

Steps to take in the event of a missing person.

1 ACT IMMEDIATELY

Do not wait. Act as soon as you notice anything out of the ordinary. Do not leave the missing person's phone number undialed and if it is safe to do so, search immediately in the areas where the person was last seen.

2 DOCUMENT THE PERSON'S MOST RECENT MOVEMENTS

Reconstruct the facts, talk to friends, relatives, the last people the person was with, track their phone, credit card activity. Talk to anyone who might know or might have seen something.

3 CONTACT LOCAL SEARCH GROUPS

This includes other searching families, those with experience, and who are best able to guide those who begin their search. The collectives will give the best advice on how to file a report, start searching, and how to interact with authorities in your context. To find these collectives, look for information about collectives on the internet and among people you know. Almost all collectives have a Facebook page.

4 REPORT TO THE AUTHORITIES

The search should be immediate, it is not necessary to wait 72 hours. You can also report a person as missing even years after the fact if you have not done so, there is no time limit. File a report with the prosecutor's office and online. Report the person as missing with the National Search Commission.

5 REQUEST AMBER ALERT, ALBA ALERT AND/OR AMPARO BUSCADOR

For the location of children and adolescents at imminent risk: Amber Alert. For the location of women: Alba Alert. For cases of disappearance by authorities: Amparo Buscador.

6 INITIATE A SEARCH IN SOCIAL NETWORKS AND WHATSAPP GROUPS

The faster the information circulates and the faster the case becomes visible, the better. If you do not have a phone with whatsapp, get one. Social networks and whatsapp are some of the fundamental tools of the search.

7 DO NOT PUT PERSONAL PHONE NUMBERS ON POSTERS OR SEARCH CARDS

Extortion is a big risk. To avoid it, do not put personal contact information of the family you are looking for. Putting numbers of local search groups or the prosecutor's office is always the best option.

8 OBTAIN RECORDINGS FROM SECURITY CAMERAS

If you have a reference site of the place of disappearance, act quickly to get recordings from cameras in stores, homes, businesses, as some automatically delete the material every 48 hours.

9 OBTAIN CELL PHONE CALL SHEETS

Demand that authorities manage the obtaining of this information that can help to geolocate the last point from where the person communicated.

10 MAKE THE CASE VISIBLE, HAVE DEMONSTRATIONS, AND CONTACT THE PRESS

Protest to demand the authorities to search immediately and contact allied media and journalists who can help pressure authorities to act, make the case visible and obtain support from society.

Sources: This list of recommendations on what to do in case of a disappearance summarizes information obtained from interviews with searching family members that have been compiled on this site, a [Twitter thread written by Baruc Sanchez, who is looking for his sister Wendy Sánchez](#), who disappeared in Nayarit in 2021, and the guide ["What to do when faced with the disappearance of a person?"](#) published by I(dh)eas Litigio Estratégico en Derechos Humanos.