



Griefline services: Frequently asked questions

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1. What does Griefline do?

Griefline exists to normalise grief by having courageous conversations and support communities to grow from loss. While grief is not a mental health issue, it can significantly impact one’s mental well-being and existing mental health conditions. By providing compassionate support and facilitating courageous conversations, we aim to prevent the exacerbation of mental ill-health stemming from grief.

2. Who are Griefline’s services for?

The services provided by Griefline are targeted to individuals aged 18 years of age and above who reside in Australia and want support, information and connection to help with their experience with bereavement, grief and loss.

3. How is Griefline funded?

Griefline is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) ABN 34129399173

Griefline has been supporting the community for over 35 years and our programs and services receive funding from the Commonwealth Government, NSW Ministry of

Health and South Eastern Melbourn Primary Health Network. We also receive funding through grants, donations and fundraising.

Griefline receives payment for providing grief and loss training, and all funds raised through our training programs are intended to cover the operational and administration costs that are not covered by our funding providers.

4. Who are Griefline's services not for?

Griefline is not for people experiencing acute mental health crisis or are in imminent danger or risk of harm.

If you are in an emergency situation or are at immediate risk of harming yourself or others, please call **000**.

If you are experiencing crisis, or are worried about yourself or someone else, please contact [Lifeline](#) by phoning **13 11 14** or by texting **0477 13 11 14**

[Kids Helpline](#) is available 24/7 to support young people aged between five and 25, call **1800 551 800**

Griefline also reserves the right to suspend or discontinue services to people who demonstrate unwelcome behaviours.

5. What are unwelcome behaviours?

Griefline views the following criteria to be inappropriate behaviours in people when using our services:

- Death threats
- Threats of physical or psychological harm or violence towards staff or volunteers or any other representatives of Griefline
- Sexually explicit, violent or sexualised content
- Sexual harassment
- Abusive interactions
- Inappropriate religious, cultural or racial insults
- Homophobic, sexist or other derogatory remarks
- Unwelcome communications made at consistent and/or regular intervals
- Overuse of the Service including seven (7) or more interactions over a 1-week period

- Prank calls

6. What services do Griefline provide and how can they be accessed?

Griefline offers a range of services including:

Helpline

A national telephone service, providing grief and loss support for adults aged 18+. The service is operational 7 days a week, 365 days a year from 8am to 8pm (AEST/AEDT) and is staffed by trained and compassionate telephone support volunteers. The service can be accessed by calling 1300 845 745 and is available to use as often as service users need it. *

Request for a callback

A national service, providing grief, loss and loneliness support for adults aged 18+. The service is operational Monday to Friday and is staffed by trained and compassionate telephone support volunteers who will call service users at a time that they choose from the calendar that can be accessed online via the following link: https://calendly.com/griefline_request_a_callback/30min

The service can be accessed as many times as the user requires the support provided. *

Online moderated forums

Online peer discussion forums provide a platform for registered users to connect with others facing similar experiences, share stories, emotions and coping strategies. The forums are moderated by trained volunteers, and are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and can be accessed on the Griefline website via the following link: <https://griefline.org.au/forums/>

Bereavement support groups

Facilitated bereavement support groups led by professional grief counsellors online via Zoom, for people aged 18+ who are seeking help to cope with the death of a loved one in a group environment. The support groups are available Monday to Friday. Additionally, some sessions may be available on Saturday. Individuals can register to participate in this program on the Griefline website via the following link: <https://griefline.org.au/get-help/support-groups/>

Integrating Grief Program (Victoria)

1-to-1 telephone or video counselling and support sessions for adults aged 18+ impacted by death who are referred by Victoria Police. Individuals cannot self-refer to this program. Counselling and support sessions are delivered by professional grief counsellors and are available Monday to Friday. Additionally, some sessions may be available on Saturdays.

Integrating Grief Program (NSW)

1-to-1 telephone or video counselling and support sessions for adults in NSW aged 18+ who are bereaved through the death of somebody. Counselling and support sessions are delivered by professional grief counsellors and are available Monday to Friday. Additionally, some sessions may be available on Saturdays. Individuals can register to participate in this program on the Griefline website via the following link <https://griefline.org.au/get-help/integrating-grief-program/>. A health practitioner may refer a client to this service with their consent.

Grief and loss resource hub

Grief and loss resources offering information and guidance on various aspects related to grief and loss. The resources are available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and can be accessed by anyone with internet access to the Griefline website via the following link: <https://griefline.org.au/resources/>

Griefline training

Griefline training programs for organisations and individuals aimed at enhancing awareness and comprehension of grief and its effects on mental health and wellbeing. The Griefline training program is a fee for service initiative and more information, including pricing, can be found on the Griefline website via the following link: <https://griefline.org.au/griefline-training/>

* We encourage individuals to utilise our services whenever needed to navigate their grief journey effectively. However, to ensure fair access for all users and to maintain the quality of our support, we have instituted an 'Overuse of the Service' clause. This clause defines 'Overuse' as seven or more interactions with our services within a one-week period.

