


Best Practices for Indiana Coroner's  
when deciding to Authorize or Decline  
an Organ, Tissue, or Eye Donation

# Suggested Best Practices

<b>Level 1</b> <i>Authorization APPROVED with            No Restrictions</i>	<b>Level 2</b> <i>Authorization Approved with            RESTRICTIONS</i>	<b>Level 3</b> <i>Authorization Pre-Autopsy            DENIED</i>
1. Pre-autopsy recovery approved	1. Pre-autopsy recovery approved with RESTRICTIONS.	1. No pre-autopsy collection/harvesting allowed. Body must stay intact and untouched for autopsy.
2. A hold placed on admission blood for toxicology.	2. A hold placed on admission blood for toxicology.	2. Post autopsy recovery may be allowed at the discretion of each individual Coroner.
3. Live organ, tissue, and eye recovery approved.	3. Live organ, tissue, and eye recovery approved with RESTRICTIONS.	
4. Overall photographs taken of the body prior to recovery. Photographs of each organ as it is removed from the body.	4. Overall photographs taken of the body prior to recovery. Photographs of each organ as it is removed from the body.	
5. A copy of all reports generated (Example: all medical records and testing performed on recovered organs).	5. A copy of all reports generated (Example: all medical records and testing performed on recovered organs).	



# Live Organ Authorization/Denial Letter

2/25/2022

Attention:

**Name: John Doe**                      **DOB: XX/XX/XXXX**

**DOD: XX/XX/XXXX**

**Coroner's case #:**

Brain Death Declared at Date/Time:

The County Coroner's Office has elected to:

**Authorize** Procurement of the Organs Listed Below **Pre-Autopsy** (Special requests are **in addition to** the standing request of overall pre-recovery photos and Coroner toxicology kit on all cases):

- Heart
- Lungs
- Liver
- Kidneys
- Intestines
- Pancreas

**Special Requests/Restrictions:**

**Decline** procurement based on the reason(s) below:

*The County Coroner, or his/her designee, in consultation with a pathologist, and according to I.C. 36-2-14-22.6(f), has denied your request for procurement. The County Coroner, or his/her designee, reasonably believes that the part or tissue you are requesting to obtain may be involved in determining the decedent's cause and manner of death, and for evidentiary purposes, the decedent's body must not be disturbed.*

Respectfully,

Coroner/ Deputy Coroner



# Donation Authorization/Denial Letter

2/21/2022

Attention:

**Name: John Doe**                      **DOB: XX/XX/XXXX**  
**DOD: XX/XX/XXXX**  
**Coroner case #:**  
IDN Recovery Timeout Date/Time: XX/XX/2022 @ XXXX hrs

The County Coroner's Office has elected to:

**Authorize** procurement of the Tissues Listed Below: Restrictions and requests are **in addition to** the standing request of overall pre-recovery photos and Coroner toxicology kit on all cases:

**Pre-Autopsy**  
 **Post-Autopsy**

Corneas  
 Skin Only  
 Lower Extremities Bone and Associated Tissues  
 Heart for Valves and Associated Tissues  
 Saphenous/Femoral Veins  
 Aortoiliac Artery  
 Whole Eye


**Special Requests/Restrictions:**

**Decline** procurement based on the reason(s) below:

*The County Coroner, or his/her designee, in consultation with a pathologist, and according to I.C. 36-2-14-22.6(f), has denied your request for procurement. The County Coroner, or his/her designee, reasonably believes that the part or tissue you are requesting to obtain may be involved in determining the decedent's cause and manner of death, and for evidentiary purposes, the decedent's body must not be disturbed.*

Respectfully,

Coroner/Deputy Coroner



# Denial of Authorization Requirements

- If a coroner conducts a postmortem examination outside of a compatible period [for preservation and recovery of an anatomical gift], the coroner must document why the examination occurred outside of a compatible period.
- **It is considered sufficient documentation if the coroner documents that additional time was necessary to conduct an adequate medicolegal examination.**

# Laws Related to Donation Authorization

- **Coroner to document specific reasons for denying recovery of anatomical gift.** *IC 36-2-14-22.6(f)* states that, if a Coroner denies recovery of an anatomical gift [because recovery could interfere with a postmortem investigation or collection/preservation of evidence], the Coroner is required to:
  - (1) “explain in a record the specific reasons for not allowing recovery of a part;
  - (2) include the specific reasons in the records of the coroner and forensic pathologist; and
  - (3) provide a record with the specific reasons to the procurement organization and the state department of health.”

# Laws Related to Donation Authorization

Continued

- The Donor Network MAY want the reason(s) for the denial and/or restrictions the Coroner has placed. ***But the statute does not really go into detail about what the “specific reasons” have to look like and does not create a process for a procurement organization to second guess those reasons.***
- IC 29-2-16.1-21 says a little more about documentation but does not really limit the Coroner’s discretion:
  - “If a coroner conducts a postmortem examination outside of a compatible period [for preservation and recovery of an anatomical gift], the coroner must document why examination occurred outside of a compatible period. **It is considered sufficient documentation if the coroner documents that additional time was necessary to conduct an adequate medicolegal examination.**”