



Department of Defense

DIRECTIVE

AD-A272 428



July 25, 1986
NUMBER 6465.2

ASD(HA)

SUBJECT: Organ Disposition After Autopsy

- References:
- (a) DoD Directive 6465.2, "Organ Disposal After Autopsy," April 19, 1984 (hereby canceled)
 - (b) Title 10, United States Code, Sections 133, 3012, 5031, and 8012
 - (c) Title 37, United States Code, Section 555
 - (d) Uniform Anatomical Gift Act, 8A U.L.A. 30 (1968)

A. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE

This Directive:

- 1. Reissues reference (a).
- 2. Updates policy and procedures, and assigns responsibilities regarding the disposition of organs or tissues removed from active duty members and other DoD beneficiaries during an autopsy, in accordance with reference (b).
- 3. Does not apply to organs or tissues removed for donation before an autopsy.

B. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the Military Departments.

C. DEFINITIONS

1. Next of Kin. The available interested party highest in the following order of priority shall be designated next of kin. The designated next of kin may waive all referenced rights for autopsy and organ disposition in favor of the next interested party in the order of priority listed:

- a. The unremarried surviving spouse.
- b. Natural and adopted children in order of seniority. The age of majority is 18 years. The rights of minor children shall be exercised by their surviving parent or legal guardian.
- c. Parents, in order of seniority.

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d. The remarried surviving spouse if the marriage immediately followed that of the decedent and did not occur following divorce from the decedent, but rather following a finding of death as stated in 37 U.S.C. 555 (reference (c)).

e. Other blood relatives by degree of consanguinity and within this category in order of seniority.

f. A person standing in loco parentis to the decedent.

g. The Secretary of the Military Department concerned.

2. Remains. The body of the decedent (excluding organs, tissues and fluids appropriately retained) as released to mortuary officials.

D. POLICY

1. It is DoD policy that all organs and tissues, or portions thereof, removed during an autopsy shall be returned to the remains before releasing the remains to mortuary officials, unless use or other disposition is authorized by the next of kin, except for:

a. Those required for determination of the cause or causes or manner of death.

b. Those required for other studies authorized by law or regulation.

c. Instances in which other disposition was specified by the decedent in accordance with the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act, 1958 (reference (d)) or similar statutory authority.

2. The Department of Defense recognizes the right of the decedent's next of kin to direct, except as specified in paragraphs D.1.a. through D.1.c., above, the disposition of organs and tissues removed during autopsy. It also supports the continued advancement of medical science and recognizes the significant potential advances in research and education that may result from the study of the organs and tissues of deceased individuals as well as the direct benefit to the recipients of transplanted organs and to the recipients of growth hormone extracted from the pituitary gland.

3. The next of kin's written permission must be obtained for organ or tissue removal unless disposition was specified as in paragraph D.1.a. through D.1.c., above. Appropriate standard forms, consistent with this Directive, may be used provided they are fully and clearly explained to the next of kin.

4. Organ and tissue specimens removed in accordance with paragraphs D.1.a. and D.1.b., above, shall be kept in accordance with Military Service regulations and, when no longer maintained, shall be disposed of in a humane and dignified manner. The preferable manner of disposition of specimens is by incineration.

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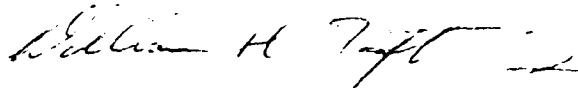
E. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) (ASD(HA)) shall monitor the implementation of this Directive.

2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments, or their designees, shall administer the policy prescribed herein for all military medical treatment facilities under their jurisdiction.

F. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Directive is effective immediately. Forward one copy of implementing documents to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) within 120 days.



William H. Taft, IV
Deputy Secretary of Defense

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