

MISSING PERSONS TOOLKIT



2024 Washington State
Attorney General's Office

Missing Persons Toolkit Checklist – What To Do Soon After a Someone Goes Missing

Immediately report the person missing to 9-1-1. DO NOT WAIT. Report the missing person to the police department nearest to where the missing person was last known to be.

Share as much information as possible in the report:

- Names (with attention to correct spelling), nicknames or aliases, date of birth, sex, nationality, race(s), and physical and clothing descriptions, including height, weight, eye and hair color, identifying body markings, scars, and tattoos.
- Disabilities, medical conditions, pregnancy status, cognitive or mental health concerns, or required medication.
- The date, time, place and circumstances of their disappearance:
 - Note if they took a trip, ran errands, went hiking, had an argument, attended a party, etc.
 - Highlight if they might be at risk to themselves or others, or if they have been a victim of intimate partner or domestic violence.
- Any recent actions that are out of the ordinary or concerning to you.
- The make and model of any vehicles they may have access to and related license plate numbers.

For your records, ask law enforcement:

- *“Will this information about my loved one be entered into NCIC?”*
- *“Can you give me a case number?”*

Actions You Can Take After Reporting:

Call or physically search common locations with a recent photo, such as:

- School or work.
- Public places like libraries, churches, schools, bus stations, or youth centers.
- Places they frequent like restaurants, bars, or other businesses.
- Hospitals. Let hospitals know that the person is missing or if they are endangered.
- Churches, temples, synagogues, mosques, or other religious places of gathering.
- Jails and tribal jails, using their website, if available, or by phone.
- Prisons, using the [Washington Department of Corrections](#)¹ website or phone at (360) 725-8213.
- Shelters in your area.

Also consider checking the following:

- Location services on phone, like FindMy on iOS, Google Sharing, or Life360 on all smartphones.
- Bank account or cash app to see if the missing person made any withdrawals. Also check money transfer apps for any public recent activity like CashApp, Venmo, or Zelle.
- Last time they were on social media.

If you choose to post on social media, post name and where they may have last been along with the photo.

Log names, phone numbers and addresses of everyone you talk to before and after reporting the missing person, like family members, friends, neighbors. Note the information they shared and date and time of the contact in case you need to follow up.

Acknowledgments

The Attorney General's Office (AGO) last published a version of this toolkit in 2007. This update would not be possible without the thoughtfulness and advocacy of the Families Subcommittee of the [MMIWP Task Force](#).² With their expertise using their own stories and working in community, the Families subcommittee, in partnership with the AGO, will release a version of this guide specific to the experiences of the Indigenous community.

Indigenous women and people experience disproportionately high rates of violence nationally in domestic and sexual violence and abduction and murder. The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIWP) crisis has historical roots stemming from colonialism and systemic oppression, which continues to impact Indigenous people in the present day. A lack of legal protections coupled with a complex jurisdictional maze further threatens the safety of Indigenous peoples and Tribal sovereignty. Reporting bias, misclassification of race, and a lack of understanding of Indigenous history, including systematic displacement of Tribal communities, create additional barriers to justice and contribute to incomplete data regarding the crisis.

Indigenous advocates continue to raise national and international awareness about the MMIWP crisis and the immediate needs to address the root causes of violence and provide justice to victims, survivors, their families and communities. Addressing the MMIWP crisis requires prioritizing and centering Indigenous voices and experiences.

The Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit of the Washington State Patrol, local law enforcement agencies in Washington who work on missing person's cases, staff from the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families, and the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office provided additional support and expertise.

How to Use this Toolkit

Realizing a loved one is missing is scary and challenging. The circumstances around how a person goes missing can vary drastically, and there is not one clear path to find a missing loved one. Every missing person case is different. As a family member or friend of a missing person, you might have information that could help find them. This toolkit provides basic information and resources to aid your search.

For some community members, due to historical and ongoing harms, contacting law enforcement may be difficult or traumatic. If this is the case, consider having a trusted family member or friend support you when you contact law enforcement. A few agencies have a case navigator or advocate who generally help clients connect with resources or advocate for services.

FEELING OVERWHELMED?

Identify someone you trust who can provide support by:

- Helping you read through this toolkit;
- Taking notes; and/or
- Providing support when calling law enforcement or other resources identified in this toolkit.

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Reporting

In Washington, the county sheriff's office or local police department takes reports and investigates cases involving missing persons. A report must be filed for law enforcement to assist. The sooner you can file a report that your loved one is missing, the sooner law enforcement can assist.

A missing person is an emergency. Report them missing to 9-1-1.

