



STATE OF MICHIGAN
RUTH JOHNSON, SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
LANSING

January 7, 2013

Dear Driver's Education Instructor,

Every year, instructors carry out the critical task of educating and training new drivers – a responsibility that is weighted heavily by the far-reaching impact on traffic safety and people's lives. You play an integral role in keeping our roads and highways safe and I appreciate your service.

Today, as you prepare to train yet another generation of new drivers, I am pleased to present you with a dynamic new DVD provided by Gift of Life Michigan – the state's organ and tissue recovery organization. As you know, Public Act 16 of 2010 requires driver's education instructors to present information on organ donation to students and this DVD fulfills that requirement. Gift of Life Michigan has generously covered all costs of this new DVD, including the cost for its distribution.

As you will see, this eight-and-a-half minute video entitled, *Your Decision to Donate: Michigan Organ Donor Registry*, is a powerful testament to the lives impacted by organ donation. It includes real people with real stories who explain the donation process and dispel the myths and misconceptions often associated with organ donation. Their stories underscore the important message of how one life can impact so many others.

Please use this DVD as the cornerstone of your organ, tissue and eye donation instruction to your students. Gift of Life will supply you with wallet cards and a brief script for introducing and concluding the DVD. If you have any questions or would like additional materials, you can contact **Jennifer Tislerics** at Gift of Life Michigan at (734) 922-1048 or via email at jtislerics@giftoflifemichigan.org.

As Secretary of State and as a mom of a young teen, I want to thank you again for your service to Michigan's future drivers and to our state. Your work truly does make a difference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ruth Johnson".

Ruth Johnson
Secretary of State



Recommended Script for Driver Education Instructors

Today we will discuss some basic information about organ, tissue and eye donation. When you apply for your new license you will be asked if you want your name added to the Michigan Organ Donor Registry. Registering to become an organ donor is a personal decision, and it's important to discuss this with your family.

Gift of Life Michigan, a non-profit organization that coordinates organ and tissue donations in our state, has created a short video to address some of the most common questions new drivers may have about organ donation.

[play video]

Drivers who join the Donor Registry will have a red heart donor symbol printed on the front of their license. If you're under 21 and have a vertical license, the red heart donor symbol is placed in the bottom left corner. With a horizontal license (for those over 21), the symbol is in the bottom right.

The red heart donor symbol means that the person's name is in a confidential, computerized database, which is accessed by Gift of Life Michigan (a non-profit organization) at the time of death to determine if the donation decision has already been made.

- If the person is under 18, their parents or legal next-of-kin can override that decision.
- Once the person turns 18, even if they signed up at 16, that decision will be honored and cannot be changed by anyone.
- To make sure there are no surprises or delays, it's best to make sure your family knows what your decision is about organ and tissue donation.

There are many myths and misconceptions about organ, tissue and eye donation. Here are the facts:

- There is no cost to donate. The donor's family is not charged anything for organ or tissue donation.
- Every effort to save your life will be made before Gift of Life is called, or donation is even considered. By law, the medical team treating you is completely separate from the transplant team.
- The donor's body is treated with the utmost respect, and the surgery is done in a sterile operating room.
- Normal funeral practices can still take place after organ or tissue donation – including an open casket.
- Everyone can join the Donor Registry, regardless of medical history. There is no disease or illness that prevents a person from signing up – medical professionals will decide what can be transplanted at the time of donation.
- Each organ donor can save up to 8 lives, and tissue donors can improve the lives of up to 50 people. Tissues that can be donated include skin, veins, bones, tendons, nerves and corneas. Corneas are the clear, outer part of your eye, and are about the size of a contact lens.

If you have questions not answered here, please contact Gift of Life at
www.GiftOfLifeMichigan.org or 866-500-5801.

Gift of Life has provided these wallet cards *[distribute cards]* to remind you to talk to your family. The information on the back side could be useful if you're ever in an accident, so you may wish to keep this in your wallet.

Engage Your Employees, Students, Parents

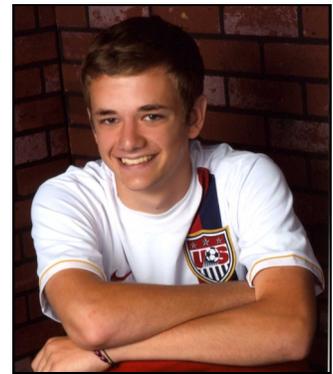
in saving lives through the Michigan Organ Donor Registry

In addition to showing the 8-minute “Your Decision to Donate” video to students and distributing the Gift of Life wallet cards, there are many ways to educate those you work with about organ, tissue and eye donation.

Here are a few steps you can take to start saving lives:

First Steps:

- Get registered yourself at www.giftoflifemichigan.org/go/driver and tell your employees how easy it is!
- Place Donor Registry promotional posters in your employee break room, front lobby and classrooms.
- Place Donor Registry sign-up brochures in your lobby and in employee mailboxes or with paychecks.
- Send an e-mail with information about signing up for the Michigan Organ Donor Registry—be sure to include a link.
- Include information about the Donor Registry in a staff newsletter.
- At your next staff or manager meeting invite a guest speaker to educate your employees about the Donor Registry.



Tim Parker died in a tragic car accident shortly after graduating from high school. Thanks to his decision to become a donor, Tim was able to save 7 lives through organ donation and improve the quality of life for many more through tissue donation.

Further Steps:

- Post a web banner linking to the Donor Registry on your company’s website.
- Promote the Donor Registry on your Facebook page or Twitter.
- Actively engage your vendors and partner companies to also promote the Donor Registry (a special program for companies, called the Workplace Partnership for Life, is available upon request).
- Work with advertising sources you use to engage them with a story about your school’s contribution to saving lives.

