

FACT SHEET 7

The role of the Tasmanian Police force in the coronial process



THIRRILI

This fact sheet explains the role of the Tasmanian police force in a coronial inquest when a family member dies suddenly. The fact sheet explains what to expect when talking to the police throughout the coronial process.

What is the role of the police?

- The Tasmanian police are required to report sudden or unexplained deaths to the coroner.
- The police will start gathering information immediately after a death to provide an initial report to the coroner.
- If the coroner decides the death was not due to natural circumstances, the police are directed to carry out a full investigation.
- The police may ask for reports from experts and statements from witnesses, including family and friends as a part of their investigation.
- During a coronial hearing, the police may identify an individual as a witness who will receive a summons to appear in court. If they don't attend the hearing, the coroner may issue a warrant for their arrest which will be carried out by the police.
- The police provide a report to the coroner about their investigation (a brief of evidence) which the coroner will use to help find out the cause and circumstances of the death of a loved one.

Communicating with the Police

- The police are expected to provide updates on the status of the investigation and the coronial process to the families.
- The police may request a statement from family members about the deceased and the circumstances of the death. You only need to provide a statement to police if you want to.

- If you are unable or uncomfortable discussing your sorry business with the police you can nominate someone else to discuss your cultural needs with them.
- Families do not need a lawyer when they give a statement to the police, but they are entitled to one if they want. All families of First Nation Peoples are entitled to have legal representation and legal advice relating to the coronial process.

More help

For independent legal services;

- Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service | TALS
- legalaid.tas.gov.au



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Working with families and communities after suicide

1800 805 801

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