

LIVING DONATION: AN ALTRUISTIC GESTURE

Living donation is an altruistic gesture of solidarity with a loved one or even a complete stranger.

Recent medical advances have made it possible to donate a kidney or part of the liver. Living donation helps to reduce wait times for people in need of a kidney or a liver transplant. It can also improve kidney or liver function and thus increase the chances that the transplanted organ will survive.

Living donors will often say how happy they are to have made this gesture, which saves lives and improves the recipient's quality of life. While magnanimous and humane, however, the gesture can come at a financial cost. Indeed, living donation requires that the donor make several visits to a transplant centre, all of which entails expenses, including the likelihood of lost income during the post-surgery recovery period.

IMPROVEMENTS UNDER THE NEW LAW

In December 2010, the National Assembly of Québec adopted the *Act to facilitate organ and tissue donation*, which provides a framework for the implementation of administrative measures. This new law should make it possible to considerably reduce the disparity between the number of people on the transplant waiting list and the number of organs and tissue available for transplantation. In this regard, Québec has created a fund to cover specific expenses incurred by living organ donors.

On the matter of living donation, the *Act respecting labour standards* now guarantees job protection for salaried employees who miss work time to serve as living donors. These donors can now rest assured that their employment will be protected for up to 26 weeks during a 12-month period. Interested persons are invited to consult the *Act respecting labour standards*.

REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM FOR LIVING DONORS (RPLD)

This new program is intended to support the donor's gesture by compensating him or her for part of the expenses incurred during the donation process.

The RPLD is a program of last recourse, meaning that all other sources of financing have been exhausted prior to the reimbursement of expenses and lost income.

This program is administered by Transplant Québec, whose chief mandate is to coordinate the organ donation process after death.

REIMBURSEMENT TABLE

APPLICATION FOR REIMBURSEMENT

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Travel: up to \$1,500

For persons living 60 km or more from the transplant centre.



Covers travel for assessment visits and for the day before or the day of the surgery.

Car: \$0.43/km

For persons living 100 km or more from the transplant centre.



Covers travel for assessment visits and for the day before or the day of the surgery.

Bus, train or air travel: economy class

Reimbursement of round trip by taxi from the bus terminal, train station or airport to the transplant centre or hotel.

On presentation of original invoices or receipts.

Parking: up to \$140, with a maximum of \$20 per day

For all applicants, regardless of where they live.



Covers parking for assessment visits, for the day prior to surgery, during the hospital stay, and for post-surgery visits.

For persons living 100 km or more from the transplant centre.



Covers, in addition to what is eligible to all applicants, parking for the day before the assessment visits.

On presentation of original invoices or receipts.

Accommodation: up to \$650, with a maximum of \$130 per night

For applicants living 100 km or more from the transplant centre.



Covers accommodation for the evening prior to the assessment visits and surgery, and the immediate post-surgery discharge from the hospital and prior to

On presentation of original invoices or receipts.

Meals: up to \$225, with a maximum of \$45 per day

For persons living 100 km or more from the transplant centre.



Covers meals taken on the day of an assessment visit.

On presentation of original invoices or receipts.

Covers, in addition to what is eligible to all applicants, meals taken on the previous day and the day of an assessment visit, the previous day and the day of the

Lost income: up to \$3,200, with a maximum of \$400 per week over a maximum period of eight weeks

For all donors living in Québec or Canada.



Covers income lost during the post-surgery recovery period, for a maximum period of eight weeks following the surgery.

Up to \$3,200, with a maximum of \$400 per week or 55% of net income (whichever is the lesser amount) for a maximum post-surgery period of eight weeks or until the donor returns to work, whichever comes first. Amounts from other sources of income (e.g. employment insurance, sick leave, paid leave, disability insurance) will be deducted from the maximum reimbursement of \$400 per week.

In lieu of lost income and in special circumstances, the reimbursement of childcare expenses of non-working parents or expenses related to psychological support may be considered.

EXPENSES OF VISITORS, FAMILY MEMBERS OR COMPANIONS OF THE LIVING DONOR ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT UNDER THE RPLD.

HOW THE RPLD WORKS

APPLICATION AND ELIGIBILITY

Persons who make the decision to serve as living donors to a Quebec resident must first go to a transplant centre where they will be examined and their medical history and blood type will be checked to determine if they are medically fit for transplantation. Those who are accepted for donation and with eligible expenses may submit an application for reimbursement under the RPLD.

The RPLD is offered to any resident of Quebec, outside Quebec or Canada who intends to donate an organ or part of an organ to a recipient and resident of Quebec. The recipient must hold a valid Quebec health insurance card.

EXPENSES AND LOST INCOME

Applicants may submit an application for reimbursement for reasonable expenses and lost income, based on eligibility criteria set out by the RPLD. The program covers transportation, accommodation, meals and parking expenses as well as lost income, for a maximum reimbursement of \$5,715.

With the exception of lost income, reimbursement amounts vary based on the distance between the donor's home and the transplant centre. (See Reimbursement Table for details.)

In regards to lost income, last recourse compensation is offered subsequent to surgery, when all other sources of income have been used and exhausted (e.g. vacation pay, sick leave, disability). In certain cases, lost income also covers the two-week waiting period for employment insurance benefits.

It is important to emphasize that all applications for reimbursement must include original invoices and receipts along with proof of income.

With the exception of parking fees, expenses and lost income incurred during post-surgery follow-up are not eligible for reimbursement. Expenses related to prescription medications, entertainment and telephone are not eligible for reimbursement under the RPLD, nor are expenses incurred by care-givers, visitors or family members.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. To open a file with Transplant Québec, applicants must obtain an RPLD application kit, available at transplant centres in Quebec, or through Transplant Québec's website: www.transplantquebec.ca

Applicants must carefully read the forms in the kit, including the Reimbursement Checklist for Applicants, to make sure that they meet the eligibility criteria.

2. Applications must be forwarded to Transplant Québec no more than 12 months after the date of the donor's final assessment visit or the date of the surgical procedure.

INFORMATIONS

Applications for reimbursement must be forwarded to:
RPLD
200-4100, Molson street
Montréal (Québec) H1Y 3N1

For further details on the RPLD, please visit the Transplant Québec website at www.transplantquebec.ca

If you have any questions and/or comments, please contact us by email at info@transplantquebec.ca or by telephone

In the province of Québec : 1 855 744-9231
Outside Québec : 514-286-1414 ext. 234



**TRANSPLANT
QUÉBEC**

*Ensemble pour
le don d'organes,
pour la vie.*

*Organ donation,
together for life.*

Reimbursement Program for Living Donors

