The Coroners Court in Victoria

THE CORONERS COURT IN VICTORIA:

A guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families

THIRRILI

Losing a family or community member to suicide is heart-breaking. Families and communities deeply feel the loss of a loved one to suicide especially during times of sorry business. What can make things harder is when the death of a loved one to suicide is investigated by a coroner. Speaking and hearing about the loss of a loved one to suicide can be very emotional. The coronial process can be complicated and long, holding up the time when a deceased person can finally rest, and families and communities can heal from grief.

Even though it can be hard for families to go through, it is an important way for mob to have their say and voices heard and make the Coroner see opportunities for change so this doesn't happen to someone else.

Thirrili and Norton Rose Fulbright have partnered together to help guide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities through some of the challenges of dealing with the Coroners Court during times of sorry business and have their voice heard. We pay our respect to the First Nations people of Australia whose Country was never ceded. We acknowledge the devastating impact of suicide on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This guide helps explain the role and processes of the Coroners Court of Victoria when it investigates a death. It tells you about the kinds of deaths investigated by a coroner and the difference between an investigation and an inquest. The guide also explains how the Coroners Court of Victoria's Aboriginal Engagement Unit can support you and your loved ones throughout the coronial process and how the Coroners Court can respect cultural protocols.

This Guide to The Coroners Court of Victoria for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people includes 10 fact sheets with information for families and communities to make the process of dealing with the coroner easier and more manageable.

Disclaimer: The legal information in this Guide is to help guide you through some of the challenges of dealing with the Coroners Court during times of sorry business. It is not legal advice. Please consult with your local Aboriginal Legal Service or other legal professional to make sure this information is right for you.

This information was last updated in December 2024 and does not constitute legal advice.

For more help contact

The Coroners Court of Victoria: 1300 309 519 or at courtadmin@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

The Aboriginal Engagement Unit of the Coroners Court: (03) 8685 1157 or at kooriccov@courts.vic.gov.au

The Family Liaison Officers of the Coroners Court at flo@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Victoria Legal Aid via phone: 1300 792 387.

The Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service via phone or email: 1800 064 865 or at vals@vals.org.au

A community legal centre can be found via the Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria, who can be contacted via phone: (03) 9652 1500