

NOT AN ~~ACCIDENT~~

Truth & Justice Checklist

For families whose loved one was killed by impaired driving, drug poisoning, or reckless behavior

Created to help you ask the right questions, understand your rights, and ensure your loved one's death is classified with honesty and accuracy.

1. Understanding What Happened

- Have you received a clear explanation of the circumstances leading to your loved one's death?
 - Has anyone used the word "accident" even though the death involved impairment, reckless behavior, or preventable choices?
 - Has the investigating officer or agency explained whether criminal behavior is involved?
 - Have you been informed of any evidence such as toxicology results, witness statements, or prior conduct of the involved person?
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2. Death Classification & Records

- Have you been shown how the death is being classified on the death certificate (homicide, accident, undetermined, etc.)?
- Does the classification accurately reflect what actually happened?
- If the death was preventable, have you asked the medical examiner or coroner to explain why it was not classified as homicide?
- If the classification feels wrong, have you been informed about your right to request clarification, correction, or review?

3. Communication With Authorities

- Has the coroner, medical examiner, or law enforcement communicated clearly and respectfully?
- Have they explained why they chose a specific classification?
- Have they acknowledged that homicide does not require intent—that reckless or impaired behavior can legally constitute homicide?
- Have you asked for the names and contact information of the professionals involved in the investigation?

4. Accountability & Justice

- Has anyone involved been held accountable or is an investigation still ongoing?
- Have you been informed of potential criminal charges or reasons charges were not filed?
- Have you been told how the classification might affect criminal prosecution or public records?
- Have prosecutors recognized your loved one as a victim of someone else’s criminal or reckless choices?

5. Challenging Misclassification

- Has your family identified any language in records or media that misrepresents the truth?
- Have you documented inaccuracies to request corrections later?
- Have you contacted advocacy organizations—such as the Not an Accident Campaign—for help understanding or challenging the classification?
- Are you aware that classifications created in 1910 are still used today and may misrepresent preventable deaths?

6. Media, Public Narrative & Language

- Are media outlets covering your loved one’s story with accuracy and dignity?
- Are reporters using harmful language such as “accident”?
- Have you requested corrections to inaccurate news articles?
- Have you shared (if you choose) your loved one’s story using truthful language that reflects the responsibility involved?

7. Your Rights & Family Support

- Do you know you have the right to ask questions—and keep asking?
- Have you been offered victim services or emotional support resources?
- Have you connected with organizations that help families navigate the justice system and classification issues?
- Are you gathering necessary documents and communications in one place for clarity and peace of mind?

8. Prevention, Truth, & Legacy

- Does the classification honor your loved one by telling the truth?
- Are you helping (if you choose) to ensure your loved one's death contributes to preventing future tragedies?
- Have you shared your story with NAC, joined the coalition, or signed the petition calling for accurate classification of preventable deaths?
- Have you considered how your loved one would want their story to be remembered—with honesty, dignity, and truth?

Our Promise to Families

Your loved one's life had meaning. Their death deserves honesty.

You deserve answers, respect, and transparency.

We stand with you in demanding the truth—because it was not an accident.