

ISMS Family Support Guide

Gentle support and care for the first hours and days after a murder-suicide

"You do not need to understand this right now. You only need to get through this moment."

You are likely in shock. What you are experiencing is traumatic.

You do not need to do everything at once.

Take what helps. Leave the rest.

Right Now

- Your safety and rest matter
- It is ok to lean on one trusted person to help communicate and make decisions.
- You are allowed to say "We are not ready to talk."

Social Media & News

- You do not need to respond to messages, comments, or media requests.
- Consider asking one person to manage social media or field inquiries for you.
- You are allowed to step away entirely.

Emotional Support

- Trauma responses are common after traumatic loss.
- Shock, numbness, anger, confusion, and exhaustion can come and go.
- There is no right way to feel and no timeline you must follow.

Funeral / Memorial

- You may choose to honor one person, both people, or hold separate services.
- There is no timeline you must follow.
- You are not required to explain or justify your choices.

Police Reports

- You may request a police report when you are ready.
- It can take time to receive and may be difficult to read.
- You are allowed to ask someone else to review it first, or wait.

Scene Cleanup

- You should not be expected to clean the space yourself.
- Trauma-informed biohazard cleanup services are available and can help.
- Insurance may cover some or all costs.



You Are Not Alone

Impacted Survivors of Murder Suicide (ISMS) is here to support families after a murder-suicide through survivor led connection including peer-support groups, comfort calls and grief work.

When and if you are ready, support and information are available.

There is no timeline and no obligation. We will be here.

If you are experiencing a crisis and need support right now, help is available.

Call or text 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Call 911 if you are in immediate danger.

You can also reach out to a trusted person and let them know you need support.



This guide is informational only and not a substitute for professional, medical or legal advice.

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