

Writing to Transplant Recipients

Whether or not you decide to write to your loved one's transplant recipient(s) is a personal decision that can be difficult to make. There is no timeline for when it is appropriate to write to recipient(s); you choose when the time is right for you and your family. This brochure includes some ideas of what you may wish to share and some important information to consider if you choose to write to recipients.

Information you may choose to share:

- › Your loved one's name.
- › Their job or occupation.
- › Their hobbies or interests.
- › Your loved one's family situation, such as marital status, children or grandchildren.
- › Photographs of your loved one or your family.
- › Contact information, such as your phone number, email address or social media profiles may be included if you would like the recipient(s) to be able to contact you directly.

Things to consider:

- › Religious information or medical details can be sensitive to some people. Please use discretion if you choose to include this information.
- › Keep in mind that anything you share cannot be taken back and Midwest Transplant Network (MTN) has no control what the recipient(s) may choose to do with that information. By including your contact or identifying information, you understand that it will be forwarded to your loved one's recipient(s) and they may contact you. If you choose not to include identifying or contact information, MTN will not share your personal information without your permission. MTN remains available to facilitate anonymous communication on your behalf.
- › Although MTN supports open communication between donor families and recipients, some transplant centers and organ procurement organizations may limit what recipients can share and receive. In most cases, they will allow information to be shared with the completion of a release form. We will work with these organizations to obtain the required documentation and will notify you if a release form is needed.

Sending your card/letter:

By mail

- › Place your card/letter in an unsealed envelope.
- › Include a separate piece of paper with your full name and your loved one's full name along with the date of donation.
- › Place these items in another envelope and mail to:

Midwest Transplant Network
Donor Family Services
1900 W. 47th Place, Suite 100
Westwood, KS 66205



Online

- › If you prefer to submit your letter through our website, please visit mwn.org/writing-to-recipients or scan the QR code on the right.



Writing to tissue recipients:

When your loved one has donated tissue, the letter writing process differs from that of organ transplant communications. MTN works with our tissue and eye transplant partners to facilitate the exchange of letters between donor families and recipients. While we make every effort to ensure as many recipients as possible receive these letters, please understand that unless a recipient initiates contact by writing first, we may not be able to reach every recipient.

Will I hear from my loved one's transplant recipient?

Your loved one's transplant recipient may or may not respond. Many transplant recipients have said that they are overwhelmed with emotion and have difficulty expressing their gratitude. It is possible they may not reply at all. If we receive a response to your letter, we will send it to the address we have on record for you. If you need to update your address, please email aftercare@mwn.org.

Will I be able to meet or communicate directly with my loved one's transplant recipient?

The decision to communicate directly with or meet your loved one's recipient(s) is a deeply personal decision and both the donor family and recipient(s) must mutually agree to this. The first step is writing to your loved one's recipients or responding to their letter if they have written to you. If you choose to include contact information, the recipient may reach out to you directly. Should you and the recipient(s) decide to meet in person, coordination of this meeting will be arranged between both parties. MTN is pleased to offer use of our facility as a safe and neutral meeting location for your meeting at no cost. Please note any travel, lodging or other expenses relating to meeting with recipients will be the responsibility of each party. MTN will not cover or reimburse these expenses. If you wish to use our facility as a meeting, please contact us.

Need help finding the right words to say?

Feel free to use one of the sample messages below to get your letter started.

- › “Dear Recipient, I want to take a moment to reach out to you as someone who has been touched by the incredible journey of organ donation. While this letter comes from a place of loss, it also comes with hope, gratitude, and the wish for a bright future for you.”
- › “Our loved one was a kind and generous person, always eager to help others. Knowing that their gift has given you a second chance at life brings us comfort in our grief. I would like to share some things about the person who has given you this second chance at life.”
- › “Our loved one was a kind and generous person, always eager to help others. Knowing that their gift has given you a second chance at life brings us comfort in our grief.”
- › “Even though we have never met, we are now connected in a way. We think of you and hope that this gift brings you strength, joy, and a renewed sense of life.”
- › “We hope this gift has brought you healing and new possibilities. May you continue to embrace life with health, happiness, and the knowledge that someone’s kindness now lives on in you.”

————— *Thinking of you* and sending caring thoughts. —————

Delivering Your Message

Every effort will be made to deliver your message to your loved one’s recipient(s). Although MTN supports open communication between donor families and recipients, some transplant centers and organ procurement organizations may limit what recipients can share and receive. If we are unable to deliver your message, we will notify you.

Opt Out From Sharing with MTN Staff and/or Community and Professional Partners

Occasionally, MTN shares deidentified donor family and transplant recipient correspondence with MTN employees or community and professional partners to highlight the meaningful impact that donation and transplantation have on others. Please know that all identifying information is fully removed prior to sharing. You may opt out from sharing in one of the following ways:

By mail: If you prefer that your message is not shared by MTN, please return this completed card with your letter:

Your name: _____

Your loved one’s name: _____

Date of donation: _____

☐ Check this box if you prefer that your message is not shared by MTN.

Online: If you are submitting your letter online, you will have the option to opt out from sharing prior to submitting.