

Support for families and friends.

When a loved one goes missing it can be very distressing. People all react differently to their situation. If you do experience any or all of the following it is important to recognise that you are responding in a normal way:

Anger, Guilt, Depression, Inability to sleep, Nightmares, Desperation, Isolation, Panic attacks, Blame, Loss of appetite, Helplessness, Loss of control, Numbness.

It is important that you look after yourself during this period. Try and rest when you can and eat nutritional meals. Accept support from family and friends. We understand you may wish to make your own enquiries, if you do, do not put yourself in danger and liaise with the police officer allocated to your case.

You may also like to consider seeking support via your own GP (if appropriate).

Missing people is a national charity that supports families left behind. They can be contacted at:

www.missingpeople.org.uk

Telephone: 0500 700 700

Another website that you may find useful, specifically for people who go missing abroad is:

www.missingabroad.org.uk

Most people who are reported missing return home or are found within one week of being reported missing.

When the missing person is found.

Police will personally visit and speak with the returned person regarding the reasons they went missing and establish if any further support or action is needed.

Contact Details:

The officer dealing with your report is:

.....

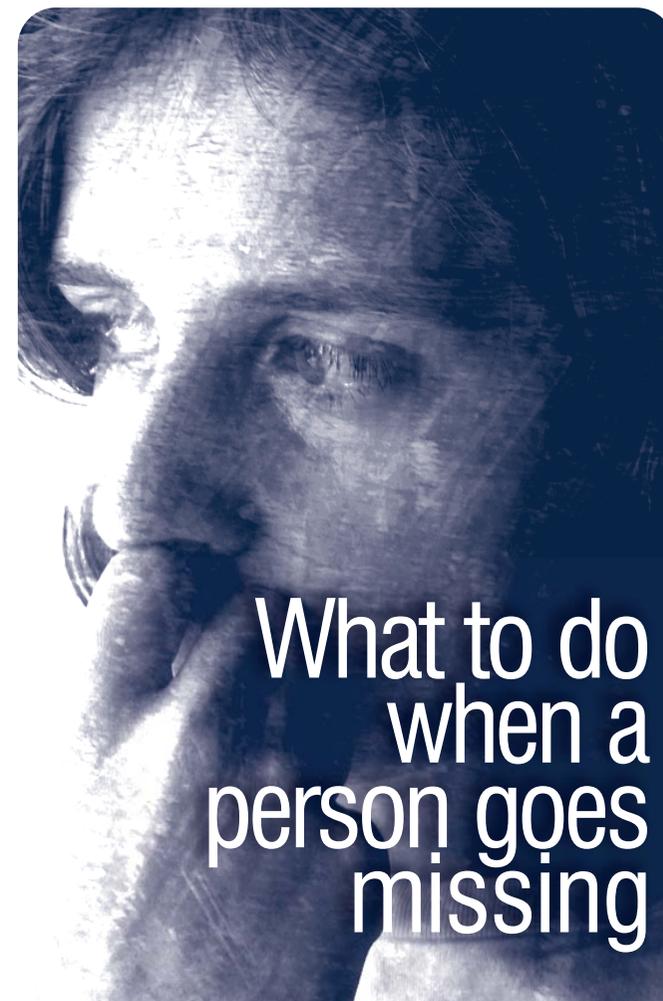
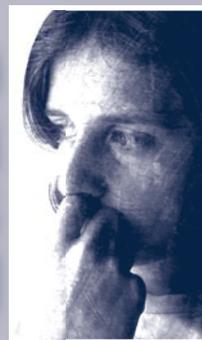
Telephone contact number:

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Event log number:

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What to do
when a
person goes
missing



What to do
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When someone goes missing
it can be very distressing for
family and friends.

This leaflet has been produced
by Suffolk Constabulary to aid
family members or friends of
the missing person.



What happens when you report a person missing?

A police officer will attend and take a detailed report about the person being reported missing. Details you provide will help assess their level of risk, for example:

- **Age of the person**
- **Out of character, unusual behaviour**
- **Has the person taken clothing, money or personal belongings**
- **Family/relationship problems**
- **Employment/financial problems**
- **School/college problems**
- **Ongoing victim of bullying and harassment**
- **Drug or alcohol dependency**
- **Medication needs, for example for diabetes or epilepsy**
- **Suffering from depression, suspected self harm**
- **May have considered or previously attempted suicide**
- **Suspicion of abduction or murder**

Other information we may ask you to provide:

- **General physical description including tattoos/scars**
- **A current photograph of the missing person - this may be required for a media release should this be necessary**
- **Any diary, laptop or mobile phones that belong to the missing person**
- **Any bank, credit card or other financial details**
- **The registration details and make of any car, motorbike or other vehicle that may be in the possession of the missing person**
- **School/employment/benefit details**
- **Name of the missing person's doctor and dentist**
- **A list of friends the missing person may have had contact with**
- **Places frequented by the missing person**

What happens next?

Details of the missing person will be circulated to local police and put on the Police National Computer (PNC) database for circulation across the country.

A record will be created on our Community Policing Activities and Case Tracking (COMPACT) database, which logs all enquiries carried out and tasks completed. It is the overall responsibility of the local police inspector for the management of the enquiry, however, the local supervisor will ensure tasks are identified and completed.

As standard procedure police will search the home address and any outbuildings in case the missing person is still located somewhere on the premises.

They will consider all lines of enquiry deemed appropriate and necessary in the circumstances. These could include:

- **Searching the area where the person was last seen (if this was not at the home address)**
- **Checks on mobile phones and computers used by the missing person**
- **House to house enquiries**
- **Reviewing CCTV footage**
- **Land and air searches, in particular for high-risk cases.**

This list is not exhaustive and will depend on the level of risk for the missing person and new information being obtained.

If the missing person is not located within 48 hours, or sooner depending on the circumstances and considered risk, the police will consider issuing a press release to the local media appealing for help from the public.

In some cases police will need to take a sample for the Missing Person DNA database. These DNA samples can be found on toothbrushes, combs, asthma inhalers and other items that have only been used by the missing person. If this is needed, the police will advise you what items they can use. Once the missing person is located their DNA sample will be destroyed.

What can you do to help?

- Contact friends or family to establish where/when they last saw the missing person
- Contact police if you have any information that may assist
- Contact police immediately if the missing person returns or makes contact with you or another family member or friend

You may be overwhelmed by the situation: therefore it may be helpful to keep a log of who you speak to including police officers, other organisations you may become involved with and friends of the missing person.

What can you expect of police?

We will agree with you how you would like to be kept updated and who will be responsible for these updates. Where possible you will have a single point of contact.

Depending on the circumstances of the missing person's disappearance we may appoint a Family Liaison Officer (FLO), but not in all cases. It is the role of the FLO to be the link between yourselves and the investigation team. The FLO will be a single point of contact and will keep you fully updated with the investigation.

