



www.donateLIFecalifornia.org



www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org

DMV Contacts: Mike Marando, Steve Haskins,
Armando Botello, Mike Miller
Media Relations Office
2415 First Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95818
Telephone: 916-657-6437
Fax: 916-657-8282

DLC Contacts: Tracy Bryan, Brenda Owen
1760 Creekside Oaks Drive, Suite 160
Sacramento, CA 95833
Telephone: 916-567-1600
Fax: 916-567-8300
www.donateLIFecalifornia.org
www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org

DMV AND DONATE LIFE CALIFORNIA ORGAN & TISSUE DONOR REGISTRY TEAM UP, CHALLENGE CALIFORNIANS TO RAISE PERCENTAGE OF LIFE-SAVING DONORS

Press conferences to be held July 10-14 in Los Angeles, Oakland, San Diego & Sacramento

Sacramento – With 20,000 people in need of life-saving transplants in California alone, DMV and Donate Life California have teamed up with a new challenge for the state's drivers ... sign up to become an organ and tissue donor and help save millions of lives. Tragically, one-third of the 92,000 Americans currently waiting for life-saving organ transplants could die due to a lack of donors. But effective July 1, Californians can help change that. Anyone who checks "Yes!" when applying for or renewing a driver license or I.D. card will be registered with the state's registry as a donor, with the potential to save eight lives and improve up to 50 others.

Since the registry's creation in 2004, 280,000 people have signed up as donors online. But that total represents just one percent of California drivers. "We know that the generosity of Californians' knows no bounds, and with 23 million licensed drivers on the road in the state, DMV employees stand ready to help increase this list of potential life-savers from thousands to millions," said DMV Director George Valverde. "Other states that have implemented similar programs with their DMV's have succeeded in registering more than 70-percent of their drivers as donors. In California, that would be 16 million designated donors. We hope California will surpass that number."

This significant change in recording Californians' commitments to become organ and tissue donors will be marked by press conferences at DMV offices during the week of July 10-14 in Los Angeles, Oakland, San Diego and Sacramento. Local officials, community leaders, celebrities, and those whose loved ones have donated, received, or are waiting for organs will participate. Specific event details will follow on a separate media advisory.

"Tens of thousands of Californians have already shown their desire to become donors by signing up for the online registry in the past year, but we know we can do better," said Tracy Bryan, President of Donate Life California, the non-profit organization created in April 2005 to administer the donor registry. "Our state senators, assembly members and Governor Schwarzenegger joined together to approve this program to allow Californians to sign up easily through DMV. Everyone who checks 'Yes!' to become an organ and tissue donor acquires a new power – the power to give someone a new life, and to give their families a lifetime of memories."

Many DMV employees know firsthand about the power of donation to save lives and strengthen families:

- In **Sacramento**, employee **Brenda O'Donnell** added the pink dot to her license as a teenager, little suspecting that she would make the choice many years later to donate her father's organs following a fatal brain aneurysm. O'Donnell now spearheads DMV's organ donation outreach program.
- In **Visalia**, employee **Clorinda Reynoso** donated her kidneys to her brother-in-law to spare her sister. Ten years later, both she and her brother-in-law enjoy good health.
- In **Thousand Oaks**, employee **Hooshang Torabi's** daughter donated a kidney to her mother. Now everyone in the family wants to donate; and
- In **Oceanside**, employee **Theresa Hurley** suffers end-stage renal failure as she waits for a kidney transplant. Despite regular dialysis sessions, she still goes to work each day.

Donate Life California is a nonprofit, state-authorized organ and tissue donor registry, administered by California's four nonprofit, federally designated organ procurement organizations -- each responsible for facilitating the donation process in the state -- California Transplant Donor Network, Golden State Donor Services, Lifesharing and One Legacy. As a state-authorized public service, the registry assures that all personal information is kept confidential and stored in a secure database, accessible only to authorized organ and tissue recovery personnel.

Before the creation of the registry, there was no official list of organ donors. The pink "donor" dot and signed donor card voluntarily carried by drivers were meant to serve as an indication of someone's intent to donate. But signed cards are often unavailable at the time a family is approached about the opportunity to donate, and the "dot" alone does not grant legal consent for donation.

With the partnership between DMV and Donate Life California, donor information will be transmitted electronically directly from DMV to Donate Life's online registry. The driver's decision acts as an advanced directive for organ and tissue donation, and for drivers 18 and older, it does not require the consent of any other person. Those who currently have a pink "donor" dot on their licenses but are not near their renewal date are asked to join the online registry directly. When they ultimately renew, they can also inform DMV of their intent to donate and the pink "donor" dot will then be incorporated into their licenses. Those who sign up can opt out or alter personal information anytime through the Donate Life California Registry itself. Those who volunteer to become organ donors through DMV may also voluntarily contribute \$2 to support and promote organ and tissue donation.

For more information about the Donate Life California Registry, the process, and how donation saves and improves lives, visit http://www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/brochures/fast_facts/ffd134.htm, www.donateLIFEcalifornia.org or in Spanish at www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org.



Note to editors: This graphic element is available for use.

###