

## 2 Voter Registration, Organ Donation, and State Identification Cards

The Department of State oversees many areas involving traffic safety issues, automobile and other vehicle registrations, and licensing issues. This chapter provides information about several programs not directly related to motor vehicles, such as voter registration and organ donor programs.

### Voter Registration Information

You must be registered to vote to participate in local, state and federal elections. Eligible residents may register at a Secretary of State office.

If you are applying for, renewing, or updating information on your driver's license or state ID card, you also will be provided with an opportunity to register to vote.

To register to vote you must be:

- A U.S. citizen.
- At least 18 years old on or before election day.
- A resident of Michigan and the city or township where you wish to register to vote.

In addition to Secretary of State offices, you may register by mail or at your local county, city, or township clerk's office. You must register at least 30 days before the election. If you move within your city or township, you must change the address on your voter registration. If you move to another city or township, you must register to vote in that jurisdiction to remain eligible to vote.

The Department of State will enclose a voter registration application with your renewal notice if you are eligible to renew your driver's license by mail. To register, fill out the voter

registration form and send it with your driver's license renewal form. If you are already registered and your address has not changed, you do not need to mail the voter registration form supplied with your driver's license renewal notice.

Michigan's mail-in voter registration form may also be printed from the Department of State website.

If the address you provide on a voter registration application does not match the residential address on file with the Secretary of State, your driver's license or state ID card will be updated to match your voter registration.

## **Organ, Eye, and Tissue Donor Program**

Michigan residents have the opportunity to make a profound impact on the well-being of others by joining the Michigan Organ Donor Registry. Adding your name to the state registry of people willing to donate their organs, eyes, and tissue will be the first step toward someday becoming a hero.

It is critical that you give serious consideration to the question of donation because it truly is a matter of life and death. About 3,000 very ill people in Michigan are waiting for an organ transplant to save their lives. Tragically, some will die before an organ becomes available. Thousands more are waiting for the gifts of sight and mobility offered through cornea and tissue donations.

Donation and transplantation are modern-day miracles. Donors are able to give their lungs, kidneys, heart, liver, pancreas, and sometimes intestines, to patients whose lives will be tragically cut short without a transplant. Tissue donors help people with severe injuries recover and experience a better quality of life. Corneas help the blind, or nearly blind, to see again.

Everyone is a potential donor regardless of age or medical conditions. Donors have ranged in age from newborns to people older than 100 years. Transplant doctors evaluate all potential donors and then decide what can be used to help others.

Donation is free, it does not interfere with open-casket memorials and, for most people, it is an opportunity to help others in desperate need with a priceless gift that saves and enhances lives. All major religions approve of organ donation (or leave the decision up to the individual); most view it as a person's final act of compassion for others.

When you join the donor registry, you receive a red heart emblem for the front of your license, indicating your decision that you want to help others through donation. It is always a good idea to share your decision with your family and to explain why it is important to you.

For more information about organ, tissue, and eye donation, go to the Department of State website at [www.Michigan.gov/sos](http://www.Michigan.gov/sos) or contact:

**Gift of Life Michigan**

**(800) 482-4881; [www.giftoflifemichigan.org](http://www.giftoflifemichigan.org)**

**Michigan Eye-Bank**

**(800) 247-7250; [www.michiganeyebank.org](http://www.michiganeyebank.org)**

## **State Identification Cards**

A state identification (ID) card can be issued to any eligible resident, regardless of age. You may not have a state ID card and a Michigan driver's license unless your license has been restricted, suspended, or revoked.

You will need to provide proof of your citizenship or legal presence, identity, residency and Social Security number (or present a letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration).

Your state ID card expires four years from your last birthday and may be renewed by mail. Under Michigan law, a state ID card is as valid as a driver's license for identification purposes.

For more information about obtaining a state ID card, please visit our website.