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ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE • GENDARMERIE ROYALE DU CANADA



Information for Families of Missing Persons

Royal Canadian Mounted Police



Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Gendarmerie royale du Canada

Canada

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Information for Families of Missing Persons



Important notice

The information contained in this guide is intended to assist families and friends, but the content could be distressing and triggering. Information on victim and mental health services is available within the guide.

Foreword



Statistics are clear that the vast majority of missing people are found safely within the first week. Every single missing person is a concern and a priority. When a loved one goes missing, there are worries, concerns, fears and anxieties. Nothing is more important than having that person returned safely. Statistics are not a comfort when YOUR loved one is missing.

Police have assisted and supported families of missing persons over many years and appreciate how difficult this time can be for the family and their friends. The police recognize that family can be spouses, children, siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles, grandparents and grandchildren, nieces and nephews, whether by blood, marriage, adoption, fostering or chosen family. Family is a broad term, defined differently by everyone. Many people such as close friends, co-workers and communities may be affected by a disappearance.

Through our work on a daily basis with families and through the testimony heard during the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, we have heard there is a need for more information from police on what happens when a loved one is missing. We also recognize that families and loved ones of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls deserve a police response that prioritizes missing persons investigations, especially when those who are reported missing are marginalized and vulnerable.

This is a traumatic time and it can be difficult to retain information. This guide allows family members to review and reflect in the level of detail that is right for them.

This document contains information of a general nature. There may be slight differences across jurisdictions, provinces and territories. The information is intended to be general enough that it can be used by families across Canada, regardless of what province or territory they live in or which police service is responsible for the investigation. The intention is to provide

information to families and loved ones about police procedures and the investigative process. It is not unusual for families to be separated by wide geographical distances. Even if the missing person is living in a different police jurisdiction, this guide can assist families anywhere in Canada to understand what is happening.

The police know how much you want us to find your loved one. It is our sincere hope to do so. We hope this guide will assist you in answering the questions you may have, but also in helping us find your loved one.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Duheme', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mike Duheme

Commissioner

Royal Canadian Mounted Police



From the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP)

As police leaders, we have learned that fully informing victims and families from the outset about the workings of police investigations and the criminal justice processes, as well as their role in it, can have a significant impact on their perception, expectations, and engagement.

When it comes to policing, and managing missing persons cases, the CACP believes in the importance of adopting a victim-centred approach. Doing so forms part of a human rights approach founded upon respect, dignity, and equality for all. It involves adopting empathetic, supportive, culturally sensitive, and trauma-informed practices. It considers the needs, rights, choices, safety and well-being of victims and survivors as an integral part of the police investigation process.

The final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls called for improved communication between police and families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people from the first report, with regular and ongoing communication throughout the investigation. The report also emphasized that family must be understood to include all forms of familial kinship, including but not limited to biological families, chosen families, and families of the heart.

This new guide developed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and endorsed by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, is an important step to improving communications with families of all missing persons, including those from Indigenous, racialized and vulnerable communities.

I would like to thank the members of the CACP's Policing with Indigenous Peoples Committee and Victims of Crime Committee for their valuable insight and contributions to the development and review of this excellent reference tool.

From a policing perspective, having an overarching missing person's document designed to guide families and made available to police services across the country is incredibly valuable. It provides clear instructions on immediate actions and serves to enhance communication between families and police. This could potentially aid in the early stages of a search and certainly help improve investigative efficiency.

This guide offers emotional support, directs individuals toward legal and financial resources, and provides families with information on support networks. It encourages public awareness and community involvement, which can be crucial during a missing person investigation.

Ultimately, this guide will serve to foster transparency, trust, and collaboration between families and law enforcement, empowering families during critical times and building confidence in the police.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and curves, positioned above the name of the Commissioner.

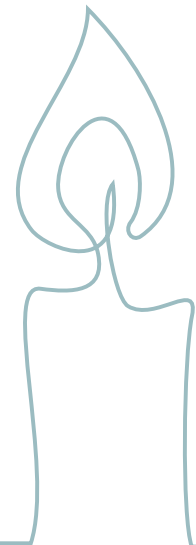
*Commissioner Thomas Carrique C.O.M.
President, Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police*

Dedication and Acknowledgements

This guide is dedicated to the families, friends and communities that are affected by disappearances. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is appreciative of the time and input offered by the organizations who assisted with this information guide:

- 2SLGBTQQIA+ Circle, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
- Brian Walsh
- British Columbia Bereavement Hotline / Families of Homicide Support
- Canadian Association for Spiritual Care
- Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, Policing with Indigenous Peoples Committee
- Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, Victims of Crime Committee
- Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Canadian Crime Victim Foundation
- Canadian Parents of Murdered Children
- City of Edmonton
- Correctional Service of Canada
- Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
- Justice Canada
- Justice, Government of the Northwest Territories
- Justice and Individual Protection, Government of Nunavut
- Edmonton Police Service
- Elliot Chapple, Ph.D.
- Family and Survivors Circle

- ➔ Federal Ombudsperson for Victims of Crime
- ➔ First Nations Chiefs of Police Association
- ➔ Fort Erie Friendship Centre
- ➔ Heathen Confederation of Canada
- ➔ Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton
- ➔ Indigenous Services Canada
- ➔ Kathy King
- ➔ Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak (LFMO)/Women of the Métis Nation (WMN)
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- ➔ Office of the Chief Coroner, Nunavut
- ➔ Office of the Chief Coroner, Ontario
- ➔ Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Alberta
- ➔ Ontario Provincial Police
- ➔ Ottawa Police Service
- ➔ Pam Fletcher
- ➔ Parole Board of Canada
- ➔ Paukutuutit Inuit Women of Canada
- ➔ Public Prosecution Service of Canada
- ➔ Public Safety Canada
- ➔ Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal
- ➔ Soka Gakkai International Association of Canada (SGI)
- ➔ Statistics Canada
- ➔ Toronto Board of Rabbis
- ➔ Treaty 3 Police
- ➔ United Church of Canada
- ➔ Vancouver Police Department
- ➔ Victims of Homicide of Edmonton Support Society
- ➔ World Sikh Organization of Canada
- ➔ York Regional Police