There is no waiting period required for reporting. Call 9-1-1 as soon as you suspect your loved one is missing. Time plays an important role in helping find a loved one, and reporting as quickly as possible can make a difference.

In Washington, in certain circumstances, state law requires law enforcement officers to enter information about missing persons into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), a national database used by law enforcement.³ Some law enforcement agencies will use other databases that feed information into NCIC (for more information about NCIC, refer to Appendix A). Law enforcement officers only need a person's name and date of birth to enter them into NCIC. Note that not all states require law enforcement to use NCIC. If the person might be missing in another state, contact the Washington State Patrol Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit for assistance (more information about this Unit is on page 7).

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE: DATABASES

- NCIC = National Crime Information Center
- NCMEC = National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- NamUS = National Missing and Unidentified Persons System

For more information on these databases, see Appendix A.

You can ask law enforcement:

- “Will a report be taken?” For unclear or unsatisfactory answers at any point in your missing person's disappearance, you can ask to speak to a supervisor.
- “Will this information about my loved one be entered into NCIC?”
- “Can you give me a case number?”

Missing person under 18:

For children, meaning anyone younger than 18, under federal law, an officer must enter the missing person into NCIC within two hours of the time of the report.⁴ Additionally, you can report your missing child to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) at 1-800-843-5678. NCMEC can aid families of missing children with a case management team and technical assistance tailored to the case. [NCMEC also has a helpful Missing Child Emergency Response Quick Reference Guide, available here.](#)⁵

What to expect:

Some law enforcement agencies will take all information over the phone, while others will send officers in person to your location for more information. Police departments can usually also take reports in person. As soon as you have capacity, begin noting down information that might aid in the search or investigation.

Provide information to the best of your ability. You can follow up with more information later. If, for any reason, there is sensitive information you do not want to share, you are not required to provide it. Law enforcement may ask you for details about your missing loved one. Even if they don't ask, you can request that they document specific information in the case file. Typically, law enforcement will ask you to provide information such as the following:

- Name, including any nicknames or aliases, date of birth, and physical description, including height and weight.
- A recent, digital photo, preferably a candid. Photos from licenses are not preferable if other photos are available.⁶
- Sex (and if their gender identity does not match their sex at birth, you can emphasize that), nationality, clothing description, eye and hair color.
- Race(s), and if applicable, tribal affiliation.
- Any disabilities, medical conditions, pregnancy status, cognitive or mental health concerns, or required medication.
- A description of any unique body markings, tattoos, or scars, and a picture of those if possible.
- Whether they are missing fingers, toes or organs (e.g., appendectomy, hysterectomy), or are circumcised.
- The date, time, place and circumstances of their disappearance. Note if they took a trip, ran errands, went hiking, had an argument, attended a party, etc. Highlight if they are outside the area where they usually live (e.g., if they are from the east side of the state visiting the west side).
- Whether they:
 - Have any children.
 - Might be at risk to themselves or others.
 - Have been a victim of intimate partner or domestic violence.
- Any recent actions that are out of the ordinary or concerning to you, such as a lack of contact from the missing person.
- The make and model of any vehicles they may have access to and related license plate numbers.

Share anything additional you think is helpful to your loved one's case, including who they may have seen recently or where they work or spend time. If you have location services for your missing loved one, you can share those with law enforcement. Features and applications to share locations, like FindMy on iOS, Google Location Sharing, or Life360 available on Android and iOS devices, need to be set up before a person goes missing.

I have made the report, now what?

After your initial contact with law enforcement, it may be helpful to gather information. As your loved one's advocate, you have critical knowledge about your missing person, just by knowing them the way you do. You can communicate with law enforcement who you plan to speak to and additional information you gather.

- Note the missing person's habits. Make a list of places they frequent and bring their photo to check for any sightings at these locations. Use Appendix B (Timeline) to log circumstances around the time the person went missing.
- The law does not require the following individuals or entities to provide any information, but you can ask:
 - The place of residence. Ask the missing person's landlord if there have been any problems at their place of residence, if the missing person paid rent, or gave notice to vacate.
 - An employer. Inquire if they picked up their last paycheck or left instructions on where to send it.
- Check for any activity or transactions you did not make, if you share a bank account with the missing person.
- You can also check if the missing person had recent activity on money transfer apps⁷ like [CashApp](#),⁸ [Venmo](#),⁹ and [Zelle](#).¹⁰
- Use Appendix C (Contacts Log) to document names, phone numbers and addresses (if known) of everyone you talk to before and after reporting the missing person. This might include family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc. Note the information they shared and the date and time of the contact in case you need to follow up. This is helpful for search parties, law enforcement, and any other agencies involved in the search.

