



Family Reference DNA Support

For families of international volunteers missing in connection with the war in Ukraine

PUBLIC INFORMATION GUIDE FOR FAMILIES AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Memory Way and the Asymmetric MIA Accounting Group (AMAG), in collaboration with Bode Technology, are establishing a family-centered pathway to support the collection and laboratory processing of family reference DNA samples.

Clear access

Help families understand where to begin and what information is needed.

Accredited testing

Provide specialized laboratory processing and DNA profiling through Bode Technology.

Future comparison

Make validated reference profiles available through appropriate, authorized channels when needed.

Important

Providing a family reference sample does not mean that remains have been recovered, does not declare a missing person deceased, and does not guarantee an identification. It ensures that essential comparison data may be available if and when it is needed.



What this initiative does

This initiative is intended to help families outside Ukraine who may be uncertain whether appropriate family reference samples have been collected, processed, or made available for future comparison. It supplements existing government and international mechanisms; it does not replace them.

The partners

Memory Way

Ukraine-based family assistance, case intake, and coordination.

Asymmetric MIA Accounting Group (AMAG)

International family assistance, case development, and coordination with relevant organizations.

Bode Technology

Accredited forensic DNA laboratory processing, profiling, and technical support.

What is a family reference sample?

A family reference sample (FRS) is a biological sample - commonly a cheek swab - collected from a biological relative of a missing person. The resulting DNA profile may be compared with a postmortem DNA profile from unidentified remains.

Who this is for

- Families of international volunteers missing in connection with the war in Ukraine.
- Families living outside Ukraine who need help understanding the FRS process.
- Families who previously provided DNA but do not know where or how it was processed.



How the process works

1 Start with AMAG or Memory Way

Use one of the official websites. Do not mail a sample or DNA file unless specifically instructed through a verified channel.

2 Complete a confidential intake

Basic information about the missing person, the disappearance, the family relationship, and existing official case numbers will be collected.

3 Review previous DNA activity

The family should identify when, where, and through which organization any earlier sample was provided, if known.

4 Select the appropriate relative

Parents, children, and full siblings are usually the most informative. More than one relative may be scientifically appropriate.

5 Collect and process the sample

Collection must follow documented instructions. Bode Technology will provide laboratory processing and DNA profiling support.

6 Coordinate authorized availability

Profiles may be made available through appropriate channels under informed consent and applicable requirements. Official identification remains with authorized authorities.

Information families should have ready

- Missing person's full legal name, date of birth, and nationality.
- Date, place, and circumstances of the last confirmed contact.
- Military unit or volunteer organization, if applicable.
- Police, embassy, ICMP, ICRC, or other case numbers.
- Details of any DNA previously collected.
- Names and relationships of available biological relatives.

A spouse or partner is not a biological kinship reference, but may possess important records or a reliable personal item belonging only to the missing person.



Frequently asked questions

Does providing DNA mean remains have been recovered?

No. An FRS is collected so comparison data is available if a suitable postmortem profile becomes available.

Why might more than one relative be requested?

DNA kinship matching is statistical. Samples from multiple close biological relatives can strengthen a comparison and may be scientifically appropriate.

Will Bode make the official identification?

No. Bode provides laboratory results. Official identification remains the responsibility of legally authorized authorities.

Will a profile automatically enter a Ukrainian database?

No. Transfer or access must follow informed consent, technical compatibility, secure procedures, and acceptance by the appropriate Ukrainian authority.

Does this replace the National Police, ICMP, or ICRC?

No. The initiative adds family access and laboratory capacity while seeking coordination with existing authorities and organizations.

How will DNA information be protected?

Families must be told what is collected, why it is collected, who may receive it, and how it will be used. No sharing should occur outside authorized, consent-based procedures.

How long will an identification take?

Laboratory processing can be expedited, but no one can promise when a match or official identification will occur. Suitable postmortem data must first be available for comparison.

Should a family send a sample now?

No sample should be mailed or delivered without verified instructions. Begin through the official AMAG or Memory Way website.

Learn more or begin a family inquiry

Families should begin with Memory Way or AMAG. Bode Technology is the laboratory partner and should not receive unsolicited family samples.

www.memoryway.org.ua

www.amagonline.org

This initiative does not replace the requirement to report a disappearance to the appropriate authorities.