

Writing to a Transplant Recipient

Family
Resources

Writing to transplant recipients is a deeply personal choice, entirely yours to make. For some donor families, the act of writing can be a meaningful part of the grieving process, offering a way to share memories and information about their loved one.

Correspondence is most common between organ donor families and organ transplant recipients. Given the intricacies of tissue donation, the initiation of correspondence rests with the tissue recipient. If a tissue recipient writes to your family, you may have the opportunity to reply.

For your convenience, you may choose to write one letter that we can copy and forward to all recipients, or you may write individual letters to specific recipients. If writing to a specific recipient, please either begin your letter with a greeting such as “Dear Heart Recipient,” or clearly indicate the specific organ or tissue on the outside of the envelope.

Suggestions For Writing

You are welcome to send cards, letters, and even photographs. To assist you in deciding what to share, please consider the following suggestions:

- Include your loved one’s first name.
- Mention their job or occupation.
- Describe their hobbies or interests.
- Include information about your family, such as marital status or whether you have children or grandchildren.
- Out of respect for the unknown religious background of the transplant recipient’s family, please exercise sensitivity if you decide to include religious content in your communication.
- Until you’ve established mutual interest in ongoing communication, we recommend against sharing any identifying details, such as your last name, address, phone number, email, or social media accounts.

Options for Sending Your Message

1. Submit an electronic message through our website:
honorbridge.org/donor-families/write-to-recipient/
2. Mail your card or letter to HonorBridge at the address listed below.
 - Please write your full name, address, phone number, your loved one's full name, and the date of donation on a separate piece of paper to assist us in identifying the appropriate recipients.
 - Mail to:
HonorBridge
Family Resource Program
7000 Millhouse Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Once we receive your letter, we will forward it to the recipient's local transplant center or to their local organ procurement organization (OPO). The process of exchanging correspondence can take several weeks to months, so we appreciate your patience. Please, too, be aware that a response is not guaranteed. Recipients have their own unique journeys and may be at different stages of physical and emotional recovery. Some may welcome correspondence, while others may find it overwhelming or prefer to keep their experience private, even while feeling grateful for the gift of life. We recognize that writing can be an emotional and challenging step, and recipients may also find it difficult to put their feelings into words.

If you have any questions or would like assistance with writing, please reach out to a Family Resource Specialist at any time:

Email: FamilyResources@HonorBridge.org

Phone: 800.200.2672 #2

Web: HonorBridge.org