



Live Donation: Financial Toolkit



SECTION • 4

Living organ donation for US military members

If you are in the US Armed Forces or US Coast Guard, you can be a living donor, in most cases. But you have to follow your branches' specific policies and steps for permission; especially, since different service branches may vary in policy. To find out the specific policies and steps for your branch, contact your military unit medical provider, or your commanding officer.

In general, here are steps you will probably need to take no matter what branch you're in:

Ask for approval

1. First, complete the first parts of testing before you ask for approval, to make sure you're a match to be a living donor
2. Ask your commander for approval
3. Have your leave requirements reviewed and approved by military personnel staff

Get counseling and an exam

4. Once your commander gets your request for approval, you will meet with a medical officer for counseling about donation and the surgery – the medical officer will explain that after the surgery:
 - You won't be put on special duty assignment
 - You may not be eligible for disability benefits from the military or the Veterans Administration
5. The medical officer or a civilian doctor will give you a physical exam
6. You will sign a service record entry that you got this counseling and understand what the medical officer told you

Learn how living donation will affect your service

7. Have a full discussion with your medical officer and commander about how the donation will affect:
 - Your unit's "mission readiness"
 - The future of your military service
 - Your assigned duties
 - Your options for re-enlistment and retirement
8. Your health insurance coverage from the military or TRICARE may be restricted, limited or not cover the living donation surgery, so contact your transplant center to discuss your situation
9. After you have recovered from surgery, you will get another exam from the medical officer before you can return to service

Many active duty military members have been living donors and return to their normal duties. Learn the pros and cons of living donation, and discuss them with your military medical team, commander, and family.
