



Annual Report to the General Assembly

**Pennsylvania
Organ and Tissue
Donation
Awareness
Program**

2023-2024



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Introduction

Act 102 of 1994 established the Governor Robert P. Casey Memorial Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Trust Fund (Trust Fund), Organ Donation Advisory Committee (ODAC), and Pennsylvania’s Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Program (OTDA). In keeping with the provisions of the Act, this annual report provides information for the period of July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. As required by Act 90 of 2018, this report also provides information on expenditures of the Trust Fund and donor designation rates.

Governor Robert P. Casey Memorial Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Trust Fund

The Department of Health (DOH) oversees administration of the Governor Robert P. Casey Memorial Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Trust Fund which consists of private, voluntary contributions. Promotion of the Trust Fund’s vital work and accomplishments and diversification of revenue sources have become essential to the continued existence of a Pennsylvania organ and tissue donation program aimed at saving lives.

Figure 1: SFY 2023-24 PA Budget for Trust Fund. Below is a chart explaining where money for the trust fund came from and how those funds were spent. Before expenditures, total available funds were \$3,102,693. After expenditures, the balance is \$2,243,496.

GOVERNOR ROBERT P. CASEY MEMORIAL ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AWARENESS TRUST FUND

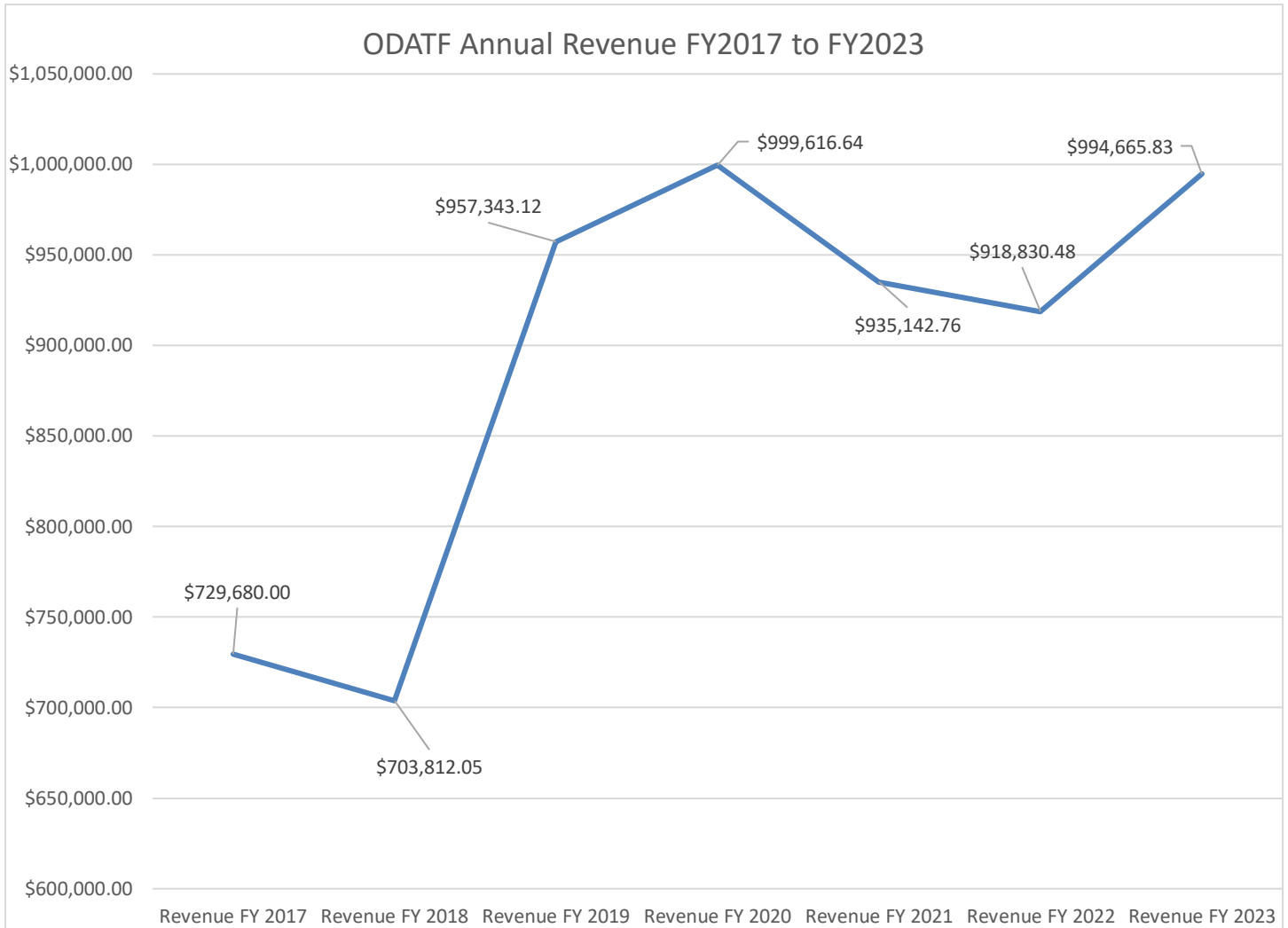
July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Beginning Balance	\$2,108,027
Revenue:	
Driver's license applicants.....	\$216,760
Vehicle registrations.....	\$652,108
Private donations.....	\$2,262
Redeposit of checks.....	\$0
State income tax contributions.....	\$5,208
Interest/investment income.....	\$118,329
Total Revenue	\$994,666
Total Funds Available	\$3,102,693
Expenditures:	
Department of Health (broken out by category below).....	\$859,197
Statewide education and information campaign... ..	\$545,791
Voluntary benefit program reimbursements.....	\$11,396
Personnel/operating.....	\$51,302
Advisory committee.....	\$0
Department of Education.....	\$238,000
Department of Transportation.....	\$12,708
Total Expenditures	\$859,197
Ending Balance	\$2,243,496

