FACT SHEET 1

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

THIRRILI

The Coroners Court of Tasmania is an expert 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. A coroner is a representative of the Court and is the main person in charge of the investigation.

It is the role of the coroner to investigate the death to find out when and where the person died, how they died, and suggest changes to try and 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 the 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 compensation be paid to the family of the deceased; or
- send a person to prison.