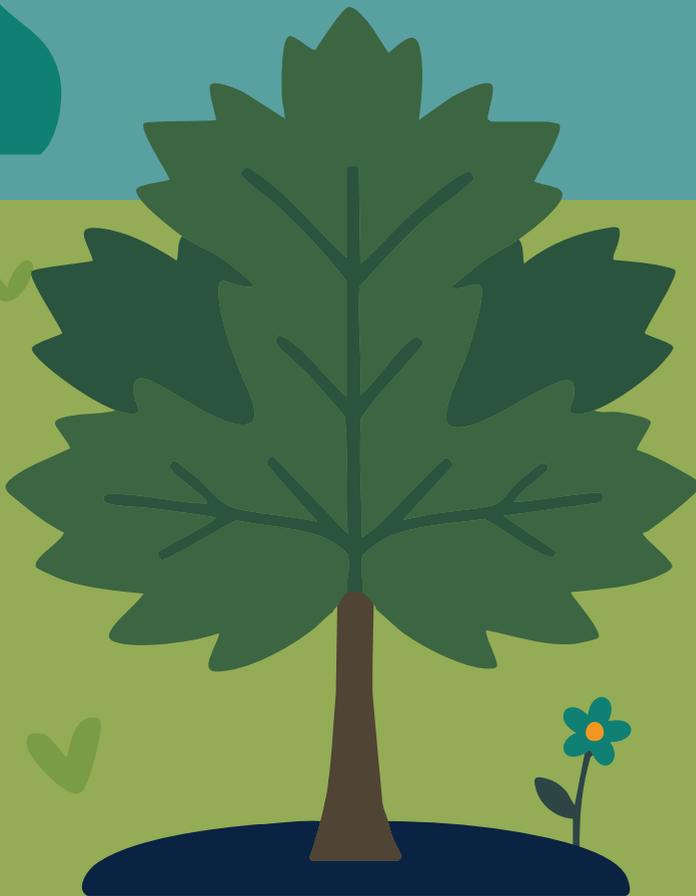


2026

Donate Life Month

TOOLKIT FOR COUNTY CLERKS



New York State

WELCOME TO

Donate Life Month

Every April, Donate Life NYS celebrates National Donate Life Month, highlighting the lifesaving impact of organ, eye, and tissue donors. Your DMV office plays a vital role by giving the public a chance to join the NYS Donate Life Registry, helping thousands of New Yorkers in need of transplants. So far, DMVs statewide have helped nearly 7 million New Yorkers enroll!



2026 DONATE LIFE MONTH THEME: Leave A Legacy

This year's theme uses trees as a symbol of life and connection. Just like trees grow and support each other in a forest, donation connects people – donors, recipients, and their families. Like a tree that grows and stands for generations, a donor's gift leaves a lasting legacy of hope and life.

MAKE NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH Tree-Mendous

Donate Life NYS gives you powerful tools to help your customers leave a lasting legacy. Inside, discover ways to celebrate Donate Life Month, be inspired by a Story of Hope, and spark creative fundraising and activities that save lives.

Branch Out WITH OUR DONATE LIFE MONTH CONTESTS!

-  "Leave a Legacy" Enrollment Competition
-  "Turn Over a New Leaf" Office Decorating Contest
-  "Leave Your Mark" Blue & Green Day Photo Contest
-  "Leave the World a Better Place" Fundraising Competition
-  "Don't Stop Be-Leaving" Peer Recognition Award Contest

You Woodn't BELIEVE OUR ONLINE RESOURCES



Don't leaf yourself hanging – scan the QR code provided where you'll discover some sap-solutely incredible resources including social media posts, graphics, digital resources, press releases, PSAs, and much more!



Statewide, 52% of the population has enrolled in the New York State Donate Life Registry. To view current county data, scan the QR code provided.

ABOUT DONATE LIFE NEW YORK STATE

Donate Life New York State is the statewide non-profit organization whose mission is to increase organ, eye, and tissue donation in New York State. Our goal is to ensure a life-changing transplant for every New Yorker in need.

If your office needs additional materials or support during Donate Life Month, contact us at (518) 326-3237 or info@dlnys.org.

