

Tissue Donor Families:

Your loved one is a tissue donor if they donated corneas, heart valves, veins, skin and/or bone.

- Unlike organs which require immediate transplantation, tissues can be preserved for up to 10 years, meaning the donation may help more individuals over time. However, direct tissue recipients are unknown at the time of donation.
- The testing and quality assurance process typically leads to transplantation about 12 months after donation.
- OneLegacy does not receive automatic updates on how donated tissue was processed or transplanted. Therefore, 12 months after tissue donation, the legal next of kin must request an update. OneLegacy will then research how many people were helped by tissue donation.

Contacting Tissue Recipients:

- Currently, donor families are unable to initiate communication with tissue recipients, and privacy laws prohibit OneLegacy from knowing who received a tissue transplant or how to contact them.
- If a tissue recipient writes to you, OneLegacy will forward the letter on to the donor's legal next of kin if we have the correct contact information on file.
- OneLegacy is working on a national level with our tissue transplant partners to change and improve this process.

Writing to Transplant Recipients *A Guide for Donor Families*



Donor Family Aftercare
800-423-7220
familycare@onelegacy.org
www.onelegacy.org



Donor families can initiate contact with recipients of solid organ transplants such as kidneys, liver, lungs, heart, pancreas or small bowel. Choosing to write a recipient is a very personal decision. Write whenever you feel ready. However, the sooner communication starts, the more likely the recipient can be located to send the letter.

Writing To Recipients

- Write information you feel comfortable sharing about you, your loved one and other family members. This may include hobbies, occupation, or interests.
- You may want to write about how your decision to donate affected you.
- If you wish to stay anonymous in your letter:
 - Avoid using last names, city or street addresses and names of hospitals or physicians.
 - Include first names only for yourself, your family and your loved one and sign only your first name.
 - You may include the state in which you live and photos if you wish.
 - Including any identifying information may lead to the recipient contacting you without going through OneLegacy.

Sending Your Letter or Card

You may choose one of the following methods:

- Submit your letter online at:
www.onelegacy.org/forms/aftercare/recipient_contact.html
- Email your letter to familycare@onelegacy.org
 - Please include your full name and the name and date of death of your loved one.
- Mail your letter:
 - Place the letter in an unsealed envelope.
 - Include a separate sheet of paper with your full name and the name and date of death of your loved one. Mail to:

OneLegacy
Attn: Donor Family Aftercare
221 S. Figueroa St., Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Where does the letter go?

OneLegacy's Aftercare staff reviews each letter and keeps a copy on file. We forward your letter to the recipient's transplant center, whose responsibility it is to pass your letter along to the recipient. This process may take several weeks or months depending on the transplant center.



Will I hear from the recipient?

Just as some donor families prefer privacy and choose not to write, a recipient may not write or respond due to a variety of reasons. Examples include the fear of adding to your grief, ill health, guilt about their improved health or a lack of information about their ability to contact you. With that said, our experience tells us that transplant recipients are profoundly grateful for the gift of life.

Can I communicate directly with the recipient?

Due to privacy laws, OneLegacy can arrange direct contact only after both the recipient and donor family review the *Benefits and Considerations for Direct Contact* and agree to disclose their identities to each other. While we encourage both parties to meet when they are ready, meetings are very rare.

Please contact us for guidance through this process.