

Information for donors

CR

Application to the Central Register

February 2017

From anonymity to openness

When donor conception was first practised, sperm and egg donations were made anonymously. However, experience has shown that donors, donor-conceived people, their parents and descendants often want to learn more about one another and are willing to share information about themselves. Donors may be interested to share medical history, personality, appearance, hobbies and interests. The way in which people connected by donor treatment exchange information and/or have contact will depend on the wishes of those involved.

VARTA manage the Central Register and can provide support and information to all parties affected by applications. Assistance with the initial exchange of information or contact can also be provided.

Information for donors

Donors are entitled to apply to the Central Register to seek identifying information about their donor offspring, however this information can only be released with the consent of the donor-conceived person or parents of those under 18 years of age.

The donor-conceived person or parents of those under 18 years of age are also given the opportunity to put a contact preference in place to specify how they would like contact to occur, if any.

They can also state a preference to have 'no contact'. **If this occurs, the donor must sign an undertaking to comply with any contact preference lodged by the donor-conceived person or parents of those under 18 years of age. Penalties may apply if this is breached.**

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Process

1. **You submit an application** to the Central Register at VARTA for information. Application forms can be found on the VARTA website and can be completed online or printed and posted to VARTA.
2. VARTA will then begin to **search** for the donor-conceived person or parents of those under 18 years of age. If VARTA is unable to locate them, it can use the services of a specialist search agency. If the donor-conceived person or parents of those under 18 years **are not located**, identifying information cannot be released as it is not possible to gain their consent and progress your application.
3. You will be required to attend a free **information and support session** with a counsellor from VARTA. The session helps you explore the possible implications for all parties affected by the application. **It is not an assessment.**
4. Together with the help of the counsellor, you write a **Statement of reasons** which explains why you have applied and your hopes for contact/information exchange in the short and long term.
5. **The Statement of reasons is then forwarded to the donor-conceived person or parents of those under 18 years of age.** It helps them to understand your reasons for making the application.

NB. Please be aware that some donor-conceived people will not be aware that they are donor-conceived.

6. The donor-conceived person or parents and their child under 18 years of age are invited to attend an information and support session and asked whether they would like to consent to the release of identifying information to you. They may lodge a contact preference stating that they want to be contacted in a **specified way** by the applicant such as email, phone or letter. They may also state their preference to **utilise VARTA as a third party** to exchange information or choose **not to be contacted** by you.
7. **If they consent, you will be required to provide an undertaking to comply with any contact preference lodged before any identifying information about the donor-conceived person, including name and date of birth is released to you.** If they are open to exchanging information or meeting, the counsellor can help with the initial stages of the connection.

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If you would like non-identifying information about your donor offspring

You can also apply to the Central Register for non-identifying information about your donor offspring. This information will include their gender, year, and month of birth.

Some donors may be concerned that their children are dating or in a relationship with a potential half-sibling. This information can help rule out potential donor siblings.

Fee for Central Register applications

Payment of a \$74.45 fee per application for information is required.

Contact VARTA

During the application process, VARTA staff will remain neutral and respectful of people's choices and opinions, **maintaining confidentiality at all times.**

For further information:

Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority

Phone: (03) 8601 5250

Email: dcrs@varta.org.au

Web: www.varta.org.au