

Anatomical Board of the State of Florida

Commonly Asked Questions

1. Can my body be donated if I have a serious disease at the time of my death or die from a crushing injury? No, the Anatomical Board cannot accept bodies of persons dying from crushing injuries, sepsis, or highly communicable diseases (such as hepatitis or AIDS).

2. How long would my remains be used for medical education and research purposes? Medical education and research procedures take up to two years to be completed. If a request has been made for the return of the cremains, we will contact the family at the time that the ashes are available.

3. What happens to my body after the medical studies are complete? Upon completion of medical studies, the bodies are cremated pursuant to Florida Statutes 497.005 and one of two options followed.

(1) The ashes can be returned to the family or location selected by the family for final interment. The Anatomical Board will pay for shipping the ashes, but the cost of interment is the responsibility of the survivors.

(2) If no request has been made for the return of the cremains to the survivors, the Anatomical Board takes responsibility for spreading the cremains over the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

4. How old do I have to be to donate my body? Enrollment is open to anyone 18 years of age or older.

5. Can I donate someone else's body, for example, that of my wife or husband? This cannot be done while the donor is living unless you hold power-of-attorney. Documentation to this effect will be required. Otherwise, after the individual dies, the nearest living next-of-kin can donate the body by consent.

6. If I move from the State of Florida, what happens to my donation? Notify the Anatomical Board that you wish to withdraw your donation. We will then assist you, if you desire, in contacting a medical school in your new area of residence or you request our list of body donation programs.

7. What happens if I die outside of the State of Florida? If death occurs outside the State of Florida, there are two options.

(1) The Anatomical Board will assist the donor's family in making arrangements to have the remains donated to the nearest medical school or the family may check our list of body donor programs for information on the closest medical school.

(2) If the next-of-kin insists that the body be returned to the Anatomical Board, the survivors must assume responsibility for the embalming and transportation costs. A funeral director in the area where the donor expired should be contacted. The funeral director can then contact the Anatomical Board for specific embalming instructions.

8. Will there be any expense to my family or estate for donating my body to the Anatomical Board?

The expense which must be paid by the next-of-kin or estate of the deceased are all funeral home expenses which include:

(1) The preliminary embalming

(2) Transportation to the University of Florida or the University of Miami School of Medicine.

(3) Charges for these services are determined by individual funeral homes, crematories or mortuaries. You may wish to discuss arrangements with more than one funeral director. The Anatomical Board will assume costs for storage, cremation, and final disposition of the cremains.

9. Am I required to use a specific funeral home to make arrangements for the transportation and handling of my body? At the time of death, the remains must be taken to a funeral home of the family's choice. The funeral director should be told of the wishes of the deceased to have his or her body made available for use in medical education. The funeral director should be told to notify the Anatomical Board prior to transporting the body to Gainesville or Miami.