



NAVIGATING THE MISSING PERSONS PROCESS

A missing person is someone who is absent from the places they usually frequent and whose location is unknown despite reasonable efforts to locate them. A missing person may also require assistance. Depending on the circumstances surrounding their absence or their physical or mental capabilities, there may be concerns for their safety and welfare.

EDMONTON
POLICE
SERVICE

PRIOR TO MAKING A MISSING PERSONS REPORT...

If you believe someone you know is missing, there are several steps you (the reporter) can consider taking prior to initiating a missing persons report. The information you collect while taking these steps may help you locate the missing person. This information may also be useful to police investigators should you require further assistance and will help them assess the risk to the person when a missing persons report is initiated.

Hospitals

Contact local hospitals to see if the missing person is a patient. This can be done by calling the below noted numbers and asking for “patient location.”

U of A Hospital	780-407-8822
Misericordia Hospital	780-735-2000
Grey Nuns Hospital.	780-735-7000
Royal Alexandra Hospital	780-735-4111
Alberta Hospital	780-342-5555
Surgeon Hospital.	780-418-8200

Shelters

Does the missing person frequent, or have they used the services of local shelters or drop-in centres? If the missing person does attend shelters, make note of which ones they frequent. You can also call the shelters noted below.

Due to privacy concerns shelters may not release information to the public about their clients, but they will often take a message and pass it on to the client.

Hope Mission	780-422-2018
Herb Jamieson.	780-429-3470
George Spady Centre	780-424-8335
Youth Empowerment and Support Services.	780-468-7070

In the event phone numbers have changed, please call 411 for updated information.

Employment/Banking/Finances

Is the missing person currently employed? If so, who is their employer and have you reached out to them? Does the missing person have access to finances/money? Where do they get their money from? If the missing person has a bank account, the following information is very helpful to police in attempting to locate the missing person:

- > Which bank do they use? Do they use more than one bank?
- > What type of accounts do they have or what type of cards do they have? For example, do they have a chequing account with a debit card or do they have a credit card?

Banks will not release information about their clients to the general public, however, they will release it to police involved in an investigation. Knowing the above information narrows the search and speeds up the process of obtaining up-to-date information.

If a spouse, family member, or guardian has access to the missing person's banking records (either by online banking or via bank statements), this can help to determine where the missing person might be.

Social Media

Does the missing person use social media? Are they on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.? Are they on dating sites like Tinder or Plenty of Fish? If they use social media, do you know their profile name, email address, or what their profile picture looks like? If you follow or interact with them on social media, have they made any recent posts?

Cell Phones

Does the missing person have a cell phone? Have you called them? Knowing their current phone number can help police locate them.

Friends/Associates

Do you know any of the missing person's friends or associates? Have you spoken to any of these people? Who were they last in contact with? Where does this friend/associate live?

Daily Routine

Do you know the daily routine of the missing person? What places do they frequent? How do they get around? Is this behaviour out of character for them? If they have been missing before, how long were they gone and where were they found?

FILING A MISSING PERSONS REPORT

If you are unable to locate a missing person and choose to initiate a missing persons report, please call the EPS Communications Section at **780-423-4567**.

Reports **cannot** be made by walking into a police station. This is to ensure the same standardized information is collected in every case and the required risk assessment is completed in all instances.

There is no minimum time period that you must wait before contacting the police to report a person as missing.

When you make this phone call to police, the following process may take place:



1. Evaluation

When you call police, you will speak with a police evaluator. They will gather information to determine if the missing person is deemed high risk.

If one or more of the following criteria are met, the missing person is considered high risk.

- > Alzheimer or dementia concerns/prone to wandering.
- > Over 80 years of age.
- > A child 12 years of age and younger.
- > A victim or witness in recent or future criminal or family court proceedings
- > Suicidal at present time.
- > Involved in suspicious circumstances.
- > A person who is endangered due to mental health concerns or capacity, and/or whose physical capabilities present a risk of injury or death.

All high-risk reports of missing persons will result in a priority dispatch of patrol officers.

If the Emergency Communications Officers determine that the missing person does not meet high-risk criteria, your report must undergo a **risk assessment** conducted by a trained Communications Administrative Assistant. You will be forwarded to this person, or they will call you after your initial call to police.



2. Risk Assessment

When the Communications Administrative Assistant speaks with you to conduct the risk assessment, they will ask you a variety of questions:

- > What was the last confirmed location of the missing person? Who had the last confirmed contact with the missing person?
- > Are there unusual circumstances or out of character behaviour leading to the report?
- > Have you checked with friends, family, workplace, hospitals or places frequented by the missing person?
- > What personal items did the missing person take or leave behind?
- > Does the missing person have an intellectual disability that prevents them from going into the community alone?
- > Does the missing person have a mental health concern? Have they indicated they are suicidal?
- > Does the person have any physical or medical conditions that may be life threatening?
- > Are there suspicious or unknown circumstances?
- > Are they involved in drug use, gang affiliation, sex work?
- > Does the missing person have any substance abuse issues?

The results of the risk assessment will determine whether or not a person is listed as missing.

If the risk assessment dictates that the person does not meet the criteria, then they are not listed as missing. A report is taken documenting this decision and it is reviewed by supervisors and the EPS Missing Persons Unit. In these cases, you are encouraged to call back should circumstances change or if the person has still not been located.

If the risk assessment dictates that the person should be listed as missing, then the file is dispatched to patrol officers or sent to the Missing Persons Unit for further investigation.



3. Investigation

If a person is listed as missing, it will most likely be investigated by patrol officers. EPS Patrol divisions will dedicate a large amount of resources to the initial investigation if required. If the person is not located after a number of days, then the file may be transferred to the Missing Persons Unit.

Once you initiate a missing persons report with the police and you have been contacted by an investigator, get their contact information (name, badge number and phone number or email) and write it down. Don't be afraid to stay in touch. Let the police know if something changes or new information comes to light. Also, please contact the investigator or call 780-423-4567 if the missing person returns.

99% of all missing persons return or are located by police.

If the person you reported missing is not located, it is important to note that the file remains open indefinitely. The EPS recognizes the tremendous grief and trauma that loved ones experience when coping with an ambiguous loss. The EPS Missing Persons Unit can assist with connecting you and other family members to our dedicated Family Liaison member or to the appropriate member of the EPS Crime and Trauma Informed Support Services.

REPORTING A PERSON MISSING OUTSIDE OF EDMONTON

If a missing person was last seen in another jurisdiction outside of Edmonton you can contact that police agency, or a report can still be made by contacting the EPS at the number indicated above. Once the information has been collected, it will be forwarded to the police agency responsible for that jurisdiction. This is considered best practice across Canada.

CANADA'S MISSING

<http://www.canadasmissing.ca/index-eng.htm>

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR CHILD PROTECTION

<https://missingkids.ca/en/help-us-find/tip-or-sighting>