MAKE NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH Tree-Mendous

Thank you for joining our poplar celebration of National Donate Life Month! This oak-ay observance will make your numbers of registered donors take root, giving hope to those in need of organ, eye, and tissue transplants. Below are six unbe-leavable fun ideas to promote donor registration in your DMV office.

SIX UNBE-LEAVABLE WAYS TO CELEBRATE



Spruce up your office with a captivating Regis-Tree: Turn a wall into a tree mural and let donors add leaves to its branches, symbolizing lives saved through their decision to give, compliments of Donate Life NYS.



Conduct a Donate Life flag-raising ceremony.
Contact us at info@dlnys.org to request a Donate Life flag for your building.



Host a "Leave a Legacy" tree-planting ceremony: Plant a tree to symbolize the lifesaving impact of donation. Invite speakers and volunteers, and celebrate your event with a press release, press conference, or county resolution. Sample materials are available on our website.



Grow a "Forest of Support" and spread awareness of organ, eye, and tissue donation: Share leaf graphics and facts on social media, tag [@DonateLifeNYS](https://www.instagram.com/DonateLifeNYS), and include Donate Life messages in workplace voicemails or hold messages. Sample materials and scripts are available on our website.



Make your customers green with envy!
Encourage employees to wear Donate Life t-shirts or blue and green on National Blue & Green Day (Friday, April 10). Don't be a sap – make sure to capture the moment(s) for our Blue & Green Day photo contest!



Draw a sidewalk chalk "leaf walk" outside your office: For National Blue & Green Day on Friday, April 10, draw colorful leaves with quick organ and tissue donation facts.

You'll be surprised at the forest of resources found on our website at donatelifenys.org/DLM-DMV. Have a creative idea you'd like to share? Email info@dlnys.org or call (518) 326-3237.



DONATE LIFE MONTH COMPETITIONS: Don't Be a Sap! ENTER TODAY!

We're rooting for you to enter these four fir-real contests! Contest winners will be honored on Donate Life NYS' communications channels and receive a special Donate Life NYS prize. Discover a lush forest of resources and inspirational photos from past Donate Life Month celebrations at donatelifenys.org/DLM-DMV.

"LEAVE A LEGACY" REGISTRY ENROLLMENT COMPETITION

Throughout April, help New Yorkers leave a lasting legacy by enrolling as organ and tissue donors in the NYS Donate Life Registry.

-  **Gold Leaf Legacy Award:** One State-operated and one County-operated DMV with the highest donor registration percentage in April.
-  **Rising Sapling Award:** One State-operated and one County-operated DMV with the greatest year-over-year increase in registrations.

Winners are determined by the percentage of eligible transactions resulting in Registry enrollment and will be recognized during DMV Appreciation Month in September.

"DON'T STOP BE-LEAVING" PEER RECOGNITION AWARD

Join us in recognizing outstanding contributors to the cause of organ and tissue donation through Donate Life NYS' Peer Recognition Award Contest. This contest honors DMV employees who have shown exceptional dedication and made a significant impact promoting donation awareness.

Submission Period: April 1, 2026 through May 31, 2026.

Nomination Process:

-  Fellow employees, supervisors, or anyone within the DMV office can make nominations.
-  Nominate a colleague who excels in supporting and promoting organ and tissue donation, whether by initiating donation conversations, creatively embodying the Donate Life Month theme in their personal appearance or workspace decor, or actively promoting awareness.
-  Submit nominations online at donatelifenys.org/DMV-peer-recognition between April 1, 2026 and May 31, 2026. Include photos and/or other materials that showcase their dedication.

Awards and Recognition:

-  One winner from a State-operated and one winner from a County-operated DMV will be selected to receive awards, symbolizing their exceptional commitment to the donation cause.
-  Each winner will receive a \$100 gift card and be recognized during ceremonies taking place during DMV Appreciation Month in September.
-  Winners' District Office Manager/County Clerk will be notified in advance of DMV Appreciation Month.

