

Benefits of Counseling

Some of the benefits of seeking counseling are:

- Reviewing the incident and processing the event can help you clarify what actually occurred.
- The discussion of legal and judicial decisions can be utilized as part of the promotion of healing and resolution.
- Counseling can help develop coping skills and strategies—allowing for the continuance of school, work or relationships.
- Establishment of a support network can help to decrease the negative physical, psychological and emotional effects that often result from grief.

Survivors can utilize the experience and their grief as an opportunity to practice confidence and assertiveness and reduce isolation.

Who can help?

The Victim Services Unit within the Travis County Sheriff's Office can provide assistance with information about your case status, Crime Victims' Rights, Crime Victim Compensation, navigation of the criminal justice system and referrals to appropriate community helping professionals or organizations according to your specific needs.



Resources

Texas Department of Public Safety
(512) 424-2000
www.txdps.state.tx.us

Medical Examiner's Office
(512) 854-9599
<https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/medical-examiner>

**Office of the Attorney General
Crime Victims' Compensation**
1 (800) 983-9933
<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/crime-victims-compensation>

Hospitals:

Dell Seton Medical Center
1500 Red River St. Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 324-7000

Dell Children's Medical Center
4900 Mueller Blvd. Austin, Texas 78723
(512) 324-0000

Grief Support Agencies:

The Christi Center
(512) 467-2600
www.christicenter.org

Austin Center for Grief and Loss
(512) 472-7878
www.austingrief.org

**MADD – Mother Against Drunk
Drivers, Texas Chapter**
(512) 512-445-4976
www.madd.org

Serious Traffic Incidents & Fatalities

Victim Services Unit
5555 Airport Blvd.
Austin, TX 78751
512-854-9709



Name/ID Number:

Direct Number:

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1748
Austin, TX 78767

When an unexpected serious injury or death occurs, it can be a very confusing and traumatic for those involved. This information is intended to help you understand what happens after a serious injury accident or fatality and who to contact for more assistance.

What happens at the scene of a serious accident?

After an accident with serious injuries occurs, the first people on scene are usually first responders: EMS paramedics, firefighters, and law enforcement personnel. Their job is to assess the situation. Depending on the severity of their injuries, patients might be transported to the hospital via ambulance. In very serious cases, survivors could also be transported by the Travis County Starflight Helicopter to the nearest appropriate level trauma center. Most adult patients are transported to the Austin/Travis County level two trauma center at Dell Seton Medical Center. Children are transported to Dell Children's Medical Center.

Dell Seton Medical Center

1500 Red River Street, Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 324-7600

Dell Children's Medical Center

4900 Mueller Blvd., Austin, Texas 78723
(512) 324-0000

TCSO Victim Services may be called to the scene of the incident or to the hospital to provide crisis services to the family and survivors. Victim Services may also be asked to accompany TCSO Deputies or DPS Troopers to notify next-of-kin if there has been a death. Victim Services can offer support, assistance contacting loved ones, information about the process, information about funeral services and grief resources.

What happens with the investigation?

If the accident is serious or results in death, the Travis County Sheriff's Office will contact the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to conduct an investigation of the incident. TCSO Deputies will remain on scene to provide assistance, such as traffic control, but DPS is the primary investigative agency.

Any questions related to the investigation of a traffic fatality should be directed to the Texas Department of Public Safety at (512) 424-2000.

What if the accident results in a death?

The Medical Examiner's Office will be contacted for transport of the body upon completion of the on-scene investigation. When there is a need to establish cause of death or in cases where criminal proceedings may follow, the Medical Examiner's Office will perform an examination.

Travis County Medical Examiner
7723 Springdale Road, Austin TX 78724
(512) 854-9599

How is a funeral arranged?

If you do not already have a funeral home selected, a Victim Services advocate may provide you with a list of local funeral homes. Once you have selected a funeral home, notify them that the death investigation is being handled by the Medical Examiner's Office. The Medical Examiner's Office will normally conclude their examination within a 12-24 hour time period. They will then contact the legal next-of-kin to determine which funeral home has been selected by the family. They will contact the selected funeral home directly to make arrangements for transport of the body.

Common Reactions

A major traumatic incident can cause feelings of grief. Grief is a normal response to loss, yet it sometimes produces emotional and physical reactions which can be alarming. Not all of these reactions are healthy and some may need to be changed, but they are all understandable and do not mean the person experiencing them is "crazy" or that their feelings are "wrong." No two people grieve the same.

Emotional Reactions

- Anger
- Fear
- Extreme sadness
- Loneliness
- Detachment/Lack of emotional response

Physical Reactions

- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Unintentional changes in eating habits
- Significant and unintentional weight loss or weight gain
- Increased susceptibility to illness

Behavioral Reactions

- Lack of motivation for daily activities
- Lack of concentration or memory
- Increased irritability
- Unpredictable bouts of crying or screaming
- Panic/anxiety attacks
- Wanting to talk about the deceased
- Worrying about talking about the deceased too much
- Increased use of alcohol, prescription drugs, or street drugs to help you cope

These responses will likely diminish with time. However, if your reactions are especially long lasting or troubling, you may need to consult with a helping professional for assistance.