
A Guide for Donor Families
Writing to recipients



Organ Donation New Zealand

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The decision to write to recipients is a *personal* one. There is no expectation on donor families to write, however in time this is something you may wish to do.

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We encourage you to write only when you are ready. Transplant recipients are advised to wait about three months before they write to donor families as their recovery can take this amount of time. Often it can be daunting to write a letter to the recipients — a card might be a better option for you.

We realise that it can be difficult to find adequate words to convey your feelings, especially as you are still grieving the death of your loved one. To help we have set out some guidelines below.

Please remember that Organ Donation New Zealand (ODNZ) does not facilitate meetings of any sort between donor family members and transplant recipients. Confidentiality is maintained to protect the privacy of everyone involved.

A FEW TIPS FOR WRITING TO THE RECIPIENTS

- You may wish to talk about your loved one and your relationship with them, including some information about your family. Transplant recipients often like to hear about their donor such as their hobbies and interests.
 - If you have received correspondence from a recipient or their family, you might like to share how it felt to receive their card or letter.
 - Please remember not to include information that would identify your loved one or your family such
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as your name, address, work place and telephone number. All correspondence is reviewed and nothing will be sent that contains this information.

- Simply sign the card or letter with “from the donor family” or something similar.

PLEASE NOTE

This is only intended as a guide. If you would like further assistance please contact ODNZ.

WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED WRITING

- 1 – Place the letter or card in an unsealed envelope.
- 2 – On a separate piece of paper write your loved one’s full name and your name.
- 3 – Send both to ODNZ, PO Box 99-431, Newmarket, Auckland 1149. We forward it on to the Transplant Co-ordinator who will send it to the recipient.

It is important to remember that some recipients may choose to respond to your correspondence, but some may not. Please do not take this personally - recipients often find it extremely difficult to put the gratitude they feel into words.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact one of the Donor Co-ordinators from ODNZ on: 0800 4 DONOR (36667) or (09) 630 0935 (24 hour number).



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