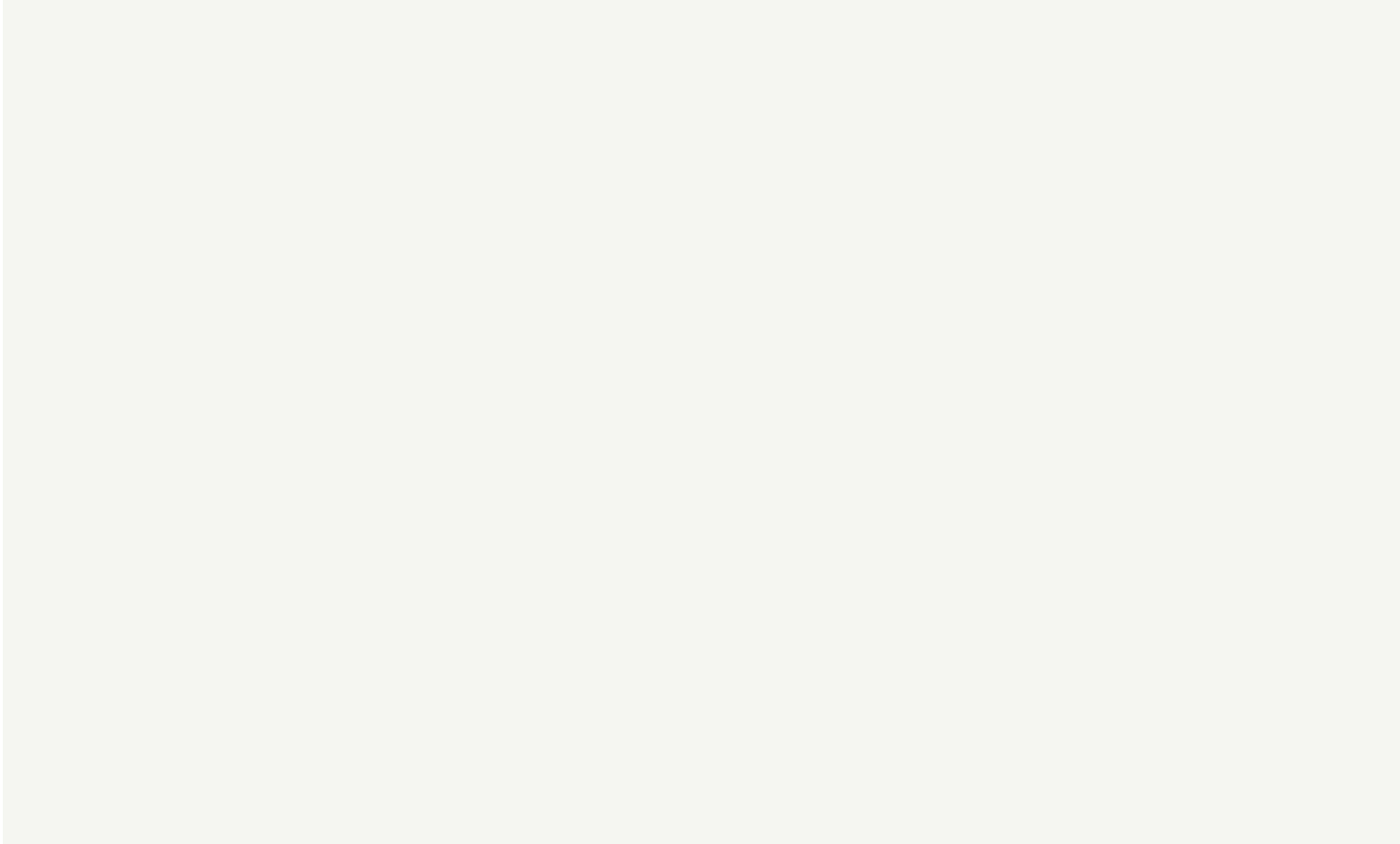


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Key Points



How Do I Report Someone Missing?

- ➔ Call 9-1-1
- ➔ Go in person to any police station in Canada
- ➔ Call the local number or non-emergency number for police



How Long Do They Need to be Missing?

- ➔ Report someone missing as soon as you have concerns
- ➔ There is no minimum time required
- ➔ You **do not need** to wait 24 or 48 hours to report someone missing



When Is a Missing Person an Emergency Situation?

It is considered an emergency if the missing person

- ➔ Is a child
- ➔ Is elderly
- ➔ Has mental or developmental disabilities
- ➔ Is a person with a disability or cognitive disorder (e.g., autism, ADHD, FASD)
- ➔ Is suicidal or has serious mental health issues
- ➔ Has medical conditions that require medications
- ➔ Has recently experienced a traumatic incident (e.g., health diagnosis, a death)
- ➔ Has physical limitations or disabilities, or
- ➔ May be in immediate danger for any other reason



What Police Service in Canada Do I Contact?

- ➔ You can report someone missing to any police station regardless of where you are, and where the person was last seen
- ➔ The police service where the person was last seen will conduct the missing person investigation
- ➔ If you report someone missing to another police service, they will pass along the file to the responsible police service



Who Can File A Missing Persons Report?

- ➔ Anyone can report someone missing
- ➔ It does not need to be a family member



What Happens When I File a Missing Persons Report

- ➔ The police will complete a report, which includes asking a lot of questions
- ➔ The police generally ask the same questions of all teenagers and adults. These questions are necessary to assess risk and assist in locating the person; they may seem very personal and possibly touch on uncomfortable topics
- ➔ There is a list of questions the police may ask; answer to the best of your ability
- ➔ Your cooperation with the police can be important in locating the person

Overview

There are no words to describe the terror and anxiety felt when someone is missing. That fear is real and understandable. Police consider a missing person to be anyone whose whereabouts are unknown, regardless of the circumstances surrounding their disappearance. The person will be considered missing until they are located.

A missing person should be reported as soon as possible. You do not need to wait a certain amount of time before reporting a missing person.

There is a misconception that there is a 24 or 48 hour waiting period before a missing person can be reported. **THIS IS FALSE.** Early reporting aids in the investigation as early reporting can be crucial to collect important evidence such as video surveillance, conducting interviews of witnesses, and preparing media releases.

It is considered an emergency, requiring immediate contact with the police, if the missing person

- ➔ Is a child
- ➔ Is elderly
- ➔ Has mental or developmental disabilities
- ➔ Is a person with a disability or cognitive disorder (e.g., autism, ADHD, FASD)
- ➔ Is suicidal or has serious mental health issues
- ➔ Has medical conditions that require medications
- ➔ Has recently experienced a traumatic incident (e.g., health diagnosis, a death)
- ➔ Has physical limitations or disabilities, or
- ➔ May be in immediate danger for any other reason

Anyone can report someone missing – family, friends, neighbours, co-workers, roommates, or anyone who has concerns that someone is missing.

Missing person investigations are a priority for police. The RCMP and other police services have formed partnerships with other law enforcement agencies, provincial and territorial governments, non-government organizations, and Indigenous organizations to increase their ability to locate a missing loved one.

Police recognize the importance of investigating missing person cases in a timely manner. All reports of a missing person will be promptly and thoroughly investigated regardless of gender identity, age, race, national or ethnic origin, skin colour, religion, sexual orientation, belief, social standing and/or lifestyle.

Contacting the Police

You can file a missing persons report at any police station or to any police service. You do not need to do this in person. It does not matter where you are in Canada or where the missing person was last seen. If you live in a different police jurisdiction than where the missing person lives or was last seen, the agency you report to should contact the correct police service or you can call that police service directly. You can contact the police by various methods:

- ➔ Call 9-1-1 or another emergency number, depending on where you live
- ➔ Call your local police non-emergency number
- ➔ Go to your local detachment or police station in person

Submitting a missing persons report can potentially be triggering for many reasons. This can include intergenerational trauma, prior experiences with law enforcement or having experienced loss in other ways. There are specialized officers, supports and teams, including Indigenous Relations/Liaison Officers, who can assist families in filing the missing persons report.

Communities without a Police Station / Detachment

In some rural or northern communities, there may not be a physical police presence by way of a station or detachment. There is, however, still a police of jurisdiction. You should call the relevant number for that police service. The report can be taken over the phone and the police will determine the next steps.

What Can You Do to Help?

You can help by providing any information you may have about the missing person to the police as early as possible. You may wish to write down any information you believe is important. Sharing a photo for the police to use will also help. This photo will not be publicly released without first discussing with you. That being said, you are not required to do more than report the person missing to start the police investigation for your missing loved one. Sometimes before a person is reported missing, families or friends may take steps to find the persons themselves. These could include:

- ➔ Contacting friends and family members
- ➔ Checking with their school or work place to ask when they were last seen
- ➔ Checking social media sites for posts by or comments about the missing person
- ➔ Checking places that the person goes to often
- ➔ Selecting recent photos that show what the person looks like now
- ➔ Preserving the missing person's toothbrush or hairbrush in case samples of DNA are required to assist with the investigation
- ➔ Checking their cellphone records

If any of this has been done, providing that information to the police is helpful. You are not required to do anything before calling the police to report someone missing.

A worksheet is available at the end of this guide to assist you in recording information for the police. Any information you provide will help the police, and they can follow up with others to fill in the gaps, if required.

Gathering Evidence

Every investigation begins with police gathering evidence. A missing person investigation begins when the police are first notified that your loved one is missing. Police will gather evidence relevant to their disappearance.

