

# HOW TO WRITE TO RECIPIENTS

## MAILING

**Address:** "Transplant Recipient"

**Closing:** Sign your first name only. Please refrain from including your address, phone number, email, or the name of the hospital.

On a separate sheet of paper, kindly include your name, your loved one's name, and the date of donation. This will help us ensure your letter reaches the correct recipient family. This information will remain confidential and won't be included in the letter.

**Mail to:**

Lions Eye Bank of the Northeast  
4 Tower Place, Ste. 601  
Albany, NY 12203

## PROMPTS

- "How did your loved one's donation reflect their values or personality?"
- "What are some of the qualities or memories of your loved one that you want the recipient to know?"
- "Is there a meaningful story or memory of your loved one that might help the recipient understand who they were?"
- "What were your loved one's favorite activities or hobbies that brought them joy?"
- "What message of comfort or hope would you want to share with the recipient of your loved one's gift?"
- "How has your loved one's donation impacted you and your family during this time?"

## A PERSONAL DECISION

Choosing to write to transplant recipients and their families is a deeply personal decision. Some donor families find comfort in sharing information about their loved one as part of their grieving process, while others may not feel ready. The choice is entirely yours, and there is no right or wrong decision.

At the Lions Eye Bank of the Northeast, we facilitate communication between donor families and recipients of cornea transplants. If you decide to write to the recipient, we can help by sending your letter on your behalf, maintaining confidentiality for both you and the recipient.

## WHY ANONYMITY IS IMPORTANT

Maintaining anonymity in these communications is essential for several reasons. It helps ensure privacy and protects both the donor family and the recipient. By keeping identities confidential, we avoid the potential for emotional pressure or expectations. This also allows both parties to engage in the process at their own pace, without the pressure of direct personal contact. Anonymity creates a safe space for both families to process their emotions and decide if and when they are ready for further contact, if ever.

## WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR LETTER

If you choose to write, here are some ideas for what you might want to share:

- Your loved one's first name only
- Your loved one's job or occupation
- Hobbies and interests that made your loved one unique
- Your family situation, such as marital status, children, or grandchildren

Please keep in mind that we do not know the beliefs of the recipient's family, so it's best to avoid religious comments unless you're certain of their relevance. Use simple and clear language in your letter to make it as heartfelt and accessible as possible.

## WILL I HEAR BACK FROM THE RECIPIENT?

It's important to understand that you may or may not hear from the transplant recipient. Some recipients are overwhelmed with emotion and may find it difficult to express their gratitude right away. In fact, it can take months or even years before they feel comfortable writing to their donor family. While it's not guaranteed, your letter is an incredibly meaningful gesture and could be a comfort to them in the future.



**LIONS EYE BANK**  
*of the Northeast*