

Definition of Death

A person is dead if the individual has sustained either:

- Irreversible cessation of circulatory (cardiac) and respiratory functions; or
- Irreversible cessation of all functions of the brain, including the brain stem.

There are a variety of confirmatory tests that can indicate whether or not a person has met the above criteria for death even while being aided by mechanical support systems that keep oxygen and blood supplied to the body.

Each hospital owned and/or operated by the PeaceHealth must develop procedures that include tests to establish that death has occurred pursuant to the definition of death provided in this policy.

It is morally acceptable to stop mechanical support systems when these procedures have been followed and the person is dead.