



## Writing to Your Donor Family

### Will I Hear Back from the Donor Family?

You may or may not hear back from the donor family. If you do not receive return correspondence, please remember the donor family is coping with the loss of their loved one and that individuals handle grief in different ways. Some donor families say that writing to their loved one's recipient(s) helps them in their grieving process. Others are comfortable with their decision to donate but prefer privacy and may choose not to write back or wait several months or years to do so.

Even if they feel unable to communicate with you, they will always know you cared and were thankful for their donation.

### Social Media Notice

Please do not use social media to contact your donor family until you have had written correspondence and mutually agree to direct contact. While you may believe you have found the right family, mistakes have occurred in the past. If you are contacted by someone who thinks you are their loved one's recipient, please do not respond until you contact DonorConnect so we can assist you on how to proceed.

If you receive a letter from your donor family, please be considerate to the author and not share any correspondence on social media, unless the person who wrote the letter agrees.



#### Donor Family Services

##### DonorConnect

6065 S Fashion Blvd, Ste 125,  
Murray, UT 84107

801-478-7350

[familyservices@donorconnect.life](mailto:familyservices@donorconnect.life)



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If you are reading this, your life has probably been saved or enhanced by the amazing gift of donation from someone you've never met. You are no doubt aware that sadness and loss have accompanied the gift of donation you received. And so you, like many recipients, may be confused about what to say or do. Experience shows that donor families want to know their gift has been received and that it has made a difference in someone's life. A thank you card or letter from their recipient can often help them to bear the sorrow of their loss.

This guide is meant to address your concerns and provide you with instructions for correspondence with your donor family.

## When Should I Write?

There is no minimum time frame or waiting period. You may write as soon as you are ready. If your are not currently ready to write, but a family member would like to, we would be happy to send their letter also. They should follow the same guidelines explained here.

## Can I Meet My Donor Family?

We encourage you to communicate with your donor family through letters before pursuing direct contact. If you are interested in meeting, you may mention that in your letter. If both sides mutually agree, your transplant social worker and a member of Donor Family Services at DonorConnect can facilitate the initial meeting.

## Can I Include a Photo?

Yes, you may choose to include photographs with your letter if you would like but it is not expected of you. You should be aware that some organizations will not send photos, but most do.

## Writing Your Letter



### Share something about yourself and your family.

- your first name
- occupation
- the state you live in (not city)
- marital status, etc.
- hobbies and interests



### Carefully consider whether to include religious comments as the views of your donor family are unknown.



### Talk about your transplant experience

- Recognize the donor family and thank them for their gift.
- Discuss the experience and how long you waited for a transplant.
- Explain how the transplant has improved your health and changed your life.
- Detail whether you can now participate in activities unheard of prior to transplant.
- Describe key moments that have occurred since your transplant. Did you celebrate another birthday? Did you bear a son or daughter? Did you return to school or accept a new job?

## Submitting The Letter

### By Mail

- Place the letter in an unsealed envelope.
- Include a separate piece of paper in the envelope listing: your full name, the date of your transplant.
- Mail or deliver the letter to the coordinator at your transplant center.

### By Email

- E-mail to **familyservices@donorconnect.life**.
- Please include your transplant social worker on the e-mail and your full name and date of transplant.

*Once received, a member of donor family services will call your donor family and send the letter on.*



### Conclude your letter

- Sign your first name only.
- Do not include your address, phone number, or email address.
- Do not reveal the name of the hospital or where the transplant took place.