You can also ask law enforcement to do the following:

- Collect the missing person's dental records. Law Enforcement may be able to obtain records but may need signatures from immediate family members.
- Request that the local law enforcement agency in another area stop by and check on the welfare of a missing person who resides in another city or state.
- Contact the applicable state agency to check whether the missing person accessed public assistance benefits, such as the Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program.

Keeping Records

Use Appendix D (Law Enforcement Communications Log) to document every conversation with law enforcement or assisting agencies, including the officer's or individual's name and phone number, the date of the conversation, and any follow-up items from the conversation. Depending on the case, the frequency of contact can vary. Ask the officer or individual you work with when or how often you can expect to hear from them. Consider keeping this log where it will be accessible, like a printed copy near where you charge your phone, at a desk, or in your purse or wallet to have a convenient reference to previous conversations all in one place. This log is a different tool from Appendix C, the Contacts Log.

Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit

The Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit (MUPU) assists law enforcement and parents in locating missing persons. Before MUPU can assist families, all missing persons first need to be reported to the primary law enforcement agency where the person was last seen.



MUPU can provide a poster with a photo and assist with distribution for an active missing person upon a request by a family member/legal guardian or the law enforcement agency handling the investigation. MUPU encourages using their free poster because it contains all the most immediately necessary pieces of information while still protecting your or the missing person's information. To authorize this process, as well as the release of medical and dental information, complete the [MUPU data packet](#).¹¹ Typically, MUPU can help families complete the form. Fill out as much information as possible and email MPU@wsp.wa.gov with a recent, digital, colored, and good quality photo of the missing person. A case manager will then follow up.

If you think your loved one may be in a different city, county, or state, MUPU can assist with working across these boundaries with multiple jurisdictions. MUPU also activates alerts on missing persons. Alerts assist in disseminating information about a missing person to the media, public, and local law enforcement agencies. In Washington, there are four different types of alerts, each with its own criteria for issuing: Amber Alerts, Endangered Missing Persons Advisory (EMPA), Missing and Indigenous Persons Alerts (MIPA), and Silver Alerts.

For information on MUPU, alert types and information, and lists of missing persons, [visit this page](#).¹²

To request assistance: Email: MPU@wsp.wa.gov | Message Line: (800) 543-5678

What is a “right to go missing”?

Ultimately, law enforcement may not be able to provide any detail beyond that they located the missing person. Law enforcement's main concern in locating a missing person is the person's safety. You may hear that people have a “right to go missing.” This is another way to say that individuals have a right to privacy, and that adults have the choice to cut off contact. They can choose to leave work and ignore friends or even family. Going missing is not a criminal or detainable offense. Law enforcement has limits and cannot share information beyond what the individual has allowed.

There may be some cases where law enforcement can place a vulnerable person into protective custody. This might be someone under 18, someone who cannot take care of themselves, or someone who has experienced abuse or neglect.

Investigations

After law enforcement takes a missing person report and opens a case, it becomes an investigation. The resources law enforcement dedicates to it depend on many factors (as listed below). You can assist by providing as much information as possible, including any details that might indicate your loved one is vulnerable or in danger. You are your loved one's best advocate. Note that once the investigation begins, law enforcement may be limited in the information they can share with you to protect the integrity of the case.

Here are factors law enforcement may use in determining how they can address a case. One such consideration is if the missing person may be a harm to themselves. Law enforcement is looking most urgently for cues that the missing person might be in danger like:

- Does not have necessary prescription medications with them or there are other immediate medical concerns;
- Has or might have a behavioral or mental health concern;
- Has issues in their relationship, including abuse of any kind;
- Seems depressed;
- Has financial problems;
- Recently suffered a loss;
- Did not return from a wilderness or aquatic activity;
- Failed to perform an important task without notice, like meeting or picking up a child or family member.

Law enforcement will also consider cues that suggest the missing person may be voluntarily missing:

- Have gone missing before;
- Are missing belongings, like clothing, toiletries, car or wallet;
- Drained their bank account.

Bringing Attention to Your Missing Loved One: Media and Social Media Tips

Media and social media are powerful tools in garnering awareness. They are fast and effective ways to reach larger audiences. While there is no requirement to use either, there are a few advantages, including others potentially reporting sightings. There are many ways to build attention around a missing persons case.

Media

For some cases, it can be difficult to gain media interest and there is no guarantee the media will use your story or represent it how you share it.

Step 1: Decide if involving media is right for you.