When you file a missing persons report, the police will ask you a number of questions. All details you provide are important to an investigation, and the more information obtained, the greater the likelihood of locating a missing person. Information collection may continue throughout the investigation until the person has been found. You may find some of these questions intrusive, but any information that can be provided can be helpful for the investigation.

Talking to Family, Friends and Others

Police ask similar types of questions about all missing teenagers and adults. Some details may be sensitive and potentially embarrassing to discuss with police but it is important that you are open, honest and provide as much information as you can. In collecting this personal information, the police are not judging the person or their life choices. This information is used to assess risk and to look for investigative avenues.

Trauma and life circumstance (for example, substance misuse, lifestyle factors that put a person at risk, mental health issues, intergenerational trauma) leave people more vulnerable, which could lead to them going missing. When loved ones try to “protect” a person’s reputation, it results in time and evidence being lost. Remember that you and the police share the same goal: to locate the missing person as soon as possible.

Family members, friends, co-workers and neighbours, among others, may be contacted and interviewed. Friends and peers often have a better understanding of what a person has been doing. Co-workers and neighbours may see or speak to the missing person often and may be able to provide details about their habits or movements. This is a normal practice to establish a timeline for the missing person.

Information gathering occurs throughout an investigation or until the person has been found. People may be interviewed multiple times.

Preserving Evidence

To assist in determining the status and location of the missing person, there may be a need for police to secure the residence/room and/or any personal belongings of the missing person. This means that police tape may be put up and/or police will guard the area and prevent anyone from entering. This will include the family or people who live there.

Personal effects may be collected as evidence, meaning that they will be catalogued and brought by the police to their offices for further examination. This may include clothes, shoes, diaries, computer and other electronic equipment, phones, wallets/purses, or any items the police believe might be important for further examination.

Requests for Property

If not already collected from elsewhere, as part of the investigation, police may also ask for information or items of the missing person. Some of the information police might ask for are:

- ➔ Contact information for the missing person's dentist (for dental records)
- ➔ Recent photos (for posters or showing to witnesses)
- ➔ Diaries or personal writings (to see if there are clues or to assess mental health)
- ➔ Usernames and passwords for electronic devices and social media accounts
- ➔ Phones, tablets, laptops, phone books (for coordinates, contacts, information, and social media)

Families can ask about when the items will be returned, but they will most likely be returned only at the end of the investigation.

Other Police Steps

The missing person will be placed on the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database. Every police service in Canada has access to CPIC.

Most missing person cases are not criminal cases. It is not illegal for an adult to disappear. These are considered humanitarian investigations. There are limitations on what police can do in the absence of evidence that a crime has occurred. If the police have reasonable grounds to suspect that a criminal act has taken place, and that evidence (including information) is located in a specific place, then they can apply for a *Criminal Code* search warrant and/or production order to obtain the evidence.

However, if the police cannot convince a judge that a criminal act has taken place, a search warrant cannot be issued to compel a third party to provide such information.

It is important to balance a person's right to privacy with providing police with the tools needed to find a missing person. Many provinces and territories have enacted missing persons legislation, which provides certain powers to the police to collect the information they need and specifies under what circumstances. As of 2024, missing persons acts exist in all provinces and territories except Nunavut.

DNA¹

When a person is reported missing, investigators use various methods to find them. If more traditional methods are not successful, the investigator may recommend DNA analysis. This might provide leads in the investigation, or help identify human remains. This guide will provide you with general information about the National Missing Persons DNA Program (NMPDP) and the role that DNA might have in the investigation of a missing person.

The RCMP manages the National Missing Persons DNA Program (NMPDP) to help investigations involving missing persons or unidentified human remains. It compares DNA profiles to those already in the National DNA Data Bank. You might be asked to submit:

- ➔ Your own DNA
- ➔ The missing person's DNA

Canada's *DNA Identification Act* is specific about the types of comparisons in the National DNA Data Bank that are allowed under the NMPDP.

DNA analysis can help identify a person because DNA is found in all living things. No two people, except identical twins, have the same DNA. The ability to associate a missing person to a family member using DNA depends on how closely they are related. The most useful DNA samples are from close blood relatives, such as parents, children and siblings.

Collecting the Missing Person's DNA

Submitting a missing person's DNA to the program is **voluntary**. You may choose not to provide an item with the missing person's DNA. However, without these items, it may be more difficult to identify or locate the missing person.

1. This section is used with permission from the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR), A Family's Guide to the National Missing Persons DNA Program (2023-12-19).

Investigators may be able to collect the missing person's DNA from:

- ➔ Items used **only** by that person, such as a toothbrush or razor; or
- ➔ Medical samples, such as:
 - items removed during surgery
 - bloodwork sample
 - medical specimen stored at a hospital or clinic

The investigator may take multiple items to increase the chances of collecting the missing person's DNA.

If you provide items from a missing person, you will be asked to complete a form stating you have been informed of and understand the following:

- ➔ How the DNA profile from the missing person will be used
- ➔ That the missing person's DNA profile will be compared to DNA collected from crime scenes
- ➔ That if the missing person's DNA profile matches to another police investigation, this could be used as evidence against the missing person in a criminal investigation

Collecting DNA Samples from Relatives

In consultation with the family, the investigator will identify the most suitable family members for submitting DNA samples. Anyone who provides a DNA sample will be asked to sign a consent form to take part in the program. Once you've given your consent, the investigator will collect samples of your DNA. The types of DNA samples requested are generally

- ➔ Blood (only a very small amount is required)
- ➔ A mouth swab (taken from the inside of the cheek)

Investigators may also need to collect DNA from donors unrelated to the missing person. For example, when submitting a DNA sample from the child of a missing person, it's helpful to submit DNA from the child's other biological parent. This helps determine which part of the child's DNA came from the missing parent. Another example is the collection of a sample from someone such as a roommate to be able to exclude them as the source of DNA found on a personal item belonging to the missing person.

Anyone can choose not to provide their DNA sample. However, without their DNA, it may be more difficult to identify or locate the missing person.

Collecting DNA from Persons Under 18

Investigators need signed consent from a parent or legal guardian before collecting a DNA sample from someone under the age of 18. Once the person reaches the age of 18, they will be asked to submit a new signed consent (before their 19th birthday) in order to keep their DNA profile in the National DNA Data Bank.

DNA Comparisons

Investigators send DNA samples to the National DNA Data Bank to develop the DNA profiles. The profiles are uploaded to the data bank and immediately compared to other DNA profiles. Comparisons are done in accordance with the *DNA Identification Act*.

DNA profiles developed from items of a missing person are entered into the **Missing Persons Index** within the National DNA Data Bank. These profiles are compared to all other DNA profiles in the data bank, including DNA from:

- ➔ Unidentified human remains
- ➔ Victims of crimes
- ➔ Crime scenes

DNA profiles from missing persons can be sent for international comparison.

DNA profiles submitted by family members are entered into the **Relatives of Missing Persons Index**. These may be used to confirm that the DNA obtained from items belonging to the missing person does indeed belong to the missing person.

They are also compared to DNA profiles of unidentified remains. Profiles in the **Relatives of Missing Persons Index**:

- ➔ Are only compared to DNA profiles of missing persons or unidentified human remains
- ➔ Are not compared to DNA profiles from convicted offenders or crime scenes
- ➔ Are not sent for international comparison

DNA profiles are continually being added to the data bank and comparisons are conducted continuously. A match or association could happen immediately, long term or not at all.

Incidental Finding

DNA comparisons may reveal relationship information that is different from what people believe to be true about their family members. This information will not be revealed unless it's necessary for the investigation.

