

## Quick facts about reporting a missing adult in Canada

Usually a person's family and friends know the individual's routine well and are the first to recognize when regular patterns are broken. In the majority of cases, explanations are easily found.

### No reasonable explanation for the disappearance

However, when there are no explanations and you are concerned for the person's safety or well-being, you should contact police to discuss the situation. The sooner police are made aware of the disappearance, the sooner they are able to begin work on locating your loved one.

When speaking with police, it is extremely important to tell them why or how the situation is different from the missing person's normal routine. For example, is the missing person someone who calls daily and is suddenly unreachable for several days? Has the person not returned after a wilderness trip? Be sure to explain how the situation is unusual.

### Waiting period before contacting police

There is **no** waiting period for filing a missing person report in Canada.

Having to wait 24 hours, 48 hours, or any other set time period is a myth.

### Who can report a missing adult?

Although missing adults are usually reported to police by family members, you do not have to be a relative to file a missing person report.

A person can be reported missing by a friend, co-worker, neighbour, employer, doctor, community worker, or anyone who knows the missing person's routine well enough to recognize when there is a change.

### Where to file a report

A missing person's report should be filed with the police force responsible for the city/area where the person disappeared from.

There are situations where the missing person disappears from an area that is different from where the reporting person lives (e.g. different city or province) or far away geographically (e.g. someone who disappears while on vacation). If this applies in your situation, contact the police force in the area where the disappearance occurred.

It may be possible to have your local police take the missing person's report and forward it to the police force in the area where the disappearance occurred. This is something to discuss when filing the report.

If the investigation involves more than one police agency, it is a good practice to contact each of the police agencies involved to ensure all information has been passed along.

## **It is not a crime for an adult to go missing**

It is not a crime for an adult to sever all contacts and voluntarily walk away from her/his life to start over elsewhere. As a result, police have the difficult job of balancing the missing adult's right to privacy with finding out the reasons for the disappearance.

In some cases, the person no longer wishes to remain in contact with her/his loved ones. When this happens, police have to respect the missing person's decision. In most cases, the searching family is notified that the missing person has been located but no further details are shared without the missing person's consent.

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