



# Steps to Take After a Traffic Crash

## *For victims and loved ones of victims*

Whether you or someone you know was the victim of a traffic crash, there can be a lot to navigate depending on the circumstances and severity. This checklist is here to guide you.

### 1 Seek medical care immediately

Even if your injuries did not result in emergency treatment, this step is important. In the immediate aftermath of a crash, adrenaline can mask pain and make it hard to assess injuries. Symptoms can manifest days, weeks, or even months after a crash. A health professional can help you to identify and address injuries that may not be obvious. This step will also enable you to preserve records of your injuries and the costs you incur in order to collect damages.

If you can't see your regular doctor, find an urgent care clinic. SF General Hospital has urgent care clinics around the city; view a directory at [sfhealthnetwork.org/urgent-care](https://sfhealthnetwork.org/urgent-care) or call **628-206-8000**.

### 2 Follow up with the police

Once a crash has been reported, evidence collection is key. Follow up with the police department to get a police report and ensure all witnesses are interviewed, nearby security camera footage is viewed/retained, and photos are taken. Call the San Francisco Police Department's Traffic Collision Investigation Unit **415-678-3600** 24 hours a day.

### 3 Get legal help

If you are severely injured or your loved one has been severely injured or killed, you should consult with an attorney as soon as possible. Lawyers provide consultations free of charge, and are usually paid on a "contingency" basis, meaning they only get paid if they collect money for you. Given that a lawyer might help with the investigation, we recommend you contact a lawyer as soon as possible.

You likely want a lawyer who has significant, related successful experience with your type of case. Walk San Francisco has a list of pedestrian-friendly lawyers in the San Francisco Bay Area at [walksf.org/lawyers](https://walksf.org/lawyers). (Attorneys on this list support Walk SF and Families for Safe Streets by sponsoring our programs and events. We do not endorse any particular attorney.)

### 4 Contact Victim Services

This office provides round-the-clock information and help to victims including legal guidance, crisis counseling, and assistance with medical expenses, attorney's fees, and funeral arrangements. You can reach the San Francisco District Attorney's Office at **628-652-4100** or [victimservices@sfgov.org](mailto:victimservices@sfgov.org). In-language services are available.

### 5 Use hospital support services

Hospitals provide many support services including patient advocates, social workers, and clergy. These people can help you to understand hospital regulations, insurance requirements, and paperwork, and help you to advocate for specific care and services.

In addition, patient support staff can help you to plan for post-hospital care, and connect you with counseling, visiting nurse services, physical therapy, and more. Departments to reach out to generally include: Patient Relations, Social Work, and Pastoral Services.

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## 6 Get emotional support

The aftermath of losing a loved one or being seriously injured, for many people, can bring confusion, anxiety, and feelings of hopelessness. It's important to get the support you need, by reaching out to community-based clinics, support groups, and individual counselors who can provide grief and trauma support. Medicaid and Medicare offer counseling services and community based clinics, and many private insurance plans will offer support services on a sliding scale.

Good starting places are SF General Spiritual Care at [sojournchaplaincy.org/get-care/](https://sojournchaplaincy.org/get-care/) and SF General Spiritual Care at [ucsfhealth.org/education/bereavement-services-and-information](https://ucsfhealth.org/education/bereavement-services-and-information).

As San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets, we are also here for you. View an extensive list of online and Bay Area-specific emotional support resources at [walksf.org/fss](https://walksf.org/fss). Feel free to reach out anytime to [familiesforsafestreeets@walksf.org](mailto:familiesforsafestreeets@walksf.org).

## 7 Do you feel that the location of the crash is dangerous?

Unfortunately, many streets and intersections aren't as safe as they should be, especially for people walking and biking. The way a street is designed can make it much more or less likely for a crash to occur. It's important for the elected official who represents the area where the crash occurred to know about the crash. Reach out to Families for Safe Streets for guidance on this at [familiesforsafestreeets@walksf.org](mailto:familiesforsafestreeets@walksf.org).

# About San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets



## We are a supportive community of people affected by traffic crashes.

San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets brings together people affected by traffic crashes, providing emotional support, guidance, and ways to channel grief into action to make our streets safer.

### Families for Safe Streets is here for you.

Contact Aly Geller, San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets Coordinator, anytime at [aly@walksf.org](mailto:aly@walksf.org) or **415.527.0080**.

### Learn more at [walksf.org/FSS](https://walksf.org/FSS) and:

- Sign up for our monthly newsletter.
- Find support resources specific to people who have experienced a crash, whether personally or a loved one.
- Register for an upcoming support gathering or information session.
- Read the stories of others who have experienced a crash.

*San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets is proud to be part of a national Families for Safe Streets movement. San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets receives support and guidance from Walk San Francisco*