Before working with the media, consider that many people may reach out to you. Let family members or friends know you are planning to speak to the media, so they are not caught off guard. The media and the public are helpful tools, but they can also be invasive, according to families with missing loved ones.

Step 2: Let law enforcement know.

Law enforcement can also be a helpful tool. Touching base with law enforcement when you want to go to the media with your story does two important things. First, it can help protect the integrity of the investigation. Law enforcement may intentionally leave out some details when sharing information publicly. Second, it can prevent duplication. The law enforcement agency you work with may have staff who regularly work with media and can help or coordinate media outreach. These professionals know how to communicate with media. In some cases, if law enforcement issues a press release, which is a publicity handout for publication, about your missing loved one, reporters may be more receptive to covering the case. Note that not every agency has a Public Information Officer (PIO).

If there is a PIO involved in the case, coordinate with them to get your missing person media exposure. If not, continue to the following steps.

Step 3: Find media outlets.

Location, readership, and personal contact with a reporter are among the considerations that can influence which media outlets you choose. Some options can include cable TV news stations, online news providers, local papers, even radio stations in your area.

TIP: actions to take if you can, but not required.

Find similar stories. Look out for other reporting on missing persons in your area. Reach out to the reporter to see if you can speak with them. Their contact information may be in one of their articles or on the news media's website. You may also be able to find the reporter on social media.

Step 4: Share information with media, including:

- Name or aliases of the missing person;
- Area they are missing from;
- Date they went missing;
- Age at disappearance;
- A current photo.

You can share your story with media. Say who your missing person is to you, what they might likely wear, physical and distinguishable characteristics. Consider writing the information down or recording yourself so you don't have to keep repeating yourself, especially if media attention becomes overwhelming.

Using Social Media

Major social media platforms have millions, and even billions, of users. The range of outreach with social media can be much broader than traditional media or word of mouth.

TIP: In your support network, identify someone who can help you with social media. They can help you post information and read and respond to comments. Social media can attract a lot of engagement, and consistently monitoring it can be overwhelming and traumatizing.

Social media is in a constant state of change. New platforms emerge regularly, and popularity can vary by age, interest, or content type. Ask your support network assisting with social media for help with different platforms, especially if your loved one uses one of them.

It is advisable to inform law enforcement about any engagement with the public, even on social media. If the investigating law enforcement agency has social media accounts where they provide information about missing persons, you can share their content. Most law enforcement agencies have social media accounts with Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and Nextdoor. The MUPU also has several social media accounts if your local agency does not have a particular account. You can also create a Facebook page devoted to bringing attention to your missing loved one.

Posts incorporating photos typically receive higher levels of engagement, which means more users are likely to see it. Photos can also help people identify the missing person. Use posters and flyers created by MUPU to release and spread information as they contain all the information necessary for public distribution. You are not required to use MUPU posters, but it is the standard and is free for families.

Sample template for creating a post:

MISSING PERSON: My loved one, *has been missing since*
 (date last seen). (He/She/They) were last seen at *(last location seen at) wearing*
(if known). If you have seen them recently, call 9-1-1 and let them know along with the
 case number *(loved one's case number). You can also call the non-emergency number*
with any additional information.

CAUTION: If you successfully bring publicity to your missing loved one, some people seeking to exploit your situation may contact you. Be wary of those who demand money with a promise to find your missing person, including private investigators or psychics or, most distressing, those who claim to be holding your missing person for ransom. Report all such information immediately to law enforcement.

You can also report businesses with unfair or deceptive practices to the [Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division](#),¹³ which helps address marketplace harm by resolving consumer complaints and investigating and litigating against business conduct that violates consumer protection laws.

Use the following links for instructions on how to make accounts and pages on different social media platforms:

- To create a [Facebook Account](#),¹⁴ a [Facebook Page](#),¹⁵ or to [share a Facebook post](#),¹⁶
- To create an [Instagram Account](#),¹⁷ make an [Instagram Post](#),¹⁸ or to [share an Instagram Post to your Story](#),¹⁹
- To create a [Nextdoor Account](#),²⁰
- To create a [TikTok Account](#).²¹

Take Care of Yourself

When a person is missing, their loved ones often struggle and experience trauma. Navigating the process of searching for a missing loved one while taking care of yourself and those around you is understandably overwhelming.

It takes courage, determination and the help of family, friends and trusted organizations to help you make it through. **You are not alone.** Family members who have lost someone and staff who work on missing persons cases offer the following suggestions:

Consider speaking with a professional, like a licensed therapist, if one is accessible to you.

Make attempts to stick to your normal routine. Drink lots of water, eat as regularly as you can, and rest when possible. You cannot do anything for anyone else unless you are taking care of yourself.