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2024¹

Two major revenue sources to the Trust Fund are contributions from driver’s license and motor vehicle applications or renewals and state income tax refunds designated by taxpayers for the Trust Fund.

Figure 2: Governor Robert P. Casey Memorial Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Trust Fund (OTDAF) Annual Revenue Graph Charting State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2017 through 2023



Source: [FY 2023-24 Revenue & Receipts Reports](#) ²

Trust Fund expenditures include a statewide public awareness campaign, voluntary benefits program, DOH administrative costs as the Commonwealth agency that oversees the organ donation program, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)’s OTDA Project, ODAC meeting expenses, and PennDOT expenses incurred for that agency’s role in organ donor designation and providing a mechanism for individuals to make voluntary monetary contributions to the Trust Fund.

The voluntary benefits program provides for hotel reimbursement of lodging expenses associated with living donor procedures and grief counseling for family members of deceased donors. In 2023-24, benefits from the Trust Fund provided support for these services to 30 families.¹

Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Project

PDE contracts with the Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13 (IU13) to administer the OTDA, which helps secondary students consider critical issues surrounding organ and tissue donation. This allows teens to make an informed decision about donor designation when obtaining a driver's license and discussing the decision with family members. Accomplishments for 2023-2024 include:

- **Grant Funding:** The 2023-2024 grant supported 18 schools, 14,000 students, and provided over \$33,000 in funding. Annually, schools complete an application if interested in participating in the OTDA. Applications are reviewed by PDE. Schools receiving funds in 2023-2024 were Altoona Area HS, Cedar Crest Middle, Deer Lakes HS, DuBois HS, Executive Education Academy Charter School, Greencastle-Antrim, Hazleton Area HS, Indiana County Technical School, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Lampeter-Strasburg HS, Northeastern HS, Our Lady of the Cross School, Philipsburg-Osceola Middle, Schaefferstown Mennonite HS, Southmoreland Middle, Sun-Area Technical School, West Branch Middle, and Windber Area HS. Welcome kits sent to the Grantees included handouts, flyers, Donate Life Flags, and t-shirts for teachers to provide as giveaways at the start of the school year. A virtual Grantee Meet Up welcomed grantees, and offered an opportunity to share information regarding grants, budget, reimbursements, field trips, and bussing.
- **Promotional Activities:** OTDA staff attended the PA Association for Gifted Educators (PAGE) Conference to connect with educators across PA and the Pennsylvania Career and Technical Association (PACTA) State Conference; tabled for events in grant-funded schools; attended community events at the IU13, including local blood drives; and presented at multiple non-public schools.
- **OTDA Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest:** The first Annual OTDA PSA contest was held for students in grades 9-12 to develop an innovative video to encourage teens and adults to become organ and tissue donors. Three students from Altoona Area High School were the recipients of the \$3,000 award and the video has been shared on several organ donation organization sites. The video will be used to promote the 2024-2025 PSA Contest and continue to be shared with teachers, nurses, and administrators to promote organ donation awareness.