While we aim to provide unlimited support to those in need, excessive use of our services may prevent others from accessing the assistance they require. Therefore,

we reserve the right to monitor usage patterns and take appropriate action, including but not limited to limiting access or providing guidance on alternative resources, in cases of overuse.

Our intention is to foster a supportive environment where everyone can receive the assistance they require while respecting the needs of others in the community.

7. Does Griefline provide accessibility and language support?

Griefline's website is designed to make content available to the greatest possible audience, including readers who require assistive technology such as translation, screen reader, styling options and reading aids.

Griefline employs [Recite Me](#), an online accessibility toolbar that lets users personalise their experience on our website, enabling users to choose how they interact with our content. You can find more information about the accessibility toolbar on the Griefline website via the following link: <https://griefline.org.au/accessibility/>

Griefline also provides telephone support for non-English speakers through the Translating and Interpreting Services. Further information is available on our website via the following link: <https://griefline.org.au/get-help/translation-and-language-support/>

8. How much does it cost to access Griefline's services?

Griefline does not charge people to access its telephone support services, counselling programs or online moderated forums and resources.

An exception is Griefline training which is a fee for service.

Calls to the Helpline may be charged at the cost of a local call. We recommend that service users check with their telephone carrier for call costs as they may vary by provider and the service user specific contract.

Use of Griefline's online forums and support groups is dependent upon an active internet connection, the costs for which will be determined by your internet service provider.

9. Can Griefline's services be accessed anonymously?

Yes, users can engage in the forums anonymously using a pseudonym.

To speak on to a Helpline volunteer, caller ID needs to be switched on before you call. Griefline does not store phone numbers, and the call remains anonymous.

When registering for Griefline's counselling services and booking a request for a callback, it is a requirement for you to provide your name and contact information.

For more information about how we use your information and how it is stored, read our Privacy Notice on the Griefline website via the following link:

<https://griefline.org.au/legal/privacy-notice/>

10. Are health professionals involved in delivering Griefline's programs and services?

Our telephone support services, and online forums are staffed by volunteers who have all been trained to support people experiencing grief, loss and loneliness.

Our counselling programs including facilitated bereavement support groups are delivered by health professionals or Masters of Counselling Students on field education placement with Griefline. Students receive specialist bereavement training and are supervised by Griefline professionals.

11. Does Griefline allow my carer, family member or support person to work with me to use their services?

The people who support you can refer you to our bereavement counselling programs and support groups. We will check with you whether you agree to this referral.

When an interpreter is required to support you in receiving access to our telephone support services, we work with the TIS Translation and Interpreting Service and one of their trained interpreters can join the session to support your language needs.

Your trained support worker may help with accessing the service, but counselling is confidential, so family or support workers do not join in the sessions unless you have provided your prior consent.

When requested, Griefline counselling and support staff can assist you to book a request a callback or register for access to our counselling services.

12. Is there any independent scientific evidence of the benefits from accessing telephone support and grief counselling for bereaved individuals?

There exists a substantial corpus of international research affirming the efficacy of bereavement counselling. Notably, the Cairnmillar Institute in Australia is presently engaged in a comprehensive evaluation of Griefline's bereavement counselling services. Preliminary findings demonstrate a notable reduction in distress among participants, underlining the effectiveness of such interventions.

Griefline's approach to addressing grief and social isolation is underpinned by thorough research and adheres to recommendations provided by the World Health Organization. This ensures that their interventions are evidence-based and aligned with globally recognised standards in mental health care.

13. Is Griefline endorsed by a government or professional body?

The Integrating Grief Program (NSW) is supported and funded by the NSW Government Ministry of Health.

The Integrating Grief Program (VIC) is supported and funded by South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network.

Our telephone support services are funded by the Commonwealth Government Department of Health and Aged Care.

Griefline is a full member of Mental Health Australia and is endorsed by Healthdirect as a trusted source of grief and loss information.

Griefline's services are accredited under the [**National Safety and Quality Digital Mental Health Standards**](#), underscoring our commitment to delivering person-centred, high-quality, and effective care.

14. Are there any precautions or safety warnings related to Griefline's services?

At Griefline, we understand the profound emotional journey that accompanies grief and loss. Our priority is ensuring that our services are beneficial and appropriate for each individual's unique circumstances.

