FACT SHEET 7

Help from the Aboriginal Engagement Unit

THIRRILI

This fact sheet explains the role of culture in a coronial inquest when a family member dies and who you can speak to for help getting the coroner to understand your traditions.

- The Aboriginal Engagement Unit (**AEU**) consists of First Nations people employed by the Coroners Court to provide cultural support and communicate directly with First Nations families throughout the coronial process.
- The AEU aims to hold a family meeting within 4 weeks of the death being reported to the Coroners Court of Victoria to explain the coronial process, expected timeframes, and to discuss cultural considerations and concerns with the family. A member of the AEU will attend court hearings with First Nations families to ensure cultural considerations are delivered throughout the hearing.
- The AEU also provides culturally focused advice and support to the coroner on aspects of the coronial investigation, including advice on medical examinations and treatment of the deceased (for more information, see Fact Sheet 6 Cultural Protocols in Coronial Investigations).
- If a directions hearing or the inquest is held with audio-visual support, the AEU will assist with arrangements to ensure that the family and community can access those hearings and, where required, participate in the hearings.
- Where there is a preference for the family to attend hearings or the inquest in person, the AEU can assist in facilitating arrangements for families to attend the Coroners Court.