FACT SHEET 1

What is the Coroners Court and the role of a Coroner?

THIRRILI

The Coroners Court of New South Wales is a specialist court that was set up to investigate and help understand the cause of certain types of deaths including suicide and those due to self-harm. The coroner is a representative of the Court and is the main person in charge of the investigation.

The role of the coroner to investigate the death to find out the identity of the deceased person, when and where they died, how they died and suggest changes to prevent the same thing happening to someone else.

In some investigations, a coroner will also hold an 'inquest' which are public hearings where people are called to the Coroners Court to give evidence.

The coronial process is slow. It can take months or even years. It can take a long time because the coroner may need to talk to many other people about the circumstances of the death, such as a hospital, the police, or a government service.

The Coroners Court does not have the power to:

- conduct a criminal trial;
- find someone guilty of a crime;
- order that compensation be paid to the family of the deceased; or
- send a person to prison.

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