- **Annual OTDA Spring Conference 2024:** The annual OTDA Conference was attended by over 50 participants. Speakers included professionals in the field of organ donation, as well as the inspirational stories of donor families and recipients, specifically kidney and liver surgeon, Dr. Thomas Butler, PDE Deputy Secretary for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Dr. Carrie Rowe, Gift of Life Hospital Services Coordinator, Christina Sarge, Eye Technician, Christine Feit, Regional Partner Relations Manager, Dena Gable, Teacher LeeAnn Richter, as well as recipient and donor families. Attendees gathered ideas from peers and highlighted OTDA successes.
- **Seed Grant Opportunities:** Two types of Seed grants are available, one for new schools and one for past grantees to support ongoing OTDA programs. Seven schools took advantage of seed grants.

- **Budget:** The budget increase from 2022-2023 to 2023-2024 allowed the OTDA program to return to its normal activities, including supporting the conference attendance and travel for both the OTDA coordinator and grantee schools.

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education³

Donate Life Pennsylvania

Donate Life Pennsylvania (DLPA) is a collaborative initiative between the Departments of Health, Education, and Transportation; the Center for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE); and the Gift of Life Donor Program (GLDP). Trust Fund contributions are used to educate Pennsylvanians, build awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation, and increase the number of people designating as organ donors on driver's licenses and state identification cards. Trust Fund money is distributed to the Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) according to the provisions of Act 102 of 1994. The OPOs retain no funds but subcontract with a marketing agency that uses Trust Fund dollars to design and implement public awareness campaigns under DLPA.

In State fiscal year (SFY) 2023-24, media partner Bravo Group focused on the following key efforts:

- Collaborating with the OPO teams to design a new website for Donate Life Pennsylvania, aiming to provide a streamlined user experience and drive more online registrations.
- Launching a new digital advertising campaign, utilizing the existing “Which Side Are You On?” creative concept and refining targeting specific to each OPO’s geographic region and needs.
- Developing new creative content for PennDOT Driver Motor Vehicle (DMV) centers, including educational/training materials for DMV employees.

The primary focus of Bravo Group for the final quarter of the fiscal year was planning for PA Donor Day, which took place on August 1, 2024. Bravo Group worked with the OPO teams to secure new partners; a total of 150 organizations and individuals were supported.

Donor Designations

The total number of registrants at the end of FY 2023-24 was 4,973,277. This marks a decrease of 16,861 from last year at the same time. The percentage of Pennsylvanians who are registered organ donors decreased slightly to 48.94%.

The key performance indicator for Bravo Group is to increase statewide organ and tissue donor designations to over five million and reach a designation percentage goal of 52.50% by the end of the three-year contract. The following outlines the designation share starting at the beginning of Bravo Group’s contract and the current share:

Contract year	1. SFY 2022-23 (06/30/2022)	2. SFY 2023-24 (6/30/2024)
Designations	4,997,740	4,973,277
Designation percentage	49.61%	48.94%
Total Customers	10,073,226	10,161,262

Donor designation registrations primarily take place at PennDOT DMV centers. A focus of Bravo Group is to increase registrations through other avenues, such as online registrations. Online designations through PennDOT totaled 403 in this fiscal year, which was a slight decline from the previous state fiscal year total of 469 online registrations.

There are several factors impacting overall designation numbers in recent years. DLPA communications and advertising focused on making the online registration process easier. However, there is an overall decline in organ donor registrations at the national level. The federal government and organ donor-related organizations are analyzing solutions nationally.

