



Brenda Fitzgerald, MD, Commissioner | Nathan Deal, Governor

2 Peachtree Street NW, 15th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3142
dph.ga.gov

August 12, 2015

The Honorable Nathan Deal
Governor
The Capitol, Suite 203
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Governor Deal:

Per your directive, please find the Georgia Department of Public Health's report entitled "State Licensed Surgical Facilities (2015): Disposal of Fetal Remains" attached to this letter.

As you know, Georgia law requires licensed abortion clinics (or a medical disposal service provider with whom they have contracted) to bury or cremate fetal remains following the termination of a pregnancy. DNA or genetic testing can and does take place in certain cases, such as if a rape has occurred or there was an abnormality in the pregnancy. However, the donation of fetal tissue is not authorized under state law.

After conducting an investigation into the five licensed abortion facilities in our state, I have concluded that each has proper procedures in place for burial or interment of remains and that all such facilities are currently following that portion of the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brenda Fitzgerald'.

Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D.
Commissioner and State Health Officer

Enclosure



We Protect Lives.

State Licensed Ambulatory Surgical Facilities (2015) Disposal of Fetal Remains - Summary Report

Facility	Method of Disposal
Atlanta Women's Medical Center	<p>1. Cremation/Off-Site</p> <p>3. Other</p> <p>a) At patient's request, products of conception may be released to Law Enforcement in cases of a suspected, reported or alleged crime.</p> <p>b) At patient's request, products of conception may be released to a laboratory for genetic testing or autopsy.</p> <p>c) At physician's request, products of conception may be released to an outside laboratory for examination by a pathologist.</p>
Feminist Women's Health Center, Inc.	<p>1. Cremation/Off-Site</p> <p>3. Other</p> <p>a) For DNA collection for rape cases, a sample goes to Law Enforcement.</p> <p>b) For genetic testing for anomalies, a sample goes to the specified by the referring MD</p> <p>c) Tissue suspected for Molar or abnormal pregnancy sent to lab for Chorionic Villi testing</p>
Planned Parenthood Reproductive Health Services	<p>1. Cremation/Off-Site</p>
Savannah Medical Clinic	<p>1. Cremation/Off-Site</p> <p>3. Other</p> <p>a) Physician may deem it necessary to have the tissue examined by a Pathologist</p>
Summit Medical Associates	<p>1. Cremation/Off-Site</p> <p>2. Requested burial, with written permission from patient and funeral home</p> <p>3. Other</p> <p>a) Physician may deem it necessary to have the tissue examined by a Pathologist</p> <p>b) Subpoena issued in sexual assault case for DNA testing of tissue</p>



Legend: 1. Cremation (check one ___ On-site ___ Off-site)
 2. Interment
 3. Other (Specify)