Talk to supportive people, like family, friends, and community or religious spaces. Do not cut yourself off from supportive relationships.

Look to support groups. Connect with groups specific to missing persons. Consider joining a Facebook group to connect online. Consider looking for options offering peer support programs. For missing children, NCMEC has a peer support program called [Team HOPE](#).²²

What is HIPAA and How Does it Relate to Missing Persons?

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is a federal law that is best known for protecting private health information. Law enforcement officers are familiar with these protections and may be able to help you obtain information that is not subject to these protections. Washington state health care providers may have additional restrictions on the information they can provide based on state law and their own policies. Hospitals, behavioral or mental health facilities, or even shelters for unhoused individuals may say that they cannot provide information due to HIPAA or other privacy protections. For more information on HIPAA, [click here](#).²³

Long-Term Missing

If law enforcement or others working on the case are not able to find a missing person quickly, continue asking them for updates at regular intervals or when anything changes, such as a new investigator assigned to the case. Expect law enforcement, medical examiners, and forensic specialists to continue sharing information in the national missing person databases. MUPU is also a good resource for long-term missing cases.

No loved one should ever be forgotten, no matter how long the case takes. As your loved one's best advocate, consider organizing vigils, marches, and/or prayer ceremonies (if that aligns with you and your community) to continue to raise awareness about your missing loved one. Milestone dates, such as birthdays or anniversary dates, might also be helpful to bring attention to the missing person. At such events, continue sharing the missing persons flyers and photos of your loved one.

Child custody

If your loved one has children under 18, you or others may have questions about child custody. If the loved one named a guardian in their will, a judge can finalize the guardianship. If the other parent is alive, the proposed guardian will need to notify the other parent about the proceeding. The other parent will have a chance to express to a judge whether or not the guardianship is in the child's best interest. For more information on parenting plans and other resources, [visit this page](#).²⁴

Hiring Private Investigators

If you decide to hire a private investigator to help locate a missing loved one, be sure to vet and interview them. Ask for their license number or other credentials. [You can look up licenses with a license number here](#).²⁵ Make sure that contracts specify exactly which services are included and the agreed upon rate for those services, and any services that are not included.

Once you hire a private investigator, notify all those working on the case. A private investigator's search activities should be fully coordinated with the investigating law enforcement agency to avoid costly and time-consuming duplication of services.

If a Loved One is Deceased

Death certificates

If a loved one unfortunately passes, the Department of Health processes death certificate orders through their [website](#).²⁶ Two main types of death certificates with different levels of detail are available. A long form death certificate includes cause and manner of death as well as the social security number of the deceased person; a short form does not include either. Long forms are typically used for closing out bank accounts or claiming benefits. Short forms are used to transfer titles or for real estate transactions. Check with the agency or business where you will use the certificate to know what information it must include.

In some cases, for the protection of personal information, only those with qualifying relationships may receive a death certificate. The link above provides specific information. Generally a "qualifying relationship" includes spouse/domestic partner, other family members, funeral establishments, or government agencies (for official duties). This process requires proof of identity and of the qualifying relationship when making a request.

Washington State Crime Victims Compensation Program

This state program works to reduce the financial impact of violent crime on eligible victims and their families. For those who qualify, the program can pay for medical and mental health treatment, medication, grief counseling, partial wage loss replacement, funeral expenses, and other expenses, such as co-pays and deductibles, not covered by other insurance. For more information on the program, check out [this brochure](#)²⁷ or [visit this webpage](#).²⁸

Wills and Probate

In the unfortunate case a loved one dies, family members may have to deal with a will and probate. If the deceased loved one had a will, it is usually presented to a local probate court. The court will authorize the executor to carry out the terms of the will. If a loved one did not have a will, the local court will distribute property depending on a [state's intestacy](#)²⁹ (distribution of assets) laws. See more information on probate terminology [here](#).³⁰

Methods of Identification

If remains do not have any identification, or decomposition renders visual identification impossible, the medical examiner or coroner will list the individual as “unidentified.” There are several methods to identify the individual, depending on information obtained from family and friends.