Withdrawing DNA Profiles

DNA profiles and related information are removed from the National DNA Data Bank:

- ➔ When you withdraw your consent (for your DNA profile) at any time by writing to the investigating agency
- ➔ When the investigation has been resolved; or
- ➔ Automatically after five years, if the RCMP can't confirm with the investigator that:
 - the DNA profile is still needed
 - the investigation is still ongoing
 - consent has not been withdrawn

No further DNA comparisons can be made once the DNA profiles are removed from the National DNA Data Bank (NDDB).

Notification of a DNA Match

The RCMP will inform the investigator when there is a DNA association to a family member or a match to a missing person. The investigator should contact you directly with information that is relevant to the investigation.

Commitment to Privacy

The *DNA Identification Act*, which establishes the authority for the National Missing Persons DNA Program, was written to respect Canadian privacy laws and safeguard personal information. Any comparisons made within the National DNA Data Bank are strictly controlled. Details are included in the Privacy Statement and consent forms that the investigator will provide to you before a sample is collected.

If you have concerns related to the collection, use, disclosure or retention of personal information under the National Missing Persons DNA Program, contact the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada.

Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada

30 Victoria Street, Gatineau, Quebec K1A 1H3

1-800-282-1376 (toll-free)

<https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/report-a-concern/file-a-formal-privacy-complaint/>



Questions

If you have any requests or questions about the National Missing Persons DNA Program, please contact the investigator for the missing person's case.



Communications Between the Police and Family

Missing person investigations move at varying paces throughout different stages. Initially there may be a lot of police contact and activity. However, as the investigation continues, it can often feel like nothing is happening.

This does not mean that police are not working on the investigation or that the missing person's case has been closed. Missing person cases are never closed until the person has been located and the missing person will remain on the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) until the file is concluded.

It is most effective if the family of the missing person can identify one person to act as the point of contact for the police, who can update the family with new information and/or questions. The designated family contact may be a family member, close friend or someone from the extended family approved by the next of kin.

The primary investigator, or a designated family liaison officer, will contact the designated family contact if more information is needed from the family or if there are police updates on the investigation.

Although anyone can report someone missing, information about the progress of the investigation may not always be shared with the reporting person. For example, a work colleague who reports someone missing would not get regular updates, but the spouse or family of the missing person would.

Primary Investigator or Designated Family Liaison Officer – Your Point of Contact

The primary investigator of the file is responsible for conducting the investigation. The primary investigator and the investigational team will work with additional police officers and law enforcement agencies, as required. In some cases, a separate police officer or a civilian specialist (a non-police officer with special training) will be assigned as a family liaison officer.

It is possible that the primary investigator or family liaison officer may change as the investigation proceeds. The investigation will continue regardless of changes in personnel. You should be informed about these changes so you know who is leading the investigation, and who your primary point of contact is.

Communication Plan/Schedule

When it is appropriate to do so, a communication plan can be established between the primary investigator and the family contact. The communication plan will include the frequency and type of information to be provided as well as the means by which the information will be provided (i.e., phone call, personal visit, email). The purpose of a communication schedule is to ensure that family members have the frequency of contact that satisfies them. Some families want regular contact while others only want to be contacted if there is advancement in the investigation or something has changed.

Staying Informed

There are notes pages at the end of this guide for you. Some pieces of information that will be helpful to have a record of are:

- ➔ Police file number(s)
- ➔ The name and contact information of the primary investigator assigned to the file
- ➔ The name and contact information of the police supervisor
- ➔ The name and contact information of the assigned family liaison officer assigned, if applicable
- ➔ The name and contact information of any victim services personnel working with you, if applicable
- ➔ Dates when follow-up occurs



Ask Questions

This is an overwhelming and stressful time. It is helpful to write down questions for the police as you think of them in order to ask them later. Record the answers for future reference and inform other family members.

Unable to Contact the Primary Investigator/Family Liaison Officer

There may be reasons why the primary investigator or family liaison officer cannot be reached at any given time. If you are unable to reach them by phone, leave a message or send an email. You can also call the main number of the police station or the major/serious crimes unit where the investigator works and ask for someone there to assist you.

Urgent Calls to the Police

You should call the primary investigator or liaison officer only for non-urgent inquiries or information updates. A sighting of the person warrants a call to the police's non-emergency number (if there is no danger or crime.) Call 9-1-1 if you believe that the person is in danger.

Additional Assistance from Specialized Units

Every missing person case is unique and police will analyze the particular circumstances to determine what steps are necessary. Sometimes, police will engage other units or external partners who can provide additional assistance, such as search and rescue units, or police dog services. In some cases, police may request the use of civilian (private) search units or dogs.

Police will determine what, if any, specialized units are to be used based on the specifics of a case. Only police can order the use of specialized police units, not families or communities. However, this is not always done. The goal is always to find a missing person, but not all tools will aid in that effort. You can talk to the primary investigator about why or why not specialized units have been ordered.

Searching for Human Remains

Everyone wants to bring the missing person home safely. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Where the police suspect that a person has died, whether by foul play, suicide or an accident, they will tell the family why they do. This is not the outcome anyone wants. The person is still missing and needs to be found. That is why, sadly, some searches are not aimed at rescue, but recovery. During this type of search, police are hoping to be able to locate the missing person's body for the family.

If human remains are found, the family will be notified by police as soon as possible. If there is a reason to believe that the body is that of your loved one, this may occur before identification is confirmed by the medical examiner/coroner. This could occur due to the location at which the remains were found or if a wallet or other article of clothing suggests it could be your loved one.

Unfortunately, the media or someone on social media might announce the discovery of remains before police can contact the family. There may be rumours concerning the identification of the human remains. This is extremely upsetting for all families of missing persons. If this occurs, call your primary investigator right away for clarification.

Non-Police Searches

It is common that family, friends or communities want to conduct their own searches. Everyone wants to help. However, it is best to speak to police prior to doing so. While police are appreciative of community support, there are risks to be aware of in conducting private searches. These risks include injury to volunteers, contamination, damage or even loss of relevant evidence.

Information Shared with the Family

Police strive to provide the family with information they need. However, they must ensure that released information will not compromise the investigation. Careful decisions are made about the investigation as it proceeds. This may mean information sharing with families gets delayed or becomes restricted. Police understand this is difficult for families who want to know what is happening with their loved one's investigation.

Unfortunately, families sometimes learn of information in a way that is out of police control, such as through social media, and this can be devastating and unsettling. Police do their best to prevent this from happening.

When police cannot share information with them, families may feel that the police are not doing anything or not being truthful with them. Police respect the families of victims and want to do their best for them. This is why they sometimes have to keep information confidential and not disclose it, even to the family. The guiding principle for police is to protect the integrity of the investigation, even in historical cases. The ultimate goal of the investigation is to find the missing person and, in the case of foul play, see that anyone responsible is brought to justice.

Access to Police Files

Families cannot have copies or read active, ongoing police files. There are many reasons for not providing this access:

- ➔ Some of the information related to the missing family member may not be released to the family under privacy laws
- ➔ Other people's personal information is contained within the file and police cannot disclose this information
- ➔ Many documents within the file could be recognized as "classified" or "protected" under rules related to handling of information by the government
- ➔ Some information may need to be safeguarded to ensure the investigation's success

The police make every effort to provide families with as much information as they can possibly share, and to answer any questions they may have.

Voluntary Disappearances

It is not a crime to go missing. Adults have the right to do so. If a person does not want the reporting party, including family, to know where they are, police cannot provide any information other than that the person has been found safe, knows there was concern, and that they do not want to make contact for the time being.

Concluding a Missing Persons File

A missing persons file is never "closed" or "concluded" until a missing person has been located.

If the missing person is thought by family or friends to have contacted them and is no longer missing, the police will need to confirm this with the missing person.

The Media, Social Media and the Public

Communicating through the media, including social media, about your missing loved one can be an effective way to spread information. Speaking to reporters can be hard. Trying to decide what, how and when to share information can sometimes be confusing and overwhelming.

