

Body Bequeathal: Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can my family view my body after death at the University of Kentucky?

- No. Viewing of the donor's body by family or friends is not possible at the University of Kentucky.
- It is recommended that survivors gather at the place of death to say their final goodbyes.

2. Can my family have visitation and a funeral service with my body present at the funeral home?

- Yes. Survivors may request viewing, visitation and/or funeral services with their loved one's body present at their local funeral home. However, the University must be made aware of this request to advise funeral home employees of special handling and embalming procedures of the body. Under no circumstances is the body to be embalmed before the University is contacted. The University of Kentucky will not assume the cost of funeral arrangements made by survivors.

3. What happens to my body after study and research is completed?

- It is the policy of the University of Kentucky Body Bequeathal Program that all donors be cremated after studies have been completed. The University of Kentucky will follow the instructions of the individual's bequeathal form or next of kin and will:

Bury the ashes in the University of Kentucky burial grounds, which are currently located in The Lexington Cemetery, 833 West Main Street, Lexington, KY. The University of Kentucky assumes the responsibility of burial of the donor's ashes in the University of Kentucky burial grounds only. Family members will be notified when the ashes have been interred. To participate in the burial option, there is a required monetary donation to the Body Bequeathal Program.

Send the donor's ashes to a designated person, or place, within the United States as indicated on the bequeathal or donation form. These arrangements may be changed by the next-of-kin only. It is essential for the next-of-kin to maintain a current address with the University of Kentucky Body Bequeathal Program.

4. How long does the University of Kentucky keep my body for study and research?

- Studies may last over a period of years. It is not possible to predict what study or research the donor's body will be involved in and the amount of time for each study.

5. Is it necessary to employ a funeral home if I donate my body to the University of Kentucky?

- The Body Bequeathal Program Coordinator is a licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer who will take care of matters involved around the donor's death to include filing the death certificate and notification of death to the social security office.
- It is the family's obligation to provide transportation of their loved one from the place of death to the University of Kentucky. The family may choose to utilize a local funeral home or mortuary to provide these services. If the family directs services to be rendered by a local funeral home, the University of Kentucky would not assume the cost of these services.

6. What happens if I die outside the Commonwealth of Kentucky?

- The University of Kentucky would decline the gift or bequeathal of the donor's body. However, we would suggest and refer the survivors to other medical schools to which the family could make a donation of the body.

7. If I have had surgery in the past can I still donate my body to the University of Kentucky?

- Yes. Major or minor surgery is acceptable if the surgery has had time to heal.

8. What happens if the University of Kentucky refuses by body?

- If the University of Kentucky declines or refuses the bequeathal or donation of an individual, it is the family's obligation to make final arrangements. Individuals who are considering body bequeathal may wish to make funeral pre-arrangements with their local funeral director in the event the University of Kentucky is not able to accept the body.

9. Can the University of Kentucky refuse my body even if I have completed bequeathal forms?

- Yes. The University of Kentucky Body Bequeathal Program must reserve the right to decline or refuse individuals for the following current reasons:
 - Individuals who have infections or contagious diseases
 - Individuals who have had major recent surgery
 - Individuals who are extremely obese
 - Individuals who die of trauma
 - Individuals whose bodies have been partially or completely autopsied
 - Individuals who have been organ donors (only exceptions are individuals who have willed their corneas only to the University of Kentucky Lions Eye Bank)
 - Individuals who die outside the Commonwealth of Kentucky
 - Individuals whose family refuses to pay transportation charges from the place of death to the University of Kentucky
 - Individuals who die and have any family member who objects to the bequeathal of their loved one's body to the University of Kentucky

10. What are the age requirements for Body Bequeathal/Donation?

- Any individual who is a resident of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, being of sound mind, and eighteen years of age and who desires to give his or her body to the University of Kentucky Body Bequeathal Program upon death may do so. There is no upper age limit. Currently, the Body Bequeathal Program does not accept fetuses, infants or adolescents.

11. Can I sell my body to Science?

- No. It is illegal in the Commonwealth of Kentucky as well as the United States to sell or receive money for a body.

12. Is there any cost to me, or my family, if I donate my body to the University of Kentucky?

- Yes. It is the family's obligation to provide transportation from the place of death to the university. A donation to the Body Bequeathal Program is required in order to bury ashes in the University of Kentucky burial grounds.

13. Can a Power of Attorney sign a bequeathal form on my behalf?

- No. Kentucky law does not recognize the Power of Attorney signature for the bequeathal of a body.

14. Does the University of Kentucky accept benevolent gifts?

- Yes. The program, as currently offered to donors, entails significant costs. We are appreciative of any bequests, monetary or gifts-in-kind directed specifically to the program. Should you be interested in making a tax deductible contribution to the program, please contact the Program Coordinator.

15. If I am unable or have not signed bequeathal forms, can my next of kin donate my body to the University of Kentucky Body Bequeathal Program?

- Yes. If an individual is unable or should fail to complete bequeathal forms prior to his/her death, the next of kin may donate your body by completing and signing body donation forms provided by the Program. The Body Bequeathal Program accepts donations made by the next of kin and coroners. To be buried in the University burial grounds, there is a required donation to the Body Bequeathal Program. This donation will help maintain our program. For further information contact our Program Coordinator.