



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20415-1000
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MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS

FROM: LINDA M. SPRINGER 
DIRECTOR

Subject: *HealthierFeds: Promoting Wellness Among Federal Employees*
National Donate Life Month, April 2006

An important partnership was formed between the Federal Government and private, non-profit organizations in 1984 when the U.S. Congress established the country's organ and tissue donor program. Since then, thousands of people have been given another chance at life. Still today, years after the program's inception, there is a critical need to increase the supply of donated organs and to carry on an effective equity of organ allocation. President Bush's proclamation, National Donate Life Month 2006, emphasizes the critical need for donation; view the proclamation at (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/03/20060329-7.html>).

With a workforce of more than 1.7 million employees, there is tremendous potential for the Federal family to participate in filling the need for increased numbers of pledged donors. In honor of National Donate Life Month, agencies can disseminate information, donor cards and links to websites to Federal employees. Information about organ and tissue donation and downloadable donor cards are available at <http://www.optn.org/about/> or by calling 1-800-355-SHARE.

A Federal employee who donates organs or tissues is eligible to use a separate category of leave distinct from 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. For more information on the Government's leave program, see www.opm.gov/oca/leave/HTML/DONOR.htm.

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 accommodate employees by granting additional time off in the form of sick and/or annual leave; advanced sick or annual leave; donated annual leave from the agency's leave transfer or leave bank programs; or leave without pay.

Additionally, the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program supports organ donation for both patients and donors. Specific benefits vary among health plans. Employees should check with their FEHB carrier for detailed information.

Organ and tissue donation offers hope for many people and their families. OPM is proud to support this fundamental program through the coverage offered in the FEHB health plans and through various leave policies. Please join us in supporting National Donate Life Month by sharing with employees information about how they can become donors and share the gift of life.