Some families have felt victimized or vulnerable during media interviews. The police can assist you in preparing for any media interviews or press conferences. It is good to consult with the police prior to speaking to the media. Media relations officers may be able to assist in ensuring that the media reports represent the missing person accurately and respectfully.

Social media posts can also take on a life of their own beyond the original author's control. This can result in speculation and false leads being put forward by people unfamiliar with the details of the case. Maintaining contact with the police can assist you in sorting out the truth from mere speculation. This can be very upsetting to the family and friends.

Choosing Photographs and Videos

Choose photographs and videos that are recent so that they reflect what the person would look like now if seen. If the person's appearance changes frequently (such as hair styles or weight fluctuations), try to find recent photos that reflect these changes. Avoid using photos or videos that have other people in them, not only for privacy reasons but also to ensure the focus is on the missing person.

Gender Identity and Expression

If the missing person identifies as a gender other than the one assigned at birth, or non-binary, whether or not they have had any type of affirming medical care (i.e. hormone therapy and/or surgeries), this should be handled with sensitivity when releasing information to the media. Using birth names (sometimes referred to as “dead names”) or pronouns that the missing person no longer uses could be insulting and/or misleading. Using the current pronouns (examples of pronouns are she/her, he/his/, they/them/, ze/hir/, etc.) is important to both honour the person's identity as well as to provide an accurate current description. If the person's pronouns have changed recently, or you are unsure, using they/them pronouns and photographs that reflect their current gender expression is more respectful and more accurate to assist in locating them.

Family Spokesperson

Identify a family spokesperson as the point of contact for the media to make it easier. Any member of the family or close friend can assume this role. Here are a few qualities to keep in mind when choosing a spokesperson:

- ➔ They feel confident speaking to the media
- ➔ They have an ability to keep messages clear and brief
- ➔ They have knowledge about the missing person's case
- ➔ They can remain calm when interacting with reporters, which can be difficult. This can be tiring, possibly triggering and emotionally draining
- ➔ Can be available regularly for this role to interact with reporters

The increased media attention can be difficult for families, but it can be helpful in leading to information from the public and can ultimately help the investigation. The decision to speak with the media or not is up to the family. Families may discuss when, where, and in what format they will be communicating with the media.

In addition, the family should discuss with the primary investigator or family liaison officer the role of the media in furthering the investigation and how best to use this tool to obtain information from the public. It may be possible for the police to assist you in managing media inquiries. The police may also speak to the media on your behalf, including reading a family statement that you have prepared.

Information or Tips from the Public

Information and tips made by the public can provide critical information in locating a missing person. In situations where a member of the public contacts you with information, forward this information to the primary investigator or family liaison member as soon as possible. In addition, please encourage the person to contact the police directly, as they will want to speak with them.

The public should not be asked to contact the family directly. If the person wants to remain anonymous, they can submit the information to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or online at <http://crimestoppers.ca/>.

The public can report a tip to any police service or detachment in Canada. They can find the address and phone number of an RCMP detachment (www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/detach/en) near them.

Canada's Missing website (canadasmising.ca) is maintained by the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR) at the RCMP. It is a national website for all police services. This website features profiles of missing persons and unidentified remains that have been published at the request of the primary investigator and which originate from the police, coroner or medical examiner agency. The lead investigator determines when and whether to publish a case. This website does not include a listing of profiles for all missing persons and unidentified remains in Canada. This site provides descriptions and images of missing persons, along with details about where they were last seen. It also allows the public to provide tips which are sent directly to the investigator.

Offering a Reward

Offering a reward for information has both benefits and drawbacks. While it may elicit tips, it can also draw fakes. Speak to the primary investigator or family liaison officer before going public with a reward. It is recommended that you work with Crime Stoppers or consider obtaining legal advice.

Posters

Posters are an important tool to aid the investigation. Before creating your own, check with police. The police may already be working on a poster and the process runs more smoothly if the family works with them. Ensure that the information has been looked at by police prior to distribution; there may be reasons why certain information should NOT be released to the public.

Public Events

Many families and communities hold marches or vigils for missing persons who have just gone missing or who have been gone a long time. Fundraising and social media initiatives are also utilized. These events keep the attention on the missing person and raise awareness. Before holding such an event, speak with the primary investigator or family liaison officer to ensure they are aware of your plans. Police often do want to attend, if possible, to show their solidarity with the family. As well, there may be safety concerns that the police can assist with, such as crowd control or highway safety.

Sometimes the police will want to call a press conference or issue a plea for tips to bring attention to the case, for example, on an anniversary of the disappearance. The support and attendance of families is often an important element at these events.

AMBER Alerts

AMBER Alert is a voluntary cooperative program between police and broadcasters that sends an emergency alert to the public when a child under the age of 18, or an adult with a proven mental or physical disability, has been abducted and is believed to be in grave danger. The AMBER Alert program provides the public with immediate, up-to-date information about child abductions through media broadcasts, social media, and the Emergency Alert System.

An AMBER Alert may only be activated by police, and is intended for the most serious and time-critical abduction cases. AMBER Alerts are designed to solicit the public's help with the safe and swift return of the child. The AMBER Alert programs are in place in all 10 provinces but have not yet been established in Yukon, the Northwest Territories, or Nunavut. When appropriate, there is a national protocol in place for the extension of AMBER Alerts across provincial borders, as well as protocols in place between the provincial programs and their border states for the extension of AMBER Alerts into the United States. Before an AMBER Alert is activated, a specific set of circumstances is required for an activation. Activation criteria include the following:

- ➔ There is reasonable belief by law enforcement that an abduction has occurred
- ➔ There is reasonable belief by law enforcement that the victim is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death
- ➔ There is enough descriptive information about the victim and the abduction for law enforcement to issue an AMBER Alert to assist in the recovery of the child
- ➔ The victim is under 18 years of age



Note: Activation criteria varies between provinces

Toolkits

There are several toolkits available that may further assist families with the media. See “Supports for the Families of Missing Persons”.



Long-Term Missing Persons

The majority of missing persons are located quickly and safely. Unfortunately, for some families, a loved one may remain missing over a long period of time. In these circumstances, the file remains open, and will be open until the person has been located.

Even when the case involves a long-term missing person, you are still entitled to updates from the police. Some families do not want regular contact from the police if there is nothing to report; they only want to be contacted if there is a change in the case, which the police will note in the communication schedule. Other families may wish for regular updates on a schedule.

After all investigative steps have been exhausted, the case may become less active but the investigation remains open. Any new information or tips will be investigated. The file is reviewed periodically for additional work that can be done as time progresses and technology evolves. Additionally, all missing persons' cases are maintained in the database at the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains where they are continuously undergoing automatic and manual analysis.

Missing persons cases can be published on Canada's Missing, a national website which is managed by the RCMP on behalf of all police in Canada. Many provinces, territories and individual police services will also have websites which feature missing people.

Do I Hold a Funeral?

Families of long-term missing persons often struggle with whether to hold on to hope or accept that their loved one has

died. Without a body, there is no confirmation and the decision to hold a funeral is a difficult one to have to make. There may also be disagreements among family and friends on if – and when – a memorial or funeral should be held.

There is no right or wrong answer; it depends on the unique circumstances and the feelings of the family members. Victim Services can assist you in coming to a decision. Clergy (priests, ministers, rabbis, imams, etc.), Indigenous Elders, religious and spiritual guides and mental health providers may also be able to provide you with someone to help discuss your options and find the answers you are seeking.

Missing Persons Information

Alberta: Report a missing person

<https://www.alberta.ca/report-missing-person.aspx>

British Columbia: Missing Persons

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/missing-persons>

Canada's Missing on the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains

<https://www.canadasmising.ca/index-eng.htm>

Missing Children's Network

<https://www.missingchildrensnetwork.ngo/>

Missing Children Society of Canada

<https://mcsc.ca/>

Missing Kids

<https://missingkids.ca/en/>

Ontario Missing Adults

<https://www.missingadults.ca/>

Reporting a Sighting: Tips on a Missing Person

Report a Missing Person/Unidentified Remains


If you need to report a missing child/person, please contact your local police service, or **dial 9-1-1** in the case of an emergency.

