

Planning for your body after your death

Disposition of Remains

There are default rules in Oregon about who makes decisions about burial or cremation of your remains after death. In most cases, your spouse will make this decision if you are married and your spouse is still living at your death. If not, your adult child would make the decision. If you don't have children, the next in line to make the decision would be your parents, if they are living, or your siblings. Sometimes the people appointed under the default rules to make decisions about burial and cremation don't know what your wishes are, or they may make choices that are different from your wishes.

If you have specific wishes about burial or cremation and want to be sure your wishes will be followed, you can sign a Disposition of Remains form to appoint a person you trust to carry out your wishes. You can also help to make sure your wishes regarding burial or cremation are followed if you pre-arrange and pre-pay for burial or cremation through a funeral home or cremation service provider. Visit the link below to complete the Oregon form online or you can find an estate planning or elder law attorney to help you decide if this form is right for you.

<https://www.oregon.gov/omcb/Documents/Reference/Appointment-to-Direct-At-Need.pdf>

Cremation Authorization

Appointing a person to carry out your cremation wishes in a Disposition of Remains form (above) is the best way to make sure your remains are cremated after death. If you feel strongly about being cremated and want to do more, you can also create a Cremation Authorization. You can contact cremation service providers in your local area to find out if they can provide a Cremation Authorization form for you to sign or if they allow you to pre-pay for the cremation service. You can also work with an estate planning or elder law attorney to help you create a Cremation Authorization.

Organ or Whole Body Donation

You can contact the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to designate yourself as an organ donor on your driver's license or ID card. Oregon law also allows you to designate yourself as an organ donor in your Will; however, this is not the recommended method because your Will is usually not found soon enough after death to allow for organ donation. Visit Donate Life Northwest, the official donor registry for the state of Oregon, at the link below to learn about organ donation: <https://www.donatelifenw.org/>.

Information about whole body donation in Oregon can be found here:

<https://www.donatelifenw.org/content/donating-your-body-science>.

<http://wingsoregon.org/get-a-life-plan>