

Ask Me Anything with Denver Private Investigator Lindsey Paison

Aug. 29, 2026, Lone Tree Library * [Check out Lindsey's website](#)

Background: Lindsey was 6 when a 9-year-old friend, the girl's father and the father's employee went missing; the three were never found and are presumed murdered. That sparked an interest in missing persons, homicide and law enforcement work. Lindsey began serving legal documents such as subpoenas for her father, an attorney, when she was 18 and found she was good at tracking people down. She opened her business, Dark Knight Private Investigations in Denver, and has been a full-time PI for more than five years.

First, let's bust a few myths about PI work:

The typical client is not a pissed-off spouse or an angry neighbor. It happens but it's not the bulk of work for most PIs. Probably 90-95% of a typical PI's clients are lawyers.

To oversimplify, there are three groups of cases:

- Criminal defense - PIs working on criminal defense for a private defense attorney (not public defenders, who typically have their own PIs on staff). The attorney's client has been charged with a crime, and they need an investigator to help with the client's defense.
- Civil law - PIs working on civil law cases, such as family law, real estate, probate, and personal injury. This includes surveillance (for example, is that worker who filed a claim really injured?), background checks, research, tracking down witnesses, etc. Some PIs will specialize in areas such as financial data or accounting.
- Regular people – the most dangerous group. These are people who are not involved in court cases and not represented by attorneys. This can get hairy in terms of what you're asked to do, which is why not a lot of PIs work on these cases.

What are the qualifications to be a PI in Colorado?

None. Colorado Gov. Jared Polis let the licensure program that governed private investigators sunset in 2021, and Colorado is now one of only a handful of U.S. states that don't license PIs. *Related story [here](#).* Lindsey strongly advocates for the return of licensing.

How do you get your clients?

She "marketed like hell" when she first started her business. Every waking minute was spent trying to get clients. Now, five years later, she's got a pretty loyal client base of attorneys that she works with. Other cases usually come through word of mouth.

Have you ever been in danger?

Ninety percent of the business she does is process service, and she's usually dealing with people who don't want to be found. So, she's had some hairy situations, like the guy who

tried to hit her with his car, then followed her onto the highway and called police on her. The police agency gave the guy her home address (!!) and the guy showed up at her house.

Do you carry a weapon?

Yes. She has three things in her purse at all times – a handgun, binoculars and cigarettes. She started carrying a gun after the guy showed up at her house (see above question).

Does being a woman help or hurt in PI work?

She believes it's mostly helpful because people are more willing to open their doors to a woman. Men are always curious about why a woman is at the door and women are less concerned about opening a door to a woman than a man. On the other hand, some people might think they can steamroll right over a woman.

Do you decline certain cases?

She doesn't take cases actively under police investigation (like a missing child because police have better resources), cases where she wasn't asked to help by a confirmed family member or current spouse, or cases that another PI may be working on. She's extremely careful in vetting family members who want her help; she once had a noncustodial mom wanting to track down her daughter.

What is a typical day in your PI life?

There isn't one. She'll often do process service early in the mornings, from 7-9 a.m., and then later, between 5-7:30 p.m. In between those hours, she may be doing surveillance (which can sometimes be sitting in the car for seven hours total), database or computer research, or the most boring stuff – writing reports and paperwork.

What is your relationship to police?

She said it's "somewhat accurate" that police don't like PIs and that may be because they've had bad experiences with them. Lindsey tries to be very upfront with police, explain who she is, why she's contacting them, what they can expect from her. She'll also ask if there's something they want her to stay away from. Her involvement with police is generally cases where a missing person's report has been filed and police are not actively working on it. She wants them to know she's working on the case, and they may hear her name.

How would you handle working with a PI from another state?

Most PIs work alone, though there's an occasional husband-and-wife team. PIs are usually independent contractors so if you need to work with someone else, you typically subcontract with them. PIs joke they generally don't like to work with someone else.