

Information for post-1998 sperm, egg or embryo donors

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Contact as a result of a Central Register application
by a parent

April 2020

Thinking it over

Being contacted as a result of an application by a parent to the Central Register under the *Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 2008 (Vic)* for your identifying information may be unexpected. You may have thought that this would occur only after the child turned 18 years.

You may not have given much thought to the donation you made, but perhaps you have wondered whether children had been born as a result, and if so, how many, what age and gender they are. You may have wondered whether they resemble you or if you share personality traits.

While the parent making the application to the Central Register may have considered their application and its consequences for some time, you are likely to need to think through its implications for you and those close to you. It is possible that you have not told your partner or children about your donation.

Why do parents apply for information?

Many parents wish to contact their donor to thank them. They may like to know more about you in order to share this information with their child (e.g. your first name), as the information on your donor file is likely to be limited. However, sometimes it is the child prompting the parents to apply on their behalf. Some parents wish to correspond. Some wish to meet.

VARTA's experience has been that parents are usually respectful of their donor's wishes and sensitive to you and your family's privacy.

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Entitlements

No identifying information is released to a parent without your consent.

As a donor, you are also entitled to non-identifying information about your donor-conceived offspring. You may wish to know how many offspring have been born and their gender and year of birth.

You are also entitled to apply to the Central Register for identifying information about your donor-conceived offspring (name, date of birth, and contact details). However, this information will **only be released** with the **consent** of the parents if the child is under 18 years, or the donor-conceived person if they are older than 18 years.

VARTA has experienced many positive connections made between donors and their offspring who have found it beneficial for them and their family.

The VARTA website has a range of information and films of personal stories of connections. Visit www.varta.org.au to learn more.

The Central Register application process

Everyone who applies to the Central Register for information will have an information and support session with a VARTA counsellor.

A **Statement of reasons** is completed following this session to help the other person decide how they want to proceed. The form explains why they have applied for information and what their hopes are for information exchange and/or contact.

You have options and choices

You may wish to consider:

- using a **VARTA counsellor** to discuss options and any concerns
- writing a letter including **non-identifying information** e.g. medical, cultural, hobbies, personality, which will be provided to the applicant by a VARTA counsellor
- **corresponding** via the VARTA letterbox/email service or by a non-identifying email address
- working with a **VARTA counsellor** to begin contact and to perhaps meet
- consenting to **release your identifying details**. This may include your name, date of birth, and any contact details you wish to release

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VARTA is here to support you

VARTA manages the Donor Conception Register Services and can provide information about your rights. VARTA staff are available to help you consider the implications of an application. We can also help you talk to your partner and children about donating if you have not already done so.

In addition, VARTA staff can assist with your initial exchange of information or contact if this is what you decide to do.

VARTA offers a free and confidential service. VARTA staff will remain neutral and respectful of people's choices and opinions at all times. Your partner and relatives are also able to contact VARTA for information and support.

For further information:

Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority

Phone: (03) 8601 5250

Email: dcrs@varta.org.au

Web: www.varta.org.au