

What do I do after I get the call?

Write down the details from initial call:

- ☐ Record the caller's name, title, contact information and the time/date of the call.
- ☐ Note the cause of death, location, timeline, facility, agency, autopsy status and any witnesses.

Retrieve the body and belongings:

- ☐ Coordinate with the facility to arrange for your loved one's body and belongings. Try to act quickly, as it may get harder to track down items over time. .

Send a preservation request:

- ☐ Contact the relevant officials (warden, jail administrator, medical examiner) to request that evidence be preserved.
- ☐ Request preservation of:
 - Surveillance video/audio
 - Emails/correspondence
 - Facility records
 - Medical records
 - Grievance forms
 - Incident reports
 - Autopsy materials

File a records request:

- ☐ Use National Freedom of Information Coalition (NFOIC) resources to understand state records laws and access sample letters.
- ☐ For medical records, complete a HIPAA release form AND prove next of kin status (requirements vary by state).
- ☐ Be specific in your request and follow up consistently to make sure records are released.

Consider talking to incarcerated people who knew your loved one:

- ☐ Use state or federal facility locator tools to contact people who may provide valuable information about your loved one's time in custody.

What steps should I take if I'm considering filing a wrongful death lawsuit?

Determine who can file:

- ☐ Identify who in your family is legally eligible to file the lawsuit.

Consider hiring a lawyer:

- ☐ Look for a contingency lawyer (no upfront fees) if you cannot afford legal representation.

Consider a private autopsy:

- ☐ If you're unsure about the official autopsy, request a private autopsy (which contingency lawyer may cover) or a free second autopsy through Know Your Rights Camp.

Know the legal deadlines:

- ☐ Consult with an attorney to understand the deadlines for filing wrongful death claims or lawsuits.