“Turn Over a New Leaf” OFFICE DECORATING CONTEST

Spruce up your DMV office for Donate Life Month and have your customers saying ‘Elm my goodness!’ Submit photos to communications@dlnys.org by April 30, 2026. Entries will be judged based on impact, originality, and creative conveyance of the Donate Life cause. Winners will be announced at the NYSACC Annual Spring Conference.



BLUE & GREEN DAY PHOTO CONTEST



Friday, April 10, 2026 until Sunday, April 12, 2026: Submit Your Photos

Visit Donate Life NYS' Facebook page and add your best blue & green photo in the comments of the pinned post. All photos must be posted by 11:59 p.m. EST on Sunday, April 12, 2026.

Categories include:

- Adults & Groups
- Clinical Partners
- DMV
- Food, Home & Garden
- Kids & Teens
- Light It Up!
- Pets

*Please make sure to submit original photos – photos with collages, borders, or filters cannot be accepted.



Vote for Community Choice Award Winner

Vote by liking your favorite photos submitted for the contest until April 16, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. EST. The photo with the most likes will be the winner and receive a \$50 Amazon Gift Card!



Top Five Photos to National Photo Contest

The five photos with the most likes will be submitted to the national photo contest held by Donate Life America for a chance to win a \$100 gift card.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, visit donatelifenys.org or call (518) 326-3237!

“Leave the World” a Better Place”

FUNDRAISING COMPETITION

Sycamore leaf puns? Make sure to participate in our "Leave the World a Better Place" Fundraising Award Competition. This April, branch out and create a world of hope and generosity. Reach for the sky, and you could be named Donate Life NYS' top fundraiser!

WHY PARTICIPATE?

Leaf your worries behind! Even if your office isn't the top fundraiser, your participation supports our lifesaving mission. Fundraising for Donate Life NYS goes beyond raising money -- it's about uniting your team for a noble cause, building harmony in your workplace, and making a significant impact on countless lives within your community.

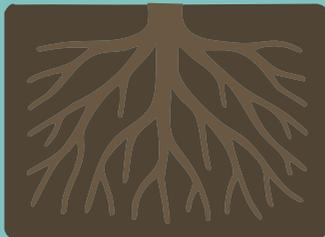
TIMEFRAME

-  The "Leave the World a Better Place" Fundraising Competition will take place from April 1-30, 2026.
-  All participating offices should report their Donate Life Month fundraising totals to mcohn@dlmys.org by Tuesday, May 5, 2026.
-  Winners will be recognized at the NYSACC Annual Spring Conference.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

-  The Top Fundraising County Clerk's Office will earn the "Leave the World a Better Place Award."
-  The 2nd and 3rd top fundraising offices will be honored as "Mighty Oaks."
-  All participating offices will be recognized as "Canopy of Champions."

IDEAS TO HELP YOUR FUNDRAISER TAKE ROOT



-  Host a "Night in the Forest" tree-themed gala or banquet.
-  Hold a leaf-themed bake sale with decorated cookies, cakes or treats.
-  Host a tree sale. Sell small saplings branded with Donate Life NYS messaging.
-  Organize a community-wide leaf-raking event, with donations benefiting Donate Life NYS.

WHERE TO SEND FUNDS

Visit donatelifenys.org/DLM-DMV to submit contributions online or mail to:

DONATE LIFE NEW YORK STATE
ATTN: MEREDITH COHN, DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS
185 JORDAN ROAD, SUITE 8
TROY, NEW YORK 12180

Note: If sending by mail, please convert cash donations into checks made payable to Donate Life NYS.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, visit donatelifenys.org/DLM-DMV, contact mcohn@dlmys.org, or call (518) 326-3237!

Raymond McKune's STORY OF HOPE

Raymond McKune considers himself a "pretty simple guy." He loves watching horror movies and professional wrestling. He cherishes time spent with friends and family. The Manhattan resident absolutely loves and adores his job at a NYC nonprofit developing enrichment programs for pre-school children.

You would never know that the 28-year-old has faced a constant array of incomprehensible medical challenges since a fateful annual physical appointment at age 14. Nothing seemed amiss with him health-wise prior to the doctor's appointment other than his frequent after-school naps, seemingly typical behavior for a growing, teenage boy. However, some abnormal blood results would abruptly alter the life he once knew.