1. **DNA:** Family members may be asked to provide a DNA sample if one is not directly available from the missing person. DNA analysis can only establish identification if there is a comparable sample from the individual or a family member. DNA samples can be taken from a toothbrush, hairbrush or other personal items. Generally, but not always, DNA can be obtained from partial remains.
 - a. **State Process:** Law enforcement can send the material to the Washington State Crime Lab for analysis.
 - b. **Private Process:** You can also test DNA through private labs. This can be time intensive and cost prohibitive and is often a last resort in the identification process.
2. **Dental X-rays:** Comparison with dental records is a method of positive identification for recovered remains. Dental X-rays are helpful because dental work typically happens throughout someone's life. If X-rays are not available, other dental records, such as dental casts, charting, or photographs, may be used.
3. **Fingerprints:** Fingerprints can establish identification only if the missing person had fingerprints taken while alive and if fingerprints are obtainable from the unidentified body. If the missing person was officially fingerprinted while alive, retain any object belonging to the missing person that might have fingerprints.
4. **Body X-rays:** If your loved one had X-rays taken, provide those to law enforcement. Positive identification may be possible by comparing X-rays. Examiners prefer the most recent X-rays. Specifically, an X-ray of a broken bone or medical implant is helpful. This includes a CAT scan, a diagnostic imaging procedure that uses a combination of X-rays and computer technology, which is often taken in cases of suspected head injury.
5. **Implants:** Most implants will have serial numbers. Let law enforcement know if your loved one had any sort of surgery or implants, including knee and hip replacements as well as defibrillators.
6. **Other useful information** that can establish identity:
 - a. **Photos:** A photo of the missing person smiling allows comparison of the front teeth and a straight-on photo of the head allows superimposition, or a comparison with another image, like a skull.
 - b. **Scars, marks, tattoos:** Provide a description, and picture, if possible, of any unique body markings, tattoos, or scars. Let law enforcement know if your loved one was circumcised.
 - c. **Missing organs/appendages:** Report any removed organs (appendectomy, hysterectomy) or missing fingers/toes.

Comments and Recommendations

If you have used this workbook, please provide feedback at Missing.Persons@atg.wa.gov.

Appendix A: Missing Persons Resources and Databases

There are several databases that law enforcement across the country can use for missing persons cases and other investigations. Each database has different functions and purposes. In Washington, law enforcement must enter missing persons cases into NCIC, but requirements vary in other states. Sometimes agencies may have a database with a different name that feeds into NCIC.

The [National Crime Information Center](#) (NCIC) is managed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). NCIC is an electronic clearinghouse of crime data that also includes missing and unidentified reports. Only law enforcement personnel can access NCIC.


The Washington State Patrol [Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit \(MUPU\)](#) has resources that can be used by law enforcement to assist missing/unidentified person cases. They also manage dental information. Examiners use dental records to identify remains. MUPU can also assist with Family DNA reference samples.


Most databases are not accessible to the general public and are maintained for use by law enforcement personnel. Members of the public can create profiles to use NamUs, which allows viewing limited details and adding details to a case.

Case	DLC	Date Mod...	Legal Last Name	Legal First Name	Missi...	City	State ...	Biol...
MP130008	09/18/2024	09/30/2024	Scott	Linda	62 Ye...	Fayetteville	AR	Female
MP129368	08/15/2024	09/30/2024	Eiland	Marla	62 Ye...	Fayetteville	AR	Female
MP129987	05/12/2024	09/30/2024	Bush	Kenyatta	17 Ye...	Little Rock	AR	Female
MP129866	08/11/2024	09/30/2024	Bacoc	Ingrid	15 Ye...	Little Rock	AR	Female
MP130401	07/16/2009	09/30/2024	Deleon	Oscar	--	Springdale	AR	Male
MP129801	09/13/2024	09/30/2024	Tamashiro	Angel	14 Ye...	Springdale	AR	Female
MP130181	01/15/2024	09/30/2024	Zephyros	Demitrios	34 Ye...	Olympia	WA	Female
MP130389	07/01/2023	09/30/2024	Gwinn	Farrah	22 Ye...	West Hollywood	CA	Female
MP129479	09/09/2023	09/27/2024	Blackner	Ann	66 Ye...	Seattle	WA	Female
MP129690	07/04/2024	09/27/2024	REYNOSA CABALLERO	ULISES	27 Ye...	Manassas	VA	Male
MP130341	09/26/2024	09/27/2024	Zazueta	Pedro	15 Ye...	Goodyear	AZ	Male
MP130295	09/21/2024	09/27/2024	Crowton	Michael	50 Ye...	Fairfield	CA	Male
MP130087	05/27/2024	09/27/2024	Webb	Robert	82 Ye...	Chattaroy	WA	Male
MP130222	04/08/2024	09/27/2024	Daniels	Daniel	15 Ye...	Beaverton	OR	Male
MP130266	08/30/2024	09/27/2024	Baker	Clay	29 Ye...	National City	CA	Male

[National Missing and Unidentified Persons System](#)³¹ (NamUS): NamUs is a national centralized repository and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed person cases across the United States. Law enforcement, medical examiners, and coroners can use NamUs, as well as friends and families of the missing person. Members of the public can add new details, but law enforcement must verify details before they are added to the case record.