When individuals reach out to us for counselling support, we initiate a thorough triage process. This initial step allows us to engage in a dialogue with them, gauging whether the timing is suitable for delving into their emotions. In instances where individuals are concurrently navigating other mental health challenges, we collaborate closely with them to determine if discussing their grief could potentially exacerbate their existing difficulties. In such cases, we may facilitate communication with their general practitioner or psychiatrist to ensure a holistic and tailored approach to their well-being.

It's important to note that our commitment to safety and well-being extends beyond the counselling session. We continuously monitor and evaluate our services to uphold the highest standards of care. To date, we are proud to report that no concerns or adverse health events have been reported following the utilisation of Griefline's services. This underscores our dedication to providing a supportive and safe environment for individuals as they navigate the complexities of grief.

15. How much time should I allocate for using Griefline's services as suggested?

Our telephone support calls typically last between 20 to 30 minutes. We understand that discussing grief and expressing emotions can be tiring. To help conserve your energy and that of our volunteers, we limit support calls to 30 minutes.

We rely on the generosity of volunteers to provide telephone support services. During peak times, you may not be immediately connected to a telephone support volunteer. In such cases, you will receive a recorded message outlining your options which include:

- Remaining on the line until a volunteer is available

- Visiting our website to access grief and loss resources, online forums and [Request a callback](#) service
- Calling back during our helpline operating hours (8am to 8pm, 7 days AEST/AEDT)

Accessing our counselling services typically involves an initial triage within two weeks and individual sessions within one week thereafter. Group support may have a wait time of up to three months.

Our waitlists may vary depending on demand, so feel free to contact our intake team on (03) 9087 2312 to check the status.

16. How long will it take to get results?

Grief is a normal human experience, not a mental illness. Clients say they begin to experience relief after just one telephone conversation or counselling session.

17. Does Griefline consult people with lived experience to develop its programs and services?

Yes, Griefline staff and volunteers have lived experience of grief, and the programs and services are developed in response to feedback from participants.

18. What do other users think of Griefline?

Griefline provides all service users with the opportunity to provide feedback and invites them to complete a 'service user experience survey'.

Service users rate their overall experience with Griefline as 'very good' (on a scale of poor, fair, good, very good, excellent).

Some examples of feedback from service users;

"... how grateful I am for this service & being able to really talk with a person who really understands how grief affects one."

.. "I'd also like to thank whoever came up with the Grief Line concept because from my experience in life, it's important to talk with others that have gone through similar experiences when one loses someone important to them."

“. . .grief counselling sessions really helped me to process parts of my grief and my ability to move forward”

19. Will Griefline link me with other health services?

Our priority is your safety and wellbeing. If you are feeling unsafe during a counselling session, we will link with your GP if you have one or your local Mental Health Care Team.

Sometimes we link clients or callers with other services such as crisis support, alcohol and other drugs or domestic violence support.

20. Who will have access to my personal data?

Protection of information privacy, particularly sensitive and health information, is important to the Griefline organisation. Our privacy notices support and endorse the privacy principles contained in the *Information Privacy Act 2000* and the *Health Records Act 2001*.

Griefline will only collect, use and store information that is necessary to provide our members with the services that they require and to maintain the quality of our services. Relevant health information may be collected with the client's consent.

Griefline only uses information for the purpose for which it was collected and then responsibly destroys information that is no longer required to provide the services or by law. Griefline will store all personal, sensitive and health information securely using a cloud-based storage solution that is password protected. Go to our [privacy notice](#) for more information.

21. How can I contact Griefline to share my feedback or concerns?

If you have a corporate or general enquiry, you can complete and submit the form on our website here: <https://griefline.org.au/contact-us/>

Enquiries are monitored during business hours, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (AEST/AEDT). Or contact us by email to feedback@griefline.org.au

Griefline welcomes your feedback regarding our organisation, programs and services. Your feedback will help us to build better services to support people experiencing grief and loss.

Every formal complaint will be acknowledged within three (3) days of receipt and investigated. Griefline's Complaint Policy is available [here](#) or by contacting feedback@griefline.org.au

You can provide feedback or lodge a complaint by completing Griefline's feedback form [here](#)

Alternate options include:

- Send an email to feedback@griefline.org.au
- Send a letter by post to the address below.

Postal address:

8/181 St Kilda Road, St Kilda, VIC. 3182

22. Where can I go if I have other concerns or issues?

- For privacy/security issues contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-complaints/>
- For complaints against a health service contact your state or territory health complaints organisation <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/notifications/further-information/health-complaintsorganisations.aspx>
- For complaints against an individual registered health professional contact the Australian Health Practitioners Regulatory Authority (AHPRA) <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/Raise-a-concern.aspx>
- For complaints about misleading claims contact Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) <https://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/complaints-problems/make-aconsumer-complaint>