

How to Protect Yourself and Your Family

Before Anything Happens

- 1 Share your live location with a trusted person**
Use a phone's built-in location-sharing (Find My / Google Maps location sharing) with at least one person you trust, especially when traveling alone, at festivals, or in an unfamiliar city.
- 2 Agree on a check-in schedule**
Set a specific time to check in by text or call when going somewhere new -- a missed check-in is the earliest possible warning sign, and it only works if someone is expecting it.
- 3 Keep a written record of plans**
Tell someone the specific address, event, or route you're heading to, and who you expect to be with.

The First 24-48 Hours of a Disappearance

- 1 Do not wait 24 hours to report**
There is no official waiting period to file a missing-person report in the United States -- contact local police immediately. The first hours are the most critical window for locating someone.
- 2 File with local police, not just online**
Go in person or call the non-emergency line of the police department covering the area the person was last seen, and ask for a case number.
- 3 Contact the Black and Missing Foundation**
BAMFI helps families get missing-persons cases visibility and media coverage: 1-877-972-2634.

4

Submit the case to NamUs

The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (namus.gov) is the free national database law enforcement and families can both use to search and cross-reference cases.

5

Preserve digital evidence

Screenshot the person's last social media activity, save texts, and note their phone's last known location before it might be wiped or reset.

Staying Safe Day to Day

1

Trust your instincts in unfamiliar situations

If a situation feels wrong, leave -- don't wait for proof.

2

Travel in groups when possible

At festivals, parks, or unfamiliar areas, especially at night, stay with people you know.

3

Keep emergency contacts accessible

Store ICE (In Case of Emergency) contacts directly on your phone's lock screen.