



Social Media

If you receive a letter from your donor family or a recipient of your loved one's donation, **please be considerate to the author of the letter and not share** any correspondence on social media.

Please do not use social media to contact your donor family or a recipient of your loved one's donation until you have had written correspondence and mutually agree to have 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 donor family or recipient, please do not respond. Please contact Indiana Donor Network so we can assist you on how to proceed.

Until both parties have agreed to have direct contact, **please correspond through Indiana Donor Network** so as to avoid any misunderstanding or miscommunication between donor families, recipients or transplant centers.

For more information

If you have any questions or concerns about the information outlined in this guide, visit IndianaDonorNetwork.org/communications for further details. You may also contact us by using the information below.

Indiana Donor Network
Attn: Aftercare Coordinator
3760 Guion Road
Indianapolis, IN 46222
aftercare@INDonorNetwork.org
317.685.0389
TOLL-FREE 888.275.4676, press 4 for
Aftercare Support



Correspondence Guidelines for Donor Families & Recipients



Making the decision to communicate

The decision to write is a very personal one. If the decision is made to communicate, we ask that you follow the guidelines below:

- Use first names only in the letter and closing signature.
- Write information you feel comfortable sharing. You may tell your story and/or the story of your loved one and explain how the experience has changed your life.
- You may include a photo of yourself and loved ones.
- You may include details such as your state of residence, age, job or occupation, hobbies or interests.
- Some people write about family dynamics such as marital status, children, or grandchildren, etc.
- You may feel more comfortable sending a card during the holidays, or a "Thinking of You" card if you choose not to write a letter.

Remember

- Keep identities anonymous and confidential. Avoid including any last names, street addresses, city names, phone numbers, email addresses, social media account information, specific names of work (employer), names of hospitals or physicians.



Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How should I mail my correspondence?

A. Place the correspondence in an unsealed, unstamped envelope and then enclose it in a mailing envelope addressed to the Indiana Donor Network central office at the address below. A member of our Aftercare Support team will review your letter or card to ensure that confidentiality is maintained and will then forward your correspondence.

Indiana Donor Network
Attn: Aftercare Coordinator
3760 Guion Road
Indianapolis, IN 46222

Q. What do I need to include with my correspondence?

A. On a separate sheet of paper write your name, your loved one's name (if applicable), date of donation or transplant, the hospital where the donation or transplant took place, your mailing address and email address. This information will only be used by Indiana Donor Network and will not be forwarded with the correspondence.

Q. Can I email my correspondence?

A. Correspondence may also be sent to our Aftercare Support team by email at aftercare@INDonorNetwork.org. Please attach your letter as a Microsoft Word document. For your convenience, correspondence may also be submitted by writing a letter through our online option. If this interests you visit [IndianaDonorNetwork.org/communications](https://www.IndianaDonorNetwork.org/communications), for more information.

Q. How long will it take for my correspondence to reach the intended person?

A. Our Aftercare Support team sends correspondence along in the order it is received. We do our best to forward your letter within a few weeks of receipt. Depending on the ultimate destination of your letter, it may be necessary to send to another organ procurement organization or transplant center who will forward to the intended person.

Q. How will I know that Indiana Donor Network has forwarded my correspondence?

A. Indiana Donor Network will use the mailing address or email address you provided to send confirmation that your correspondence has been forwarded.

Q. Do I have to wait a year to write? Is it too late to write?

A. There is no period of time that is too soon or too late to write. The appropriate time is when you are ready to reach out.

Q. How should I start my letter?

A. Here are some sample phrases to inspire your letter:

- *I find myself writing to you. I do not want to intrude in your life, but I can't help wondering about you. I would appreciate it if you would write and tell more about yourself.*
- *I think of you often. Please write and let us know how you are doing.*
- *I waited for you to write and decided that I would write to you. I want to know how you are feeling and learn something about you.*
- *We would love to hear from you as it helps to know how you are doing.*

Q. Do I need to be a good writer?

A. Some of the most memorable letters were written by someone who didn't use "correct" language or spelling, but spoke from the heart. If you feel that you cannot put into words what you are thinking, you can find a greeting card and simply sign your first name. What you say and how you say it are not nearly as important as the sentiment behind your intention. What is most important is that you reach out.

Q. How do I know if the person I am writing to wants to hear from me?

A. Donation and transplantation is a journey for both the donor family and recipient. Each family can be impacted by the other. Reaching out to simply let them know you are thinking of the other family can be healing for everyone. If you are thinking of initiating the communication process, the most important thing is to start writing. Donor families and recipients are often overjoyed to have received a letter.

Q. I wrote but never heard back. Should I be concerned?

A. Rest assured that every effort is made to ensure that your letter reaches the intended person. The forwarding confirmation is sent to notify you that your letter was sent along. If our team is not able to forward your letter, we will contact you. Some families feel unable to express their emotion adequately on paper or need more time. The timing of a reply will vary with individual circumstances. If you do not receive a response, please do not feel that your expression of interest is unwelcome. Your letter is greatly appreciated.

Q. What if I'm not ready or don't know if I will ever be ready to reach out?

A. If communication is important to you, perhaps someone else can write a letter for you. Letters are often written by other family members impacted by the donation or transplant.

Q. Will I be able to meet the other family one day?

A. Once both the donor family and recipient have said that they want to have direct contact with one another, in writing, our Aftercare Support team begins the process of identity disclosure. This can occur months after transplant, or decades later. It is whenever both parties are ready.

Our Aftercare Support team calls both parties to explain the process of identity disclosure and ensures they are ready to move forward. At this time, a cover letter and release form are sent.

Once both release forms are notarized, signed and returned, our Aftercare Support team will contact both families. At this point, our team sends out both parties' contact information to one another.

To learn more about the identity disclosure process please contact us.

