



[OPTN Modernization](#) is a comprehensive effort to strengthen the nation's organ donation, procurement, and transplant system through increased transparency, accountability, competition, and innovation. Through modernization, HRSA aims to reform governance, enhance technology infrastructure, and improve oversight to better serve patients, donors, and transplant professionals. Modernization efforts focus on updating longstanding systems and policies to ensure they align with current clinical practices and public health needs. Ultimately, OPTN Modernization seeks to improve patient outcomes across the transplant system.

Key Developments this Month

- **Public Comment Opportunity:** HRSA published a Federal Register notice outlining proposed updates to eligibility guidelines for Living Organ Donation Reimbursement Program.
- **OPTN Policy Process and Committee Support Task Order Awarded:** HRSA awarded a new task order to support OPTN policy development and committee operations.
- **HRSA Rulemaking in Unified Agenda:** HRSA is pursuing rulemaking to improve compliance with OPTN policies.
- **OPTN Elects New Secretary and Vice President of Patient and Donor Affairs:** The new Board members began their term on July 1.
- **OPTN National Town Halls:** A recording of the National Town Hall, along with summaries of topics discussed, is now available on the OPTN website.
- **Updated Living Donor Testing Windows for HIV and West Nile Virus:** Beginning Aug. 17, testing for HIV and WNV must be performed as close as possible to organ recovery, but no more than 7 days prior to recovery for living donors.

For Patient, Families, and the Public

Public Comment Period Open for Proposed Changes to HRSA's Living Organ Donation Reimbursement Program

On July 1, HRSA published a [30-day Federal Register notice](#) outlining proposed updates to

eligibility guidelines for Living Organ Donation Reimbursement Program (LODRP) to reflect the newly enacted [Honor Our Living Donors \(HOLD\) Act](#). LODRP provides eligible living organ donors reimbursement for qualifying donation-related expenses, such as travel, lost wages, and dependent care. Per the HOLD Act, eligibility for reimbursement under LODRP will no longer be based on the organ recipient's income—rather, it will be based on the donor's financial circumstances. This means more living donors may now qualify for reimbursement from the program.

Why this matters: Anyone who assists living donors in applying for LODRP should review the proposed changes to the eligibility criteria, as a broader pool of donors may now qualify. Public comments are open July 1–31, 2026 and should be submitted to livingdonorsupport@hrsa.gov.

HRSA Awards OPTN Policy Process and Committee Support Task Order

HRSA awarded the [OPTN Policy Process and Committee Support Services Task Order](#) to CVP. The award establishes dedicated contractor support for the OPTN policy development process and committee operations as part of the ongoing OPTN Modernization Initiative. The contractor will support policy development, committee operations, implementation, education, and post-implementation monitoring while working closely with HRSA, the OPTN Board, committees, and other OPTN contractors to strengthen coordination across the transplant system.

Why this matters: This award is another key milestone in implementing a modern, competitive, multi-vendor OPTN. Dedicated policy support will help strengthen governance, improve transparency and coordination, and ensure the policy development process remains efficient, accountable, and responsive while supporting continuity of ongoing committee work.

HRSA Proposed Rulemaking Included in Unified Agenda

HRSA is pursuing rulemaking to strengthen oversight and improve compliance with OPTN policies, while aligning existing regulations with the 2023 Securing the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Act. These efforts build on findings from HRSA investigations, external reporting, and Congressional hearings aimed at strengthening the organ procurement and transplantation system for patients and families.

Why this matters: The proposed rulemaking would make specific critical OPTN policies directly enforceable by the HHS Secretary for the first time, providing the Department with stronger tools to ensure compliance with OPTN policies and hold organizations accountable when they violate OPTN policies.

Operational Updates for OPTN Members

OPTN Board Officer Election

The 2026 Board Officer election took place between May 15 and 22, 2026. The OPTN Board Officers are the President, Vice President, Vice President of Patient and Donor Affairs, Treasurer, and Secretary. Only the Vice President of Patient and Donor Affairs and Secretary appeared on this year's ballot, since the [OPTN Board of Directors](#) approved a one-year term extension for the President and Vice President during their April 3, 2026, Ad Hoc Board meeting and the role of Treasurer is elected only in odd-numbered years.

