

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People in Washington (MMIWP)

Author

Northwest Justice Project

Last Review Date

May 5, 2025

Learn basic information about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIWP). Learn what to do after a Native woman or other Native loved one goes missing.

My loved one just went missing. What can I do?

Follow all the steps for reporting the person as missing that are detailed in the Missing Persons Toolkit (<https://agportal-s3bucket.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/2025%20Missing%20Indigenous%20Persons%20Toolkit.pdf?VersionId=lvVtTI>) from the Washington State Attorney General's Office. You should report them as missing immediately. Report them to the law enforcement agency in the place where the person was last seen.

Don't wait. You can file a report **as soon as you think** your loved one is missing – there's **no** waiting period in Washington. It's **an emergency** if someone is missing. Call 9-1-1 to file a missing person report as soon as you can.

What if I don't know which law enforcement to call?

You should call the law enforcement in the place where the missing person was last seen. If you don't know which law enforcement agency to call because of tribal jurisdictional issues, you might need help. You can use the Jurisdictional Assessment Tool and MMIW Database of Response Contacts from the MMIW Toolkit for Understanding and Responding to MMIW for Families and

Communities (<https://www.niwrc.org/resources/toolkit/mmiw-toolkit-families-and-communities>).

What if the missing person is under years old 17?

There are special steps for reporting a minor as missing (<https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/media/document/170022.pdf>) but you should still **report the person as missing immediately**. Ask the law enforcement officer to enter the person into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Missing Persons File. There are other important things you must do if the missing person is under the age of 18. (<https://www.missingkids.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/publications/nc198.pdf>)

What should I do during the first 72 hours after my loved one goes missing?

First, you should call 9-1-1 and file a missing person report. You can also try to contact your local tribal police to file a report.

After you file a missing person report, there are other important things to do immediately after a Native loved one goes missing (https://www.niwrc.org/sites/default/files/files/reports/mmiw_when-a-loved-one-goes-missing_guide_2024.pdf). The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center's (<http://www.niwrc.org/>) quick reference guide can help you learn what to do in the first few days (<https://www.niwrc.org/resources/booklet/when-loved-one-goes-missing-quick-reference-guide-families-missing-indigenous>) after someone you loves goes missing.

What can I do after the first 72 hours?

Follow the steps in this printable fillable workbook (https://www.niwrc.org/sites/default/files/images/resource/misti_full_workbook.pdf) from the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (<http://www.niwrc.org/>) that helps Native families and communities as they search for missing loved ones. It has practical, step-by-step information and forms for anyone searching for a missing loved one.

After you've filed the missing person report, try to get your loved one's photo on the Washington State Patrol (WSP) Missing Person's website (<https://wsp.wa.gov/crime/alerts-missing-persons/>). There's a specific site for Missing Indigenous Persons (<https://wsp.wa.gov/crime/alerts-missing-persons/missing-indigenous-persons/>) that includes information about who to contact to get your loved one listed. You might have to be a family member of the missing person to get them listed on the WSP site.

You might be able to have the Washington Attorney General's office share the flyer and other information about your missing loved one on their social media. You can send your flyer and questions [via email \(mailto:mmiwp@atg.wa.gov\)](mailto:mmiwp@atg.wa.gov).

How can I get the WSP Missing Indigenous Person alerts?

You can sign up online (<https://www.wsp.wa.gov/media/subscribe/>) for any of the various WSP Missing person alerts, including the Missing Indigenous Persons alerts.

Where can I get more support?

You can get support at a monthly [MMIWP Family Support Talking Circle \(https://agportal-s3bucket.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/Initiatives/MMIWP/fam_talk_circle_2025.png?VersionId=EZVfgdEJWrRYDcARl\)](https://agportal-s3bucket.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/Initiatives/MMIWP/fam_talk_circle_2025.png?VersionId=EZVfgdEJWrRYDcARl) hosted by the [Washington State Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Task Force \(https://www.atg.wa.gov/washington-state-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-and-people-task-force\)](https://www.atg.wa.gov/washington-state-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-and-people-task-force).

Your tribe might be able to help or might have culturally specific support programs.

What if the case for my missing loved one is old?

Washington has a new [MMIWP Cold Case Unit \(https://www.atg.wa.gov/mmiwp-cold-case-unit\)](https://www.atg.wa.gov/mmiwp-cold-case-unit) at the Washington Attorney General's office. You can contact the Unit by:

- Phone: 1-844-770-7900
- Email: [crjmmiwp@atg.wa.gov \(mailto:crjmmiwp@atg.wa.gov\)](mailto:crjmmiwp@atg.wa.gov)

You can make anonymous reports to the MMIWP Cold Case Unit.

Where can I learn more?

The [Washington State Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Task Force \(https://www.atg.wa.gov/washington-state-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-and-people-task-force\)](https://www.atg.wa.gov/washington-state-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-and-people-task-force) has a helpful information page that includes a calendar of upcoming MMIWP Task Force activities and reports.

The [Indigenous Sexual Assault and Abuse Clearinghouse \(ISAAC\) \(https://www.isaaconline.org/mmiw\)](https://www.isaaconline.org/mmiw) has more information about MMIWP and various reports.

WashingtonLawHelp.org gives general information. It is not legal advice. Find organizations that provide free legal help on our [Get legal help](#) page.