

PEOPLE LOCATOR® FAQ (Updated 10/8/15)

1. Where do I search through reports of missing and found persons?

A: Go to the PEOPLE LOCATOR® website here: <https://pl.nlm.nih.gov/> and select the disaster event you are interested in.

2. Where can I practice sending in a report?

A: Select the Test Event at <https://pl.nlm.nih.gov/>.

3. Where do I report missing and found persons?

A: Go to the PEOPLE LOCATOR® website here: <https://pl.nlm.nih.gov/> and select the disaster event you are interested in. One can report anonymously or with an account. The benefits of an account are that you can get updates to your posting if anyone comments on it. At the present time you will need to create an account to make or comment on a report. We do this so reporters can get updates to their reports if someone else comments on it.

4. Can I comment on an existing missing or found report?

A: Yes, but first create an account on our site.

5. Do I need an account to search?

A: No.

6. Can I use my iPhone or Android phone to search and report?

A: Yes. To search and report via our ReUnite® app, see <http://lpf.nlm.nih.gov> for links to our iPhone/iPad version and Android version. ReUnite® is designed to be used after major disasters to help speed reunification of family and friends via our National Library of Medicine's PEOPLE LOCATOR® website (<https://pl.nlm.nih.gov/>).

7. Who operates this service?

A: ReUnite® and the PEOPLE LOCATOR® are elements of a research and development project called the Lost Person Finder Project effort investigating tools and technologies to speed family reunification after disasters at the U.S. National Library of Medicine which is part of the National Institutes of Health, a unit of the U.S. Federal Government Department of Health and Human Services. Users report and search for information on missing or found persons for specific disasters. For links related to the project go here: <http://lpf.nlm.nih.gov>.

8. How can I contact the staff responsible for PEOPLE LOCATOR® and ReUnite®?

A: Send a message to <https://pl.nlm.nih.gov/contact>. Support staff check email during 7:30 AM- 6 PM Eastern Time M-F, Federal Holidays excluded. The website is operated by the U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services located in Bethesda, Maryland.

9. Is the PEOPLE LOCATOR® website curated?

A: No. However we will correct items if they are brought to our attention. To do so users should use the “Report Abuse” link or send a message with the record id to <https://pl.nlm.nih.gov/contact>.

10. How can I get notification of new public events?

A: Follow us on social networking:

Twitter: http://www.twitter.com/NLM_LPF

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LostPersonFinder>

Google+: <https://plus.google.com/117085093991742083182/posts>

Or via the “PEOPLELOCATOR-L” list. Sign up to this list by sending an email to list@list.nih.gov with a blank subject line and Subscribe PEOPLELOCATOR-L Your Name (italics are for emphasis/clarity here and not needed) in the email message body.

11. How long are disaster events viewable by the public?

A: For the duration of the disaster event. For most disasters this is roughly 30-60 days. For very large scale or extended disasters this period may increase.

12. Where does PEOPLE LOCATOR® get its data?

A: From the public via direct reporting at the website, via direct reporting via our ReUnite® app, and from other reunification services such as Google.org’s Person Finder <https://google.org/personfinder/global/home.html>.

13. Is the data viewable by anyone on the Internet?

A: Yes so please keep this in mind when posting information. Think of this as a public bulletin board that anyone can see.

14. Do you share data submitted with other organizations?

A: Yes. We share the data with Google’s Person Finder system for any public disaster event. We are interested in exchanging data with other organizations who have parallel goals (American Red Cross’s Safe and Well service, International Committee of the Red Cross, U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System etc.).

15. What else do you do with the data?

A: We also have a research and development program using the data we obtain to improve family reunification technologies in the event of disasters. For instance we currently offer as a beta service “visual search” at PEOPLE LOCATOR® an experimental face matching service. The National Library of Medicine is a leading organization conducting research and development and training in the field of medical informatics.

16. Are all events on the PEOPLE LOCATOR® website publicly viewable?

A: Not all. In some cases we have private events viewable for specific demonstrations and tests.

17. Where is the System of Records Notice (SORN) and Privacy Act statement for this system?

A: The current SORN is located here <http://oma.od.nih.gov/ms/privacy/pa-files/0200.htm>, the Privacy Act statement is reachable via a link on the bottom of any page at the PEOPLE LOCATOR® website, <https://pl.nlm.nih.gov>, and via the “About” button in ReUnite®.

18. Has the system received appropriate authority to operate?

A. The Lost Person Finder (PEOPLE LOCATOR®) was granted Authority to Operate (ATO) from the NIH/NLM Director of Information Systems. System security is additionally addressed through continuous monitoring and adheres to the Risk Management Framework.

19. Is the data encrypted?

A: Yes. Data is encrypted while in transit via Secure Socket Layer technology to or from the website. ReUnite® provides on-device encryption for iPhones with the Operating System providing encryption on Android devices.

20. I am an emergency management professional and would like to use the PEOPLE LOCATOR® system for a real disaster event, demonstration, or test. Who can I contact?

A: Send a message to <https://pl.nlm.nih.gov/contact> with rationale and contact information.

21. What are the triggers for a PEOPLE LOCATOR® event?

A: Larger (time and/or geographic) scale domestic or international mass casualty events (typically more than a few dozen affected) which involves a potential for disconnecting family systems. Since this is not always obvious right away we monitor many news sources to help ultimately determine which events might turn into trigger events. We consider all requests but especially those from Government agency or NGOs. For National Special Security Events, demonstrations, emergency management drills, or test drives an inquiry from a Government Agency or Emergency Management Agency or NGO is required.