"One day, I was living normally," recalled Raymond, "and the next day I was on dialysis." He would later be diagnosed with kidney failure in January 2012.

He received his first kidney transplant the following July. A series of health complications and transplant rejections would lead to a second transplant in May 2017. In March 2020, he caught COVID-19. Placed on life support, Raymond battled courageously to recover, but it cost him his second transplant.

Undaunted, he received his third kidney in 2022 "hoping this time would be different." Unfortunately, it was not the case, requiring surgeons to remove it in 2023. Now, he awaits a donor match for the fourth time in 14 years.

Raymond stays admirably positive given the formidable challenges he continues to face in his young life. "Even through all of this, I've continued to push forward, adapting to each new challenge and finding strength in the process," said Raymond.

Given the gift of life from his three deceased donors "literally means everything to me. It gives me the chance to live and do things that I'm passionate about."

Raymond hopes his story inspires others to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors and bring hope to the nearly 8,000 patients in New York State waiting for lifesaving transplants. Register today at donatelifenys.org/register.



GET THE FACTS About Organ & Tissue Donation



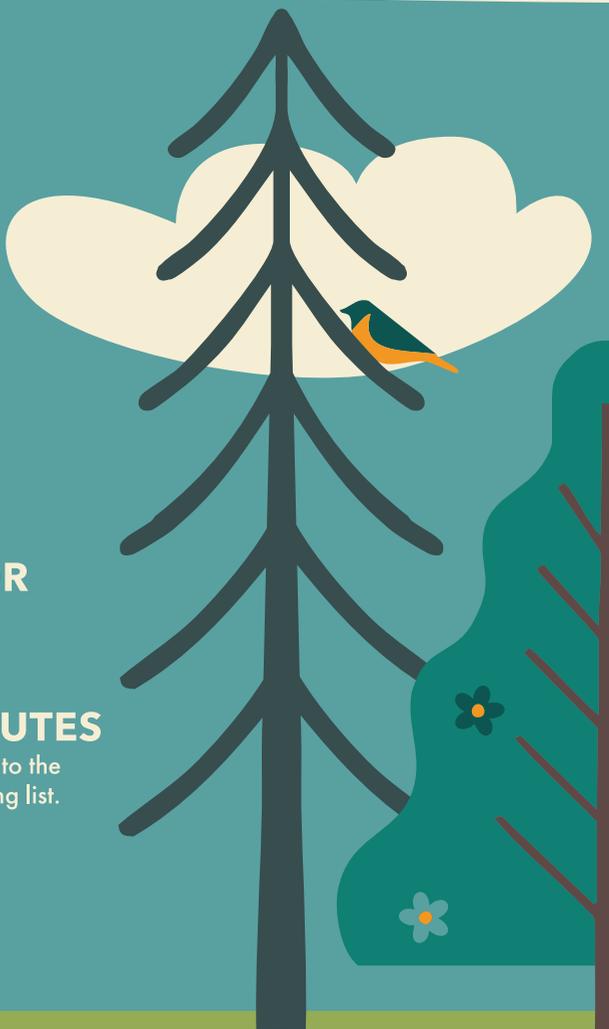
1 NEARLY 8,000
New Yorkers are waiting for a
lifesaving organ transplant.

2 NEARLY 800
have been waiting more
than five years.

**3 ONE ORGAN DONOR
CAN SAVE 8 LIVES**
eye and tissue donation.

4 EVERY 8 MINUTES
another person is added to the
national transplant waiting list.

5 NEARLY 300
New Yorkers died in 2025
because the organ they needed
wasn't donated in time.



**6 REGISTERING AS A DONOR DOES
NOT INTERFERE WITH MEDICAL CARE**
Donation becomes an option only after death has been determined.



**7 NO ONE IS TOO OLD OR TOO
SICK TO REGISTER**
Anyone age 16+ can join the NYS Donate Life Registry.

8 ALL MAJOR RELIGIONS
support organ and tissue donation, viewing
it as an act of love and generosity.



**9 THERE IS NO COST TO
THE DONOR'S FAMILY**
or estate for organ and tissue donation.