There is **no waiting period** prior to reporting someone missing.



A Missing Person is defined as:

Anyone reported to police or by police as someone whose whereabouts are unknown, whatever the circumstances of their disappearance. They are considered missing until located. A missing person under the age of 18 is classified as a missing child. In the case of a missing child, they are considered missing if they are no longer in the care or control of their legal guardian and have not been removed by law. They are considered missing until returned to appropriate care and control.



Report a Sighting of a Missing Person

If you believe you have seen a missing person, you can:

1. Contact the investigating police service directly
2. Contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or via their website www.canadiancrimestoppers.org
3. Contact the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains at CanadasMissing-DisparusCanada@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

In the case of an emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Submit a Tip on a Missing Person's Case

If you have information that may help a specific investigation, you can:

1. Contact the investigating police service directly. This information is provided at the bottom of every case detail page
2. Contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or through their website at www.canadiancrimestoppers.org
3. Contact the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains at CanadasMissing-DisparusCanada@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

Supports for the Families of Missing Persons

There is no one way to feel or react when someone is missing. Every person will experience this differently. Some family members and friends experience a unique type of trauma. Psychologists use the term “ambiguous loss,” because families have no definite answers or closure.

When someone is missing, it does not provide a family with clear explanations, and sometimes even knowledge of whether or not their loved one is alive. There is no clear sense of closure. Optimism or hope that a loved one will be returned can seem like a lifeline or terrible torture – and often both, alternating over time. Without knowing what has happened, people report being “stuck” in a kind of limbo. The more “typical” grieving stages associated with the death of a loved one may be halted, stalled and incomplete. This type of loss and trauma can be multi-generational. If the person is never located, the questions and unresolved uncertainty can remain and the impacts extend to future generations.

Self-Care and Caring for Others

It is not unusual for the focus to be on the missing person, rather than on yourself or other family members. It is important that families take care of themselves, both over the short and long term.

Self-care is very difficult to follow in times of crisis. Ensuring that you have food, water, sleep and support are the very basics. Spiritual care from an Indigenous Elder or clergy person (priest, minister, rabbi, imam, etc.) or spiritual self-care activities (praying, meditation) can help you deal with the stress and emotions you are feeling. Everyone’s needs are different and there are supports that can help you.

When families first discover that their loved one is missing, they often say that they cannot stop thinking about their disappearance, where they may be, and what may have happened. You may feel overwhelmed trying to figure out how to

deal with the police and other aspects related to your loved one's disappearance. There are supports that can be helpful such as Victim Services, Indigenous organizations and community services.

Victim Services

Victim Services provides information, emotional support, and practical assistance to people who have been impacted by crime. Victim Services provides a confidential service and can help you:

- ➔ Understand the police process
- ➔ Communicate with the police
- ➔ Access community resources
- ➔ Access crisis/counselling resources
- ➔ Receive emotional support

If you would like to speak with someone from Victim Services and have not already had contact with them, ask the primary investigator or family liaison officer to help you make contact.



Note: Not all Victim Services may be available in your area. Further, you may not be able to access certain services, depending on your relationship to the missing person.

National Victim Services and Information

The following are links and directions for seeking further information on various topics.

Victim Rights and Information

- ➔ **Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime** (links, services, resources, support)
Phone: 613-233-7614
Toll-free: 1-877-232-2610
Text: 613-208-0747
Email: crcvc@crcvc.ca
Website: <https://crcvc.ca>

- ➔ **Canadian Victims Bill of Rights (the CVBR), Justice Canada**
Website: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-23.7/page-1.html>
- ➔ **Victim Services Directory by province or territory, Justice Canada**
Website: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/victims-victimes/vsd-rsv/agencies-agences.aspx>
- ➔ **Victims – Information Products, Justice Canada**
Website: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/victim/>
- ➔ **Office of the Federal Ombudsperson for Victims of Crime**
Toll-free: 1- 866-481-8429
Outside Canada: 613-954-1651
TTY: 1-877-644-8385
Email: victimsfirst@ombud.gc.ca
Website: <https://victimsfirst.gc.ca/>
- ➔ **Canadian Centre for Child Protection** (advocacy, programs, research, resources)
Mail: Canadian Centre for Child Protection, 615 Academy Road, Winnipeg, MB R3N 0E7
Phone: 204-560-2083
Toll-free: 1-800-532-9135
Website: <https://www.protectchildren.ca/en/>

Information for families of Missing Indigenous People

- ➔ **Family Information Liaison Units, Justice Canada**
List of Provincial/Territorial Units and contact information
Website: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fund-fina/cj-jp/fund-fond/mmiw-fada/info.html>
- ➔ **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Support Line:**
For immediate emotional assistance, call 1-844-413-6649
This is a national, toll-free 24/7 crisis call line providing support for anyone who requires emotional assistance related to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. You can also access long-term health support services such as mental health counselling, community based emotional support and cultural services and some travel costs to see Elders and traditional healers.



National Missing People Sites & Information

- ➔ **National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains** (case files)
Speak to the investigating officer about adding your family's case to NCMPUR.
Website: <https://www.canadasmising.ca/about-ausujet/index-eng.htm>
- ➔ **The Missing Children's Network** (advocacy, support, missing cases)
Email: info@missingchildrensnetwork.ngo
Website : <https://www.missingchildrensnetwork.ngo/>
- ➔ **Canadian Centre for Information on Missing Adults** (advocacy, support, referrals)
Phone: 1-877-232-2610
Email: info@ccima.ca
Website: <https://ccima.ca/>
- ➔ **MissingKids.ca** (support for families and friends, prevention, database)
To register a missing child, but not to report a person missing for the first time:
Phone: 1-866-KID-TIPS (1-866-543-8477)
Website (intake form): <https://missingkids.ca/en/report-missing-child/>
Website: (form to report a tip or sighting of a missing child): <https://missingkids.ca/en/help-us-find/tip-or-sighting/>

Federal Government Financial Support for Families of Missing Children

- ➔ **Victims Fund, Justice Canada**
The Victims Fund provides grants and contributions to support projects and activities that encourage the development of new approaches, promote access to justice, improve the capacity of service providers, foster the establishment of referral networks, and/or increase awareness of services available to victims of crime and their families. The Fund does not provide criminal injuries compensation for victims of crime.
Website: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fund-fina/cj-jp/fund-fond/index.html>
- ➔ **Canadian Benefit for Parents of Young Victims of Crime**
A missing child is unimaginable and can leave you grief stricken and unable to work. The Federal Income Support for Parents of Murdered or Missing Children (PMMC) grant may be available to assist you with your financial needs. There are no government programs that provide financial assistance to those who are searching for a missing adult.
Website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/parents-young-victims-crime.html>

Media Guides

- ➔ **Media Toolkit**, Government of Saskatchewan
Website: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/help-for-families-of-missing-or-murdered-persons>
- ➔ **Working with the Media: A Guide for Canadian Victim Service Providers**
Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime
Website: https://crcvc.ca/general_resources/if-the-media-calls-a-guide-for-crime-victims-survivors/
- ➔ **Indigenous Women and Girls Missing Persons Toolkit and Resource Guide** (Greater Sudbury Police Service)
Website: <https://www.gspcs.ca/en/about-gspcs/resources/Documents/Indigenous-Women-and-Girls-Missing-Persons-Toolkit-and-Resource-Guide.pdf>
- ➔ **Toolkit to Assist Families of Missing Persons and Persons at Risk** (Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc.)
Website: <https://www.kanikanichihk.ca/missing-persons-persons-at-risk-toolkit/>
- ➔ **Navigating the Missing Persons Process** (Native Women's Association of Canada)
Website: https://www.sacp.ca/uploads/1/2/4/0/124002851/navigating_the_missing_persons_process_updated_dec_2008.pdf

Support Documents

- ➔ **Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime** (Website: <https://crcvc.ca/resources/publications>):
 - ✦ Resiliency
 - ✦ Victim Blaming in Canada
- ➔ **Grief and Sympathy – 6 Guidelines for Living with Grief for Missing Persons**
Website: <https://www.griefandsympathy.com/grief-for-missing-persons.html>



Provincial and Territorial Services

Victim Services, support groups and other services differ in their composition, duration, and structure. Depending on geography, information can be gained from local Victim Services about the availability of services in a specific area.

