



Caring, Support, Awareness, Education
Telephone Help Line: 1300 767 022

Website: www.sosbsa.org.au
Email: secretary@sosbsa.org.au
Facebook: [SOSBSA](https://www.facebook.com/SOSBSA)
Mail: P.O. Box 334
Springwood Qld 4127

Reporting a suicide

The police will need to be contacted so that they may investigate what occurred. They will probably need to question family and friends. The person who found the suicide victim will most likely be asked to make a statement regarding the discovery of the suicide and the events that preceded it. If the suicide victim left a note, tape or video recording, the police will take possession of same as evidence.

Unfortunately, once a person has suicided, that person comes under the jurisdiction of the law and the police follow the very necessary and relevant legal procedures. As a close family member or friend, it will be a distressing and emotional occasion and you may find yourself feeling completely hopeless and frustrated during these procedures.

The scene of the suicide will need to be visited by the police and they will explain the relevant and legal and usual procedures that are necessary. If the person who found the suicide victim has not already contacted the ambulance service, the police will do so.

Once the police have investigated the suicide, the police will arrange for the suicide victim to be taken to the morgue (within the Brisbane metropolitan and regional areas, it will be the John Tonge Centre), in other areas it may be the hospital morgue or local funeral home. The police will require someone to formally identify the body. It is advisable that you have a support/ advocate person: one who can absorb information that may be overwhelming for you; who will help you deal with police; the Coroner's Court or the media; who will accompany you to the morgue as this is a traumatic and emotional experience.

The police, if deemed necessary, may be in contact with you again to gather further information.

The Coroner

In Queensland, deaths may be subject to a Coroner's Inquiry and, as a legal requirement, include 'unnatural deaths' such as violent or unusual causes, accidents, suicides, homicides and deaths in prisons.

The police, acting on behalf of the Coroner, having conducted the investigation of the suicide will report their findings to the Coroner.

A post-mortem examination (or autopsy) may be performed to determine the exact cause of death. The results of this examination will be reported to the Coroner. An inquest is not automatically held as the Coroner may be satisfied with reports from the police and medical examiner.

Should you choose, you are entitled to a copy of the post-mortem results (or Autopsy Report) and the Coroner's report and upon your request, you may obtain same from the Coroner's Office. It is helpful to have a

compassionate person with you when you first read the report. If it is too harrowing, leave it until you feel that you can cope. You may also request a copy of the Police Report. It may take some time to obtain this information and, if the Coroner decides to hold an inquest into the suicide, be prepared for a lengthy period of time to elapse, as the duties of the Coroner are very demanding.

Brisbane Coroner's Office

179 North Quay
BRISBANE Q 4000
Phone: (07) 3247 4606
Fax: (07) 3247 9292

Coronial Support Unit

John Tonge Centre
39 Kessels Road
COOPERS PLAINS Q 4108
Phone: (07) 3274 9197
Fax: (07) 3274 9108

Outside Brisbane —

Local Magistrates Court:

Phone numbers are listed in
the local White Pages

**Queensland Health Scientific
Services (QHSS)**

John Tonge Centre for
Forensic Sciences
COOPERS PLAINS Q 4108
Phone: (07) 3284 9200

QLD Helplines

Standby Brisbane 07 3250 1856
Standby Response Service 0438 150 180
(24 hour mobile crisis response to suicide bereavement)
Sunshine and Cooloola Coasts 0407 766 961

National Helplines

LifeLine: 13 11 14 (24 hour)
Mensline: 1300 789 978 (24 hour)
Suicide Callback Line: 1300 659 467 (24 hour)
National Hope Line: 1300 467 354 (24 hour bereavement support)
Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636
Kids Help Line: 1800 55 1800 (24 hour)
SANE Helpline: 1800 18 SANE (M-F 9am-5pm)

Photo by Pia Koskelainen