



## Alabama Coroner's Association

*Collaboration · Education · Accreditation*

**Dedicated to the promotion of excellence in medicolegal death investigation through collaboration, education and accreditation.**

### **ACA POSITION STATEMENT**

**ACA recognizes that the USA has a critical shortage of transplantable organs and shortage of tissues which can be used for lifesaving transplant, such as heart valves.**

- Coroners, Legacy of Hope (LOH) and Advancing Site Network (ASN) should work cooperatively together and establish prospective agreements, protocols, or Memoranda of Understanding to ensure that all parties get what is needed, and that procurement of organs and/or tissues from cases falling under our jurisdiction can be maximized. Recognizing that each local jurisdiction and environment may have unique considerations, these agreements should be formulated between individual offices and LOH/ASN.
- ACA contends that with proper communication and cooperation between LOH/ASN and Coroners, the Coroner can allow for procurement of at least some, if not all, organs and/or tissues in cases falling under their jurisdiction and fulfill their legal mandates without detriment. The USA makes justice for citizens paramount, and because of this tradition, in rare cases, donation may be legitimately declined.
- Coroners should permit the recovery of organs and/or tissues from decedents falling under their jurisdiction in virtually all cases, to include cases of suspected child abuse, other homicides, and sudden unexpected deaths in infants. It is recognized that blanket approvals may not be possible in every case, and may require an "approval with restriction(s)." The time limitations of tissue donation, and competing practical aspects of performing autopsies in the pursuit of a timely answer is recognized.
- If permitted by confidentiality and other legal requirements in the jurisdiction, Coroner offices should refer all cases to be evaluated as potential donors, as any case not going through the hospital are not otherwise referred. Coroners should have a goal of 100% referral of out of hospital deaths investigated by their offices where the last known alive time is within 24 hours.
- Some Coroner offices currently have "zero denials" and this should be the goal of every office.

Respectfully,

The ACA Board of Directors