



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
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MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: DAN G. BLAIR
ACTING DIRECTOR

Dan G. Blair

Subject: National Donate Life Month, April 2005

President George W. Bush has again designated April as *National Donate Life Month*. This comes at a time when there are, today, more than 88,000 people awaiting organ donations. Each day, about 75 Americans receive a transplant, but another 18 on the waiting list die because not enough organs are available, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. In order to help meet this great need, our Nation's organ and tissue donor program is a strategic partnership between the Federal Government and private, non-profit organizations.

Federal agencies are strongly encouraged to participate in National Donate Life Month by disseminating information, donor cards and links to websites to Federal employees. With a workforce of more than 1.5 million persons, there is tremendous potential for the Federal Family to participate in filling a critical need.

Information about organ and tissue donation and downloadable donor cards are available at <http://www.organdonor.gov/signup1.html> or by calling 1-800-355-SHARE. Additionally, the President's official proclamation, *National Donate Life Month 2005*, can be viewed on the Internet at www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/04/20050401-5.html.

Government leave programs continue to support organ donation in the same manner as they have in the past; the following information is provided. Leave for bone marrow and organ donation is a separate category of leave that is available in addition to annual and sick leave. An employee may use up to 7 days paid leave each calendar year to serve as a bone-marrow donor. An employee also may use up to 30 days of paid leave each calendar year to serve as an organ donor.

The length of absence for organ donation procedures will vary depending upon the medical circumstances of each case. For medical procedures and recuperation requiring absences of longer than 30 days, we encourage agencies to continue to accommodate employees by granting additional time off in the form of sick leave and/or annual leave, advanced sick leave and/or annual leave, donated annual leave from the agency's leave transfer or leave bank programs, or leave without pay.

For additional information on leave for bone marrow and organ donation, agency Chief Human Capital Officers and Human Resources Directors may contact their assigned OPM Human Capital Officers. Employees should contact their agency's human resources office for assistance.

The Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Program also supports organ donation for both patients and donors. While specific benefits vary among plans, FEHB covers non-experimental transplants such as cornea, heart, kidney, pancreas, lung, liver, and small intestine transplants. In addition, FEHB members, as recipients, are covered for the actual donor's related medical expenses medical and hospital expenses (if they are not otherwise covered) even if the donor is not an FEHB member.

OPM's HealthierFeds campaign includes health education and awareness information and is part of our website <http://www.opm.gov/healthierfeds/>. This campaign fully supports President Bush's HealthierUS initiative <http://HealthierUS.gov> and the Department of Health and Human Service's Steps to a Healthier US initiative.

Members of the Federal Family are in a position to make a significant impact on this national issue by carrying a donor card and telling your family that you are an organ and tissue donor.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers
Directors of Human Resources