

How To Find A Missing Person - The Methods Investigators Use in Their Work

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It is not always necessary to hire a private investigator to search for a missing person. In fact, the time consuming task of investigating a missing person can be done by almost anyone.

As long as a person understands and follows the procedure provided herein, they can do the job of searching for a missing person as well as a hired detective.

Before beginning, realize that you must maintain a detailed record of your investigation. Keep this and copies of any correspondence in a file.

Begin your investigation at the point where the subject was last seen and radiate in ever-growing circles. When you come up with a solid lead, your search will then go only in one direction.

Contact the subject's immediate family very early in your investigation. See if they have any ideas. From there you should contact your subject's closest friends and then the neighbors.

Now widen your search further by questioning other associates of the subject, like the hairdresser, bartender, gas station attendant or newspaper boy. These people must not be overlooked as they are all sources of possible information.

More than likely, when you have completed the task of speaking to all these people, you will have some good leads. But if you wish to further the investigation, use as many of the ten following sources as you need.

POST OFFICE

Send an envelope to the last known address of the missing person, with your own in the upper left corner and write on the envelope, **DO NOT FORWARD - ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**. If a forwarding address has been left, you will be notified of it.

SUPERIOR COURT DOCKET

By writing to the Court Clerk in the county in which the subject was last known to reside, you can find out if the subject was involved in any legal proceedings. There will be a small fee for the search.

TELEPHONE RECORDS

You can check with the telephone company to find out if the missing person made any long distance calls just prior to departure. You can check with the people called for any leads.

DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Request that a search of the department's files be done for the missing person's driver's license as well as his/her address. There will be a fee for this service and the missing person's full name and date of birth are required to conduct the search.

CITY DIRECTORY

Your local public library has a city directory which lists people by name, address and occupation. They also have a cross reference for phone numbers. Check back for several years,.

VOTER REGISTRATION

Voter registration records are open to the public and these records show name, address and date of registration.

COUNTY RECORDER

This county recorder records all types of legal documents, like marriage certificates and wills. A letter to this office may open up some leads.

COUNTY ASSESSOR

This office is in charge of tax collection. If your subject owns any property, he will be listed with this office.

CITY BUSINESS LICENSE

If your subject owns a business he will have his license on file with this office. Run a check on the name of the business and the subject's name.

FRATERNAL ASSOCIATIONS

If the missing person is a member of any type of organization, a letter of inquiry to the local chapter can be helpful.

Under certain conditions, the Social Security Office will assist in locating a missing person. You must send a letter stating your reason for wanting to find a person to the Department of Health, Education & Welfare, Social Security Administration, Baltimore, Maryland. They do not assist insurance companies or bill collectors.

By going through the right channels, you can conduct your own investigation for a missing person. Good luck and good hunting!