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Get Help Now

If you or someone else are in immediate danger, CALL 911 immediately.


[24-Hour Hotline
1-800-843-5678](#)
[Search Missing Posters](#)
[Make a CyberTipline Report](#)
[AMBER Alerts](#)

Is your child missing?

1. Immediately **call your local law enforcement agency**.
2. After you have reported your child missing to law enforcement, call the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at **1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)**.
3. If your child is missing from home, search through:
 - Closets.
 - Piles of laundry.
 - In and under beds.
 - Inside large appliances.
 - Vehicles – including trunks.
 - Anywhere else that a child may crawl or hide.
4. Notify the store manager or security office if your child cannot be found when in a store. Then **immediately call your local law enforcement agency**. Many stores have a Code Adam plan of action in place.

When you call law enforcement:

- Provide law enforcement with your child's name, date of birth, height, weight and descriptions of any other unique identifiers such as eyeglasses and braces. Tell them when you noticed your child was missing and what clothing he or she was wearing.
- Request law enforcement authorities immediately enter your child's name and identifying information into the FBI's **National Crime Information Center Missing Person File**.

[National Center for Missing & Exploited Children](#)³² (NCMEC): NCMEC is a national resource center for issues related to missing and exploited children. NCMEC assigns case managers to work on missing children's cases. NCMEC also operates a 24-hour toll-free hotline and a CyberTipline, which is a centralized reporting system for suspected child sexual exploitation.

Appendix B: Create a Timeline

When a loved one goes missing, investigators will ask for many details about how they disappeared. As you begin collecting this information, the Timeline template below can help you keep it all in one place. Describe known circumstances prior to your loved one’s disappearance. This could be following a specific trip or running errands, hiking, a family argument, a party, etc.

What happened?	Date and Time?	Location?	Anyone else involved or may know more?	What were they likely wearing?	Any vehicles Involved?	Any other details?
Ex. Hiking, Party, Family argument	Jan 1, 2024	Seattle, WA at a friend’s house	Friends at school	Black shirt and jeans, converse	Ford, license plate 123ABC	

Appendix C: Contact Log

As a loved one of a missing person, you have critical information that could help find them. It can be helpful to put it all in one place and in the same format to share with others involved in the search. Use the log below to document names and contact information (if known) of everyone you talked to before and after reporting your loved one missing. This could include family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc. Note the information received and date of the contact in the event you need to get back to them for additional information. This is helpful for search parties, law enforcement, and any other agencies involved in the search.

Name and Relationship Including who they are to the missing person	Contact info. (phone, address, email address) Where do they reside or work?	When did they last have contact? Last text, phone call, or email sent from the missing person? Last seen?	Additional information Was there a vehicle involved? Who else was there during that contact?

Appendix D: Law Enforcement Communications Log

Trying to find a missing person involves a lot of conversations and back and forth with a variety of people in law enforcement and other agencies. This Communications Log may be a helpful tool to use to keep track of all correspondence and engagement.

How to Use: When working with agencies, such as law enforcement, obtain the name, phone number and badge numbers, if relevant, of whom you spoke with so you can call to follow up or to report any additional information that you discover. Additionally, use the Log to record contents of the conversation and what the next steps may be, as well as who is responsible for those next steps.

Date and Time	Officer or Person	Badge number or role	What they said	Follow up/responsible party for follow up