Alberta

➔ **Victim Services, Solicitor General and Public Security Victims of Crime: Government of Alberta**

Phone: 780-427-3460

Outside of Edmonton: dial 310-0000 (ask for Victims Program)

➔ **Victims of Crime Assistance program, Alberta Government** (Financial assistance):

Phone: 780-427-7217

Outside of Edmonton: dial 310-0000 (ask for Victims Program)

Email: victimsofcrime@gov.ab.ca

Website: <https://www.alberta.ca/programs-for-victims-of-crime>

➔ **Alberta Family Information Liaison Unit, Alberta Government**

(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)

Phone: 780-644-5187

Toll-free: 310-0000

Website: <https://www.alberta.ca/family-information-liaison-unit>

➔ **Criminal Injuries Review Board**

Phone: 780-427-7330;

Also available toll-free from anywhere in Alberta: 310-0000

➔ **Report a Missing Person, Government of Alberta** (Information, advice)

Website: <https://www.alberta.ca/report-missing-person>

British Columbia

➔ **Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division, Government of British Columbia**

Phone: 604-660-5199

British Columbia and Yukon: 1-800-563-0808

TTY: 604-875-0885

Email: victimservices@gov.bc.ca

➔ **Crime Victim Assistance Program, Government of British Columbia** (Financial assistance)

Phone: 604-660-3888

Toll-free inside British Columbia: 1-866-660-3888

Email: cvap@gov.bc.ca

Website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime/victim-of-crime/financial-assistance-benefits>

➔ **VictimLinkBC, Government of British Columbia**

(Link to available supports, 24 hours a day)

Toll-free: 1-800-563-0808

Email: 211-VictimLinkBC@uwbc.ca

Website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/victimlinkbc>

➔ **BC Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of British Columbia**

(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)

Toll-free: 1-888-355-0064

Email: BCFILU@gov.bc.ca

Website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime/victim-of-crime/family-information-liaison-unit>

➔ **Missing Persons, Government of British Columbia** (Information, advice)

Website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/missing-persons>

Manitoba

➔ **Victim Services, Government of Manitoba**

Phone: 204-945-6851

Toll-free: 1-866-484-2846

Website: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/justice/vs/>



- ➔ **Compensation for Victims of Crime Program, Government of Manitoba** (Financial Assistance):
Phone: 204-945-0899
Toll-free inside Manitoba: 1-800-262-9344
Website: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/justice/vs/cvc/supportfamily.html>
- ➔ **Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO)** (Victim Services for Indigenous families)
Website: <https://mkonation.com/>
- ➔ **Medicine Bear Counselling, Support and Elder Services, Ka Ni Kanichihk**
Family Information Liaison Units
Phone (Northern Manitoba): 204-677-1600
Toll-free: 1-888-953-5264
Email: medicinebear@kanikanichihk.ca
Website: <https://www.kanikanichihk.ca/medicine-bear/>
- ➔ **Manitoba Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of Manitoba**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)
Toll-free: 1-866-484-2846
Website: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/justice/vs/cs/resources.html>

New Brunswick

- ➔ **Victim Services, Government of New Brunswick**
Phone: 506-453-3992
Website: https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/public-safety/community_safety/content/victim_services.html
- ➔ **Victims of Crime – Compensation, Government of New Brunswick** (Financial assistance):
Toll-free (Suicide Prevention CHIMO Helpline): 1-800-667-5005
Email: DPS-MSP.Information@gnb.ca
Website: https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.201175.html
- ➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of New Brunswick**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls):
Phone: 506-259-2453

➔ **Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick**

Are you a Victim of Crime? Services for Victims of Crime Booklet

Website: https://www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca/en/uploads/Services_for_Victims_of_Crime_EN.pdf

Newfoundland & Labrador

➔ **Victim Services, Government of Newfoundland**

Phone: 709-729-7970

Email: victimservices@gov.nl.ca

Website: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/victimservices/>

➔ **Newfoundland and Labrador Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador**

(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)

Phone (Gander Office): 709-486-9623

Phone (Happy Valley-Goose Bay Office): 709-327-7939

Phone (Nain Office): 709-922-1361

Northwest Territories

➔ **Victim Services, Government of the Northwest Territories**

Phone: 867-767-9261 (collect calls accepted)

Email: victimservices@gov.nt.ca

Website: <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/victim-services/>

➔ **Victims of Crime Emergency Fund, Government of the Northwest Territories**

Phone: 867-767-9261 (collect calls accepted)

Toll-free: 1-867-873-0199

Email: vcef@gov.nt.ca

Website: <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/victims-of-crime-emergency-fund/>



- ➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of the Northwest Territories**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)
Phone (Yellowknife Office): 867-767-9261 ext. 82217 or 867-444-2263
Phone (Inuvik Office): 867-777-7370 or 867- 445-2262
Email: filu@gov.nt.ca
- ➔ **Native Women's Association of the NWT**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)
Phone: 867-873-5509 ext. 231
Toll Free: 1-866-459-1114
Email: vsworker4@nativewomens.com
Website: <https://www.nativewomensnwt.com/victim-services>

Nova Scotia

- ➔ **Victim Services, Government of Nova Scotia**
Phone: 902-424-3309
Toll-free: 1-888-470-0773
Email: justweb@gov.ns.ca
Website: https://novascotia.ca/just/victim_Services/
- ➔ **Criminal Injuries Counselling Program, Government of Nova Scotia** (Financial assistance)
Phone: 902-424- 4651
Toll-free within Nova Scotia: 1-888-470-0773
Website: https://novascotia.ca/just/victim_services/programs.asp#CICP
- ➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of Nova Scotia**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)
Toll-free: 1-888-470-0773
- ➔ **Nova Scotia Native Women's Association** (FILU Community Outreach Specialist)
Phone: 902-329-7064
Email: filu@nsnwa.net

Nunavut

➔ **Victim Services, Government of Nunavut**

Phone: 867-975-6363

Toll-free: 1-866-456-5216

Email: victimservices@gov.nu.ca

Website: <https://www.gov.nu.ca/en/justice-and-individual-protection/victim-services>

➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of Nunavut**

(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)

Phone (Iqaluit, NWT Office): 867-975-6373

Phone (Rankin Inlet, NU Office): 867-645-2150

Toll-free: 1-866-456-5216

Email: victimservices@gov.nu.ca

Website: <https://www.gov.nu.ca/en/justice-and-individual-protection/victim-services>

Ontario

➔ **Victim Services, Ministry of the Attorney General, Government of Ontario**

Phone: 416-325-3265

TTY: 416-325-4935

Website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-attorney-general>

➔ **Ontario Victim Quick Response Program, Government of Ontario** (Short-term financial services)

Website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-help-if-you-are-experiencing-violence#section-8>

➔ **Victim Services in Ontario, Ministry of the Attorney General, Government of Ontario**

Phone (Victim Support Line): 416-314-2447

Toll-free: 1-888-579-2888

Website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/victim-services-ontario>



- ➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of Ontario**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)
Toll-free: 1-844-888-8610
Email: OntarioFILU@ontario.ca
Website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/family-information-liaison-units>
- ➔ **Ontario's Missing Adults**
Phone: 613-851-2442
Email: Admin@missingadults.ca
Website: <https://missingadults.ca/>

Prince Edward Island

- ➔ **Victim Services, Government of Prince Edward Island**
Phone (Queens and Kings Counties): 902-368-4582
Phone (Prince County): 902-888-8218
Website: <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/justice-and-public-safety/victim-services>
- ➔ **Criminal Injuries Compensation, Government of Prince Edward Island** (Financial assistance)
Website: <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/justice-and-public-safety/criminal-injuries-compensation>
- ➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of Prince Edward Island**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)
Phone: 902-368-4584

Quebec

- ➔ **Assistance and Information for Victims of Crime, Gouvernement du Québec**
Phone: 418-646-6548
Website: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/justice-and-civil-status/support-victims-crime/assistance-and-information>
- ➔ **Crime Victims Compensation Act** (Financial assistance)
Website: <https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/l-6>

- ➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Gouvernement du Québec**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)
Toll-free: 1-888-338-3023
Website: <http://uqlif.com/>
- ➔ **Crime Victims Assistance Centres (CAVAC)**
(Post-traumatic intervention, access to legal network, support)
Toll-free: 1-866 LE CAVAC / 1-866-532-2822
Website: <https://cavac.qc.ca/en/>

Saskatchewan

- ➔ **Victim Service Units and Agencies, Government of Saskatchewan**
Phone: 306-787- 3500
Toll-free: 1-888-286-6664
TTY: 1-866-445-8857
Email: victimservices@gov.sk.ca
Website: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/justice-crime-and-the-law/victims-of-crime-and-abuse/help-from-victim-service-units-and-agencies>
- ➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of Saskatchewan**
(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)
Phone: 306-519-7804
Toll-free: 1-833-529-6486



Yukon

➔ **Victim Services, Government of Yukon**

Phone (Whitehorse): 867-667-8500

Phone (Dawson City): 867-993-5831

Phone (Watson Lake): 867-536-2541

Toll-free: 1-800-661-0408, extension 8500

Email: victim.services@yukon.ca

Website: <https://yukon.ca/en/legal-and-social-supports/supports-victims-crime/find-out-about-victim-services>

➔ **VictimLinkBC. Government of British Columbia**

Toll-free (24 hours a day): 1-800-563-0808

Email: 211-VictimLinkBC@uwbc.ca

Website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/victimlinkbc>

➔ **Family Information Liaison Unit, Government of Yukon**

(Victim Services for families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls)

Phone: 867-393-7178

Toll-free: 1-800-661-0408 ext. 7178

Email: filu@yukon.ca

Website: <https://yukon.ca/en/find-support-families-missing-or-murdered-indigenous-women-and-girls>



Note: Many communities have support groups, including some for families of missing persons. Check your white pages in the phone book, online, or ask your doctor or local victim services for suggestions.

Missing Persons Worksheet and Essential Questions



The police will ask a lot of questions and deal with very personal information and the habits of your missing loved one. These questions assist the police in assessing risk, identifying leads and avenues of investigation. Although personal, they are not judgements, and all adults and teens are asked the same types of questions.

Every case is different. Not all of the questions that follow may be asked. If you do not know something, do not worry. Any information you provide will assist the police, and they can follow up with other people to fill in the gaps if required. If you remember or learn something later, you can always update the file.

Details of the Missing Person

Full name:

Other last names:

Other names used (chosen name(s), nicknames, aliases):

Birth date:

Height:

Weight:

Eye colour:

Skin colour:

Hair colour, length and style:

Facial hair, if applicable:

Scars:

Tattoos:

Piercings:

Racial or ethnic self-identification:

Appearance (race/ethnicity do not always correspond to appearance):

Assigned sex at birth:

Gender identity or expression:

Language(s) spoken:

Details of the Last Time the Person was Seen

Date and location last seen:

Date of last contact (email, phone):

Clothing, jewellery and shoes worn:

What were their plans?

Did they attend work or school?

When did you start to worry? Why?

Who was the last person who had contact with the person? When?

Did you notice anything unusual? Did they seem upset?

Are they familiar with the area?

Are there any possible risk factors (inadequate clothing, terrain or lack of equipment) in the area they were last seen?

Any personal items missing? (clothing, cellphone, treasured personal items, money stash)

Other Information That Is Useful to Police

Basic Information on the Missing Person

Contact Information

Phone number(s) of missing person:

Cell:

Home:

Work:

Email address(es):

Personal:

Work:

Social Media Handle:

Other:

Address of missing person:

Does anyone else live here? If so, names and contact information:

What is the relationship?

Previous addresses:

Work and School

Where do they work or go to school?

For how long?

When was the last time they were there?

Have they been attending regularly until they went missing?

Have you contacted anyone there?

How do they normally travel to and from work/school?

Names of co-workers or supervisor?

Next of Kin

Who is the next of kin?

Relationship?

Contact information?

Last time in contact with person?

Personal Habits

Daily Routine

What time do they get up?

What time do they go to work/school?

When do they normally get home?

Are there typical daily activities or routines? (such as going to the grocery store or gym)

Have they developed any new habits or interests lately?

Have you observed any changes in their behaviours, mood, actions?

Social Activities

Are they involved in any clubs, sports or social activities?

Do they have favourite places to go or hang out?

Are they religious?

Do they attend a specific religious or spiritual location? (Church, mosque, synagogue, etc.)

Do they have a spiritual leader or Elder?

Online Activity

Do they spend a lot of time online?

What social media sites do they participate in?

Do they play online games? Which?

Do you know any of the passwords or usernames?

Drugs and Alcohol

Do they smoke cigarettes? If so, what brand?

Do they drink alcohol? If so, what kinds, how much, how often? Is there a place the person normally goes to drink?

Do they smoke marijuana? If so, what kinds, how much, how often? Is there a place the person normally goes to smoke pot?

Do they use other drugs? If so, which ones, how much, how often? Is there a place the person normally goes to use drugs?

Previous History of Going Missing

Has this person gone missing before?

What were the circumstances then?

Where were they found?

How long were they missing?

Physical and Mental Health of the Missing Person

What is their general physical health like?

What regular medications do they take?

Do they suffer from Alzheimer's disease, dementia or memory loss?

Any disabilities?

What is their general mental health like?

Do they have any addictions?

Doctor and/or clinics they go to:

Name of dentist:

Do they have an AA/NA sponsor? Do you know their contact information?

Personal Effects

Do they have a debit or credit card? Which financial institution(s) do they use? Account numbers?

Do they regularly carry a lot of cash on them?

What kind of electronic devices do they have? What types?

Do they have a passport?

Are there any other important personal items they treasure or are likely to have with them?

What is their usual mode of transportation?

Do they use taxis, Ubers or other ride sharing services?

Type of personal vehicle?

Do they have access to other vehicles?

Do they have a diary or electronic blog?

Do they own or have access to any firearms?

Do they own or have access to any other weapons? What types?

Other Areas of Interest

Are they in a relationship? With whom?

Have they recently separated or broken up?

Is there a history of domestic violence?

Are they in foster care/a group home?

Are they homeless?

Do they have a history of being transient (moving around a lot)?

Have they experienced bullying lately?

Have they experienced abuse lately from anyone?

Are they known to gamble?

Are they known to hitchhike?

Are they known to use prostitution services?

Are they associated with gangs or organized crime?

Are they, or have they been, victimized in the sex trade or otherwise exploited?

Are they involved with any legal proceedings?

Do they have any financial problems?

Do they have a court worker?

Do they have regular contact with a social worker?

Your Notes



Police File Number: _____

Police File Number:

Police: Primary Investigator(s) Contact Information:

Police: Supervisor Contact Information:

