

Families and Friends of Missing Persons Service

A fact sheet for families and friends of missing persons

Families and Friends of Missing Persons Service (FFMPS) provides free counselling, information and support from trained professionals to people in NSW.

Who are we?

For families and friends of missing people, we offer:

- free and confidential counselling
- support group meetings
- information and resources on issues specific to missing people
- liaison with service providers.

Service providers can contact us with any questions about:

- FFMPS services and resources
- approaches to supporting families and friends of missing people.

Although we work with search agencies, we do not search for missing people. If you have concerns for the safety or welfare of a person who is missing, you can make a report at your local police station. For more information, visit NSW Police - police.nsw.gov.au

“I realised these meetings helped alleviate the pain and over time helped me find different tools which helped me cope with endless situations.” (Father)

Support available

Free and confidential counselling, information and support groups are available to families and friends of missing persons who live in NSW, or who have a relative or friend missing in NSW.

We can provide information, referrals, assistance and liaison during different events in a missing person's investigation. This includes: coronial investigations, legal and financial issues, and referrals for support when a missing person has been located.

“[FFMPS counsellors] helped me understand and learn to live with unresolved grief.” (Mother)

Support groups

Groups are held online throughout the year.

The groups intend to provide a safe space where families and friends can:

- meet and connect with others
- share and talk about experiences
- learn information about the missing persons sector
- share helpful ideas and strategies about ambiguous loss and living with a loved one who is missing.

“Initially I thought the meetings would be beneficial to me alone. However, I have learnt that through interacting with the facilitators and others who understand ‘missing’, I am able to contribute to the group and offer support to others – which is extremely satisfying.” (Group member)

Accessing support

We offer support to individuals or families by telephone, video conferencing and email.

To access support, or to refer someone to us, call or email an FFMPS counsellor.

Prior to attending a group for the first time a FFMPS counsellor will talk to you about your situation, whether the group is the best way to meet your needs, and how groups are run.

“Being part of this special group of brave people helps you share feelings and support each other. We are with the only people who truly understand how it feels to have a missing loved one.” (Mother)

Frequently asked questions

What if I need to cancel my appointment?

If you need to cancel your counselling appointment please give the counsellor as much notice as possible. Your counsellor will similarly provide adequate notice in the unlikely event of cancelling a session.

Can I make a complaint or give feedback?

You can make a complaint at any time. You can do this by email, post or over the phone.

We also welcome any other feedback. Everything you say will be treated confidentially.

Will you protect my privacy?

Yes. Victims Services is required to comply with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002.

Your counselling information is confidential and will only be released in rare instances where it is ordered by a court, required by law or you have consented to an exchange of information.

What other support is available?

Please ask us for referral advice if you need assistance from other agencies. Referrals will be made after consultation with you and with respect to your right to privacy.

We will ask you to sign a consent form prior to liaising with other agencies at your request (for example police or health professionals).

Choosing not to sign this form will not affect your access to our services. The form can be found at:

Web: www.missingpersons.justice.nsw.gov.au

Who should I contact to find out more?

Victims Access Line: 1800 633 063 | **Aboriginal Contact Line:** 1800 019 123

Email: ffmps@justice.nsw.gov.au **Website:** www.missingpersons.justice.nsw.gov.au

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