Paid Media

This year a new advertising campaign was launched using the “Which Side Are You On?” campaign concept and refining materials targeted to each OPO region. With the narrowed geo-targeting and new creative content, Bravo Group successfully converted donors in these specific geographies. Based on a sample size comparing the same amount of time from when the new creative was introduced versus the prior period, GOL’s site registrations were improved by 13% while CORE’s grew by 6.4%. However, the refined geographic targeting increased advertising costs. Google Search, Google Display and YouTube all increased conversion rates year over year. Highest converting sources are Google Search and Display. Facebook is driving the most inexpensive traffic.

Social Media

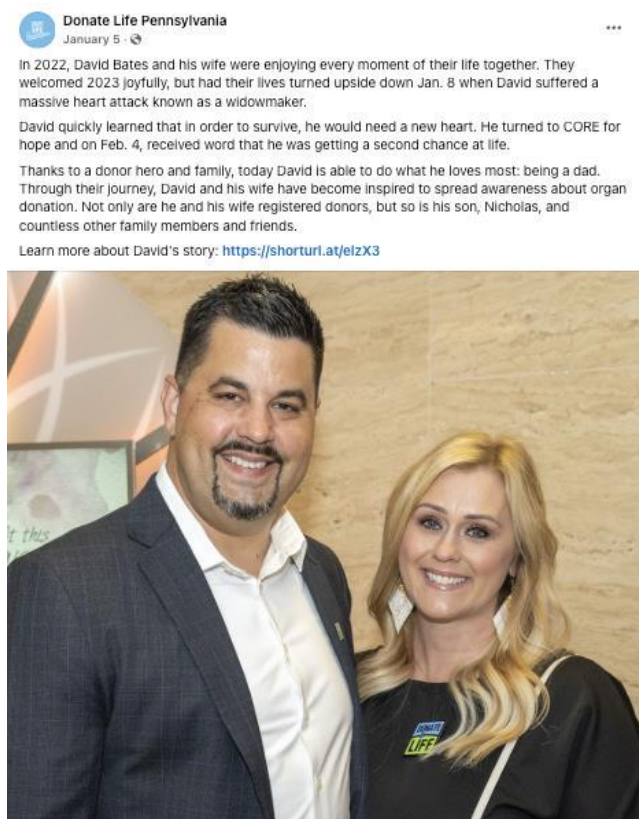
During this year, there were 143 posts on Facebook and 93 posts on Instagram. Facebook saw an increase in followers, from 12,901 to 13,241, as well as an increase of 340 in new page likes. Instagram gained 118 new followers.

Figure #3: DLPA Social Media

Metric	Facebook	Instagram
Reach	645,391	30,398
Page Visits	9,800	598

Source: Bravo Group Annual Report FY23-24⁴

Figure #4: The top-performing Facebook posts across platforms for this year were the National Donor Day post, the David Bates story and Leslie and Jeffrey's story. The David Bates story and photograph are provided here. David and his wife are pictured in this graphic. David has black hair, a mustache and beard and is wearing a grey suit. His wife has blond hair and is wearing a black shirt. Both David and his wife are smiling.



Source: Bravo Group Annual Report FY23-24⁴

PA Donor Day

Bravo Group partnered with the OPOs to host Donate Life PA's annual PA Donor Day. PA Donor Day is held on August 1 to symbolize that eight lives can be saved by one donor (8/1).

Working with the OPOs, Bravo Group created an updated toolkit and graphics that were provided to partners. PA Donor Day 2024 had 150 total confirmed partners. The individuals and organizations spanned industries including Hospitals and Health Systems, Community Health Centers, Religious Organizations, State Organizations, State Associations, Community Groups, Private Companies and Individuals.

Figure #5: Donor Day Graphic



Source: Bravo Group PA Donor Day Report⁴

Organ Procurement Organizations

When the National Organ Transplant Act (NOTA) was signed into law in 1984, it created the national Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) for matching donor organs to waiting recipients. The OPTN both standardized the process through which organs are donated and shared across the country and created the system of federally designated OPOs throughout the United States and its territories.

OPOs must be certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and abide by CMS regulations. By federal law, all OPOs must be members of the OPTN.

<http://www.aopo.org/>⁵

Pennsylvania is served by the Center for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE) and Gift of Life Donor Program (GLDP). OPOs have two major roles in the service areas, including:

1. **Increasing the number of registered donors:** OPOs reach out to individuals, families, communities and professionals through education and public awareness campaigns. The goal is to encourage people to legally register as a donor.
2. **Coordinating the donation process:** Representatives from the OPO evaluate every hospital death to determine whether the patient is a potential organ or tissue donor, check the deceased's state donor registry and/or the national registry, discuss donation with family members, obtain authorization, enter the potential donor's information into the OPTN computer system that matches donors and recipients, obtain a match list for that specific donor, and arrange for the recovery and transport of donated organs. The OPO also provides bereavement support for donor families and volunteer opportunities for interested individuals.

CORE is the non-profit, federally designated OPO serving the western half of Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Chemung County, New York. **Pennsylvania population served:** 3.1 million.

Pennsylvania counties served: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Blair, Bradford, Butler, Cambria, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Fayette, Forest, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Somerset, Venango, Warren, Washington, and Westmoreland

Pennsylvania organ transplant centers located in CORE's donation service area: Allegheny General Hospital, UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Hamot, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Presbyterian, and Veterans Administration Pittsburgh Healthcare System

Pennsylvania tissue procurement providers within CORE's service area: Center for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE)

Pennsylvania eye procurement providers within CORE's service area: Center for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE) and Lions Eye Bank of Northwestern Pennsylvania⁶

GLDP is the non-profit, federally designated OPO serving the eastern half of Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and Delaware. **Pennsylvania population served:** 8.9 million.

Pennsylvania counties served: Adams, Berks, Bucks, Carbon, Centre, Chester, Clinton, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Lycoming, Mifflin, Monroe, Montgomery, Montour, Northampton, Northumberland, Perry, Philadelphia, Pike, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Union, Wayne, Wyoming, and York

Pennsylvania organ transplant centers located in GLDP’s donation service area: Albert Einstein Medical Center, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Geisinger Medical Center, The Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, UPMC Harrisburg Hospital, St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children, Temple University Hospital, Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Lehigh Valley Hospital, and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital

Pennsylvania tissue procurement providers within GLDP’s service area: Gift of Life Donor Program, Community Tissue Services, CryoLife, Inc., LifeNet Transplant Services, Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation and National Disease Research Interchange

Pennsylvania eye procurement providers within GLDP’s service area: Gift of Life Donor Program.⁷

Table 1: Pennsylvania Organ Procurement Organizations Donations, FY 2023-24

	CORE	GLDP
ORGAN DONATION		
Total number of referrals*	8,376	4,741
Total number of potential donors	3,318	1,065
Total number of donors recovered	315	545
Total number of organs recovered	1,125	1,699
Total number of organs transplanted	651	1,297
Total number of organs provided for research	168	518
TISSUE DONATION		
Total number of referrals	24,855	32,690
Total number of potential donors	16,234	10,154
Total number of donors recovered	923	1,104
Total number of tissue grafts produced	69,225	110,475
Total number of tissues provided for research	2,792	207
EYE DONATION		
Total number of referrals	24,855	32,690
Total number of potential donors	10,029	11,381
Total number of donors recovered	756	1,927
Total number of eye tissue procured	964	3,849
Total number of eye tissue transplanted	816	2709
Total number of eye tissue provided for research	63	349
*Count of all patients on a ventilator at time of referral		

Source: CORE and GLDP 2023⁸

Organ Donor Designation on Driver's Licenses and State Identification Cards

In SFY 2023-24, a decrease of 16,861 organ donor designations was seen in driver's licenses and state identification cards, bringing Pennsylvania's statewide donor designation rate to 48.94 percent.⁹ This decrease in registration mirrors declines seen in other states. CORE and GLDP along with national partners are analyzing this trend, looking at factors such as declining and aging populations, young people delaying getting a license, and a growing distrust of healthcare and other institutions.

Table 2: County Ranking by Percent of Driver Licenses and State Identification Cards with Organ Donor

ORGAN DESIGNATION PERCENTAGE BY COUNTY			
COUNTY	TOTAL DRIVERS	ORGAN DESIGNATION	PERCENTAGE
ADAMS	83,770	46,023	54.94%
ALLEGHENY	947,009	501,870	53.00%
ARMSTRONG	54,660	26,112	47.77%
BEAVER	131,364	67,275	51.21%
BEDFORD	39,057	18,804	48.15%
BERKS	339,336	157,364	46.37%
BLAIR	96,550	52,030	53.89%
BRADFORD	47,332	26,534	56.06%
BUCKS	536,523	279,954	52.18%
BUTLER	161,080	91,659	56.90%
CAMBRIA	103,104	53,381	51.77%
CAMERON	3,642	1,989	54.61%
CARBON	53,604	25,471	47.52%
CENTRE	97,466	58,695	60.22%
CHESTER	419,805	244,979	58.36%
CLARION	27,538	13,172	47.83%
CLEARFIELD	59,414	31,517	53.05%
CLINTON	26,617	14,355	53.93%
COLUMBIA	49,414	25,347	51.30%
CRAWFORD	64,422	32,873	51.03%
CUMBERLAND	217,814	119,924	55.06%
DAUPHIN	233,154	109,438	46.94%
DELAWARE	450,148	205,871	45.73%
ELK	24,887	13,573	54.54%
ERIE	204,676	109,585	53.54%
FAYETTE	107,780	46,070	42.74%
FOREST	4,245	2,155	50.77%
FRANKLIN	122,183	62,217	50.92%
FULTON	11,817	5,225	44.22%
GREENE	26,876	12,144	45.19%
HUNTINGDON	33,059	17,176	51.96%
INDIANA	60,147	29,106	48.39%
JEFFERSON	34,175	17,164	50.22%

COUNTY	TOTAL DRIVERS	ORGAN DESIGNATION	PERCENTAGE
JUNIATA	17,591	8,358	47.51%
LACKAWANNA	169,026	84,541	50.02%
LANCASTER	426,245	226,365	53.11%
LAWRENCE	69,639	34,430	49.44%
LEBANON	117,628	58,411	49.66%
LEHIGH	300,403	140,463	46.76%
LUZERNE	262,181	114,891	43.82%
LYCOMING	88,114	47,010	53.35%
MCKEAN	30,454	16,940	55.62%
MERCER	82,637	41,387	50.08%
MIFFLIN	33,075	17,142	51.83%
MONROE	140,931	57,833	41.04%
MONTGOMERY	695,625	373,116	53.64%
MONTOUR	14,699	8,029	54.62%
NORTHAMPTON	268,211	132,800	49.51%
NORTHUMBERLAND	70,753	33,199	46.92%
PERRY	38,298	19,475	50.85%
PHILADELPHIA	1,135,326	349,062	30.75%
PIKE	50,333	23,822	47.33%
POTTER	12,814	6,618	51.65%
SCHUYLKILL	114,594	54,968	47.97%
SNYDER	29,468	14,214	48.24%
SOMERSET	57,213	29,055	50.78%
SULLIVAN	4,983	2,562	51.41%
SUSQUEHANNA	30,793	16,770	54.46%
TIOGA	31,908	17,471	54.75%
UNION	29,037	15,620	53.79%
VENANGO	38,856	20,003	51.48%
WARREN	29,601	17,455	58.97%
WASHINGTON	176,357	91,194	51.71%
WAYNE	44,736	23,430	52.37%
WESTMORELAND	281,024	141,593	50.38%
WYOMING	22,324	11,725	52.52%
YORK	373,717	204,273	54.66%
TOTALS	10,161,262	4,973,277	48.94%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, 2024⁹

Citations

- ¹ Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2024.
- ² Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, 2024. [FY 2023-24 Revenue & Receipts Reports](#)
- ³ Pennsylvania Department of Education. Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13. Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Program, 2024.
- ⁴ Bravo Group FY 22-23 Report, July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.
- ⁵ US Department of Health and Human Services, <https://www.hhs.gov/>, 2024. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA), US Government Information on Organ Donation and Transplantation, <https://www.organdonor.gov/>, 2024.
- ⁶ Center for Organ Recovery and Education, 2024. <https://www.core.org/>.
- ⁷ Gift of Life Donor Program, 2024. <https://www.donors1.org/>.
- ⁸ Center for Organ Recovery and Education and Gift of Life Donor Program State Fiscal Year 2023-24.
- ⁹ Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, 2024.