celebrations or festivals to reach out to people with the organ/tissue donation message. Contact the coordinator of the event to arrange for booth space. Follow up weeks in advance to ensure the space is reserved. The Secretary of State's office will provide materials for distribution to the public. (See page 8 for the Secretary of State Materials Request Form.)

Proclamations — A proclamation may be adopted by the city council or county board in recognition of the benefits of organ/tissue donation in the community or county. The proclamation is signed by the mayor or county board president and presented at a public ceremony. Contact the mayor's office, city council or county board for arrangements.

Table Tents — The Secretary of State's office provides table tents to be displayed in local restaurants, cafeterias and picnic areas. These provide a simple, yet effective way of promoting organ/tissue donor awareness. (See page 8 for the Secretary of State Materials Request Form.)

Tray Covers — Contact local fast food restaurants to have an organ/tissue donation message placed on tray covers. These can usually be done for free or minimal charge.

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Letters to the Editor — A letter to the editor of your local newspaper is an effective way to reach many people with the organ/tissue donation message. The committee can write a letter encouraging people to join the Organ/Tissue Donor Registry and to discuss their wishes with their families.

Newsletter Articles — Many businesses, labor unions and community organizations publish newsletters on a regular basis. Contact these organizations about contributing an article about a local transplant recipient or donor.

Banners — Hang a banner in a highly visible area to create awareness. The Secretary of State's office has a limited supply of banners, or you can create your own. The office can provide electronic artwork. (See page 8 for the Secretary of State Materials Request Form.)

Schools — Educate young people at an early age to help them make an informed decision about organ/tissue donation. The Secretary of State's office has materials for students, including activity sheets, crayons, teen cards, posters, videos and pens/pencils. (See page 8 for the Secretary of State Materials Request Form.) An Organ/Tissue Donor in the Classroom section also is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

During National Donate Life Month, ask schools to encourage family discussion about the benefits of donation in the morning announcement or bulletin, or have students design a bulletin board about organ/tissue donation.

Marquee Displays — Post a message about organ/tissue donation on a local marquee board. Contact local businesses, libraries, unions and hospitals to encourage them to post a donation message in April. This should be done several weeks ahead of when you want it displayed.

Floats in Parades — Contact the local parade coordinator to enter a "Life Goes On" float in a parade. Encourage committee members, transplant recipients and donor families to participate.

Tree Planting Ceremony — Purchase a small tree and ask permission to plant it in the park. Invite community leaders, residents and the media. Hold a ceremony honoring a donor or recipient's memory. Place a small plaque in the ground with the person's name after the tree is planted and dedicated.

Celebrity Signing — Invite local celebrities and/or officials to sign the backs of driver's licenses as witnesses in conjunction with a donor booth or display.

Sports Events — Organize an Organ/Tissue Donor Awareness Night at a professional, college or high school sporting event. Announce a message about the benefits of donation at a break in the game, distribute brochures at the gates, and/or set up an informational booth in the lobby/parking lot.

Hoops for Hope — To raise awareness about the shortage of organs and the number of people on waiting lists for organs, teams are formed to shoot 5,000 baskets to represent the 5,000 people waiting for transplants. These events are usually held at a large gymnasium or local junior college.

Illinois Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program Staff

Nadine O'Leary • Program Manager

451 Howlett Bldg. • Springfield, IL
217-557-7215 • 312-814-3146
noleary@ilsos.net

Elizabeth Hager • Manager Outreach and Education; LGO Coordinator

2701 Dirksen Pkwy. • Springfield, IL 62723
217-782-0578 (work) • 217-782-9448 (fax) • 217-827-5945 (cell)
lhager@ilsos.net • ehager@ctitech.com

Stephanie Dial • Southern Illinois

McLeansboro Driver Services Facility
R.R. 5, Box 346 • McLeansboro, IL 62859
618-643-3233 (work) • 618-643-4179 (fax) • 618-926-3459 (cell)
sdial@ilsos.net • stephd5@hotmail.com

Kim Funk • West Central Illinois

R.R. 3, Box 221 • Rushville, IL 62681
217-322-3065 (home)
Dkf@frontiernet.net

Irma Golliday • Metro East

4900 Bond Ave. • East St. Louis, IL 62207
618-271-6710 (fax) • 618-791-3572 (cell)
IRMA1024@aol.com

Gail Grabczynski • Chicago Suburbs

27 N. Wacker Drive, Ste. 166 • Chicago, IL 60606
312-607-1385 (work) • 312-225-6445 (fax)
thedifference@mindspring.com

Mike Papineau • South Suburbs

3849 W. 153rd St. • Midlothian, IL 60445
708-371-1701 • 708-521-1502 (pager)
mappineau@aol.com

Lisa Kirk • Chicago Office

100 W. Randolph, Ste. 5-400 • Chicago, IL 60601
312-814-8921 (work) • 312-814-2954 (fax)
lkirk@ilsos.net

Margaret Shannon • Northern Illinois

322 S. Locust St. • Sycamore, IL 60178
815-895-9340 (home) • 815-761-7395 (cell)
margshannon@msn.com

Margaret Pearson • Northern Suburbs

1215 Oakton Ln. • Naperville, IL 60540
630-579-8711 • 630-399-4335 (cell)
Mpearson2@wideopenwest.com

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Secretary of State Materials Request Form

Indicate the amount requested next to each item.

_____ **“Life Goes On” Brochure with tear-off card**

Geared toward a general audience. Includes a tear-off card to complete and mail in to join the Organ/Tissue Donor Registry. (Available in English, Spanish and Multilingual.)

_____ **Senior Citizen “Life Goes On” Brochure with tear-off card**

Geared toward the senior community. Includes a tear-off card to complete and mail in to join the Organ/Tissue Donor Registry.

_____ **Walter Payton Memorial Organ/Tissue Donor License Plate Postcard**

Offers people the opportunity to order an Organ Donor specialty license plate for their vehicle.

_____ **Organ/Tissue Donor Payroll Insert**

Allows people to complete and mail in to join the Organ/Tissue Donor Registry.

_____ **Organ/Tissue Donation Poster**

The winning poster from the annual Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Poster Contest for students K-12.

_____ **“Life Goes On” Tabletop Display**

A small display with the “Life Goes On” logo.

_____ **“Life Goes On” Table Tent**

A tabletop tent with the “Life Goes On” logo.

_____ **“Life Goes On” Teen Card**

A special message for teenagers who are getting their driver’s licenses.

_____ **Kidz Space Organ/Tissue Donor Bookmark**

A colorful bookmark containing the Secretary of State’s Web site address to access organ/tissue donor information for young people.

_____ **“Life Goes On” Activity Sheet**

An activity sheet containing a dot-to-dot, maze and word search, appropriate for grades K-5.

_____ **“Life Goes On” Pencil**

Send Request Form to:

Secretary of State

Organ/Tissue Donor Program

2701 S. Dirksen Pkwy.

Springfield, IL 62702

217-782-4658

217-782-9448 (fax)

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