Dr. Kymberly D. Watt was elected as Secretary and William (Bill) Ryan as Vice President of Patient and Donor Affairs. Their terms began on July 1, 2026.

What OPTN members need to know: Strong transparent governance is essential to maintaining trust and accountability across the transplant system. Board leadership elections and ongoing committee work help ensure the OPTN remains focused on effective oversight, sound policy development, and transplant system performance and outcomes.

OPTN National Town Halls

The Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) hosted two 90-minute virtual National Town Hall meetings on April 28 and May 13, 2026. These sessions provided a transparent, high-level update on OPTN priorities and ongoing modernization efforts to strengthen the transplant system and improve patient outcomes.

What OPTN members need to know: A recording of the National Town Hall, along with summaries of topics discussed, is now available on the [OPTN website](#).

Updated Testing Windows for WNV and HIV in Living Donors

The required [testing windows for Human Immunodeficiency Virus \(HIV\) and West Nile Virus \(WNV\) are being shortened](#) to better align infectious disease testing with the time of organ recovery. Beginning Aug. 17, HIV and WNV nucleic acid testing (NAT) must be performed as close as possible to organ recovery, but no more than 7 days prior to recovery for living organ donors.

This change reduces the previous testing windows of 28 days for HIV and 14 days for WNV to a uniform 7-day testing window for both infectious disease tests.

What OPTN members need to know: The new policy goes in to effect on Aug. 17, 2026. Living donor recovery hospitals, and transplant hospitals should familiarize themselves with the new policy and associated testing requirements.

Moving Forward Together

OPTN Modernization continues to advance through coordinated efforts to strengthen governance, modernize operations, and improve transparency across the nation's organ donation and transplant system. Recent milestones—including expanded contractor support for policy development, proposed regulatory changes to strengthen oversight, continued progress on key policy initiatives, and improvements to data collection and patient safety requirements—reflect steady implementation of a more accountable, responsive, and patient-centered OPTN. As modernization efforts continue, HRSA remains committed to working collaboratively with patients, donor families, donation and transplant professionals, OPOs, transplant centers and other stakeholders to build a stronger organ donation, procurement, and transplantation system that improves public trust and delivers better outcomes for all.

ICYMI

- **July 27, 2026:** [HRSA Awards OPTN Policy Process and Committee Support Task Order](#)
- **July 22, 2026:** [Announcing Winners of the 2026 OPTN Board Officer Election](#)
- **July 17, 2026:** [Emergency Policy Update to HIV and West Nile Virus Testing Windows - A Message from the OPTN President](#)
- **June 25, 2026:** [Strengthening Patient Safety and Advancing Modernization Efforts](#)
- **June 10, 2026:** [Ensuring Adherence to International Organ Transplantation Policy - A message to Transplant Program Directors](#)
- **June 3, 2026:** [HRSA Awards OPTN Patient Safety and Compliance Task Order](#)
- **May 28, 2026:** [Protecting Patients Through Strengthened Oversight and Accountability](#)
- **May 13, 2026:** [Update on Normothermic Regional Perfusion - A Message to the OPTN Community](#)
- **May 7, 2026:** [Update on Lung Continuous Distribution Policy Changes Now in Effect](#)

Quick Links

[We Want to Hear from You:](#) Your voice is essential as we work to ensure equitable access to care, improve health outcomes, and empower the larger organ donation and transplantation community with data and transparency.

[More Donors, More Hope:](#) Every registered organ donor offers hope to people who need transplants – and to the families who love them.

[Ways to Get Involved:](#) Every 8 minutes, someone is added to the transplant waiting list. As a member of the donation and transplant community you have an impact on the lives of these people every day. But there is more you can do.

OPTN Data Dashboard: HRSA makes available to the public both data and data visualizations on organ donation and transplantation. The aim of this information is to improve transparency around organ transplantation activities across the nation for the public.