Endnotes

- 1 WA Department of Corrections Inmate Search <https://www.doc.wa.gov/information/inmate-search/>.
- 2 More information about WSP's Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit can be found at: <https://www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/alerts-missing-persons/missing-persons/>.
- 3 State law requires entry into NCIC when the missing person is a child, a vulnerable adult, has been missing for 30 days or more, or is missing under suspicious circumstances and foul play is suspected (RCW 68.50.320).
- 4 The Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (Adam Walsh Act, Pub. L. No. 109-248) mandates NCIC entry must be made by law enforcement within two hours of receipt of a report of a missing or abducted child. <https://www.missingkids.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/missing.pdf>.
- 5 [Missing Child Emergency Response Quick Reference Guide for Families https://www.missingkids.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/publications/nc198.pdf](https://www.missingkids.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/publications/nc198.pdf).
- 6 Photos are immensely helpful to a case. Any photo is better than no photo, but a current photo is most helpful to law enforcement agencies and the public. A candid photo helps capture how someone might be likely to see the missing person, as opposed to a posed or smiling photo. Photos from licenses and identification issued by the Washington Department of Licensing (DOL) are only updated every 8 years, and the DOL is unable to provide a photo to law enforcement outside of standard business hours.
- 7 Depending on their privacy settings, you may or may not be able to see this information.
- 8 [How to use CashApp https://cash.app/help/us/en-us/6485-getting-started-with-cash-app](https://cash.app/help/us/en-us/6485-getting-started-with-cash-app).
- 9 [How to use Venmo https://help.venmo.com/hc/en-us/articles/209690068-How-to-Sign-Up-for-a-Personal-Venmo-Account](https://help.venmo.com/hc/en-us/articles/209690068-How-to-Sign-Up-for-a-Personal-Venmo-Account).
- 10 [How to use Zelle https://www.zellepay.com/fag/how-can-i-use-zelle#:~:text=To%20enroll%20with%20the%20Zelle,accounts%20or%20any%20credit%20cards](https://www.zellepay.com/fag/how-can-i-use-zelle#:~:text=To%20enroll%20with%20the%20Zelle,accounts%20or%20any%20credit%20cards).
- 11 [WSP Missing Persons Packet https://www.wsp.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/220017_Missing_Persons_Packet_10-18.pdf](https://www.wsp.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/220017_Missing_Persons_Packet_10-18.pdf).
- 12 [WSP MUPU Alerts and Missing Persons https://wsp.wa.gov/crime/alerts-missing-persons](https://wsp.wa.gov/crime/alerts-missing-persons).
- 13 [WA AGO Consumer Protection https://www.atg.wa.gov/consumer-protection](https://www.atg.wa.gov/consumer-protection).
- 14 [Creating a Facebook Account https://www.facebook.com/help/570785306433644](https://www.facebook.com/help/570785306433644).
- 15 [Creating a Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/business/help/1199464373557428?id=418112142508425](https://www.facebook.com/business/help/1199464373557428?id=418112142508425).
- 16 [Sharing a Facebook post https://www.facebook.com/help/163779957017799](https://www.facebook.com/help/163779957017799).
- 17 [Creating an Instagram Account https://help.instagram.com/155940534568753](https://help.instagram.com/155940534568753).
- 18 [Posting a photo on Instagram https://help.instagram.com/442418472487929](https://help.instagram.com/442418472487929).
- 19 [Sharing a post to your Instagram Story https://help.instagram.com/1013375002134043](https://help.instagram.com/1013375002134043).
- 20 [How to join Nextdoor https://help.nextdoor.com/s/article/How-to-join-Nextdoor?language=en_US](https://help.nextdoor.com/s/article/How-to-join-Nextdoor?language=en_US).
- 21 [Creating a TikTok Account https://support.tiktok.com/en/getting-started/creating-an-accounthtt](https://support.tiktok.com/en/getting-started/creating-an-accounthtt).
- 22 [NCMEC Team Hope https://www.missingkids.org/gethelpnow/support/teamhope](https://www.missingkids.org/gethelpnow/support/teamhope).
- 23 [WA Health Care Authority - what is HIPPA https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/notice-privacy-practices](https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/notice-privacy-practices).
- 24 [Washington Law Help, Parenting Plans https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/resource/parenting-plans-court-orders-about-child-cust](https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/resource/parenting-plans-court-orders-about-child-cust).

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- 25 [WA Department of Licensing, License Look Up https://professions.dol.wa.gov/s/license-lookup.](https://professions.dol.wa.gov/s/license-lookup)
 - 26 [WA Department of Health, Ordering Death Certificates https://doh.wa.gov/licenses-permits-and-certificates/vital-records/ordering-vital-record/death-record.](https://doh.wa.gov/licenses-permits-and-certificates/vital-records/ordering-vital-record/death-record)
 - 27 [WA Labor and Industries, Crime Victims Compensation Program Brochure https://lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F800-006-909.pdf.](https://lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F800-006-909.pdf)
 - 28 [WA Labor and Industries, Crime Victims Compensation Program Webpage https://lni.wa.gov/claims/crime-victim-claims/apply-for-crime-victim-benefits.](https://lni.wa.gov/claims/crime-victim-claims/apply-for-crime-victim-benefits)
 - 29 [RCW 11.04.015 https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=11.04.015.](https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=11.04.015)
 - 30 [RCW 11.02.005 https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=11.02.005.](https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=11.02.005)
 - 31 [National Missing and Unidentified Persons System https://www.namus.gov/dashboard.](https://www.namus.gov/dashboard)
 - 32 [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children https://www.missingkids.org/home.](https://www.missingkids.org/home)

