

Los Padres National Forest Check in & Check Out Plan 2026



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PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to provide safety accountability for the whereabouts of Forest employees as they implement fieldwork. This plan fulfills the Forest's requirement to comply with Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (FED-OSHA) Standard 29 CFR 1910.38, FSM 6700, and FSH 6709.11, Chapter 10. This plan provides a framework, expectations, and direction for employees and supervisors to account for the location and safety of all Forest employees. The plan establishes the protocols for tracking employee's field visits and status for when they are away from their duty station to complete work. All employees, including hosted employees and volunteers will be included and directed to follow this plan.

BACKGROUND

A LPNF check-in and check-out workplace assessment was implemented on June 6, 2024, by the Forest Safety Committee. Recommendations were received by District Rangers, Los Padres Communication Center (LPCC) and the local Union. Seven items were considered in the assessment: types of employees, work environments and settings, working conditions, types of travel and field activities, availability and status of communication systems and equipment, availability of LPCC or other personnel, and availability of emergency response resources.

Employees and Volunteers Covered

Permanent, temporary, hosted, detailed employees, and volunteers are covered. For groups of Forest visitors, a basic form is provided in Appendix A for the Forest liaison representative to complete and possess on file in the event of an emergency

Accountable Locations for Tracking Employee Status in the Field

Settings include: rural, urban, and general Forest areas.

1. At Duty Station, Work Center, Fire Station, Warehouse, or Administrative Facility
2. Driving on Forest System or Administrative Routes
3. In the Field and away from Vehicle
 - a. Recreation Sites
 - i. Campgrounds
 - ii. Trailheads

- b. Project Sites
- c. General Forest Areas
 - i. General area within Wilderness
 - ii. On a system trail

Available Resources:

- Communication Systems and Equipment
 - Communication systems and equipment include employees who have access to and can communicate with two-way radios, phone (hardline, satellite, and wireless)
 - Satellite Emergency Notification Devices (SPOT/SEND). Refer to LPF-Standard Operating Procedure for SPOT/SEND Units. SPOT or SEND devices will be **monitored by Supervisors, NOT LPCC.**
- Staffed Dispatch Center
 - LPCC hours of operation are 0730 to 1800. Hours are subject to change contingent upon incident activity on forest. The office could potentially be closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years, depending on fire season status.
- Emergency Response Resources
 - Availability of emergency response resources includes emergency first responders adjacent to the Forest on State, County and City jurisdictions. These resources offer 24/7 advance life support. The Forest also has responders assigned with basic life support capability on most firefighting modules.

Check-In and Check-Out Procedures Los Padres National Forest will use Los Padres Communication Center as the primary system. LPCC will keep dispatch communication logs within the Wild CAD (Computer Aided) program.

Specific process and instructions for the system include:

Contacting LPCC by phone at (805) 938-9142 ext. 0 or via radio

Employees will **Check In** when:

- Fire Employees: Leaving the office in official duty status.
- Non-Fire employees: Leaving the office, going into the Forest.

- If not checking in through LPCC, employees are required to check in with their immediate supervisor.
- Employees may check in with their immediate supervisor when traveling on primary routes such as highways to meetings (i.e. Highway 101/166/154) or to off-forest assignments.

Employees will **Check-Out** when:

- Fire Employees: Returning to the office in official duty status.
- Non-Fire employees: Returning to the office, coming back from the Forest.
 - If not checking out through LPCC, employees are required to check out with their immediate supervisor.
 - Employees may check out with their immediate supervisor when traveling primary routes such as highways from meetings (ie Highway 101/166/154) or from off-forest assignments.

The information required for check-in/check-out include:

1. Radio identifier or last name (If no call sign has been assigned) and any additional in the party (Radio Identifier plus 3 when w/ 3 passengers)
2. Current location
3. ETR (Estimated Time of Return).

The Field Procedures Guide for In-Service and Out-of-Service protocols with LPCC can be found at the following URL:

<http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/ecc/lpcc/LOGISTICS/dispatch.php>

Check-in/out example scenarios table

Situation	Minimum employee accountability	Minimum supervisor accountability
Employee travels for off forest overnight location. (Meeting/training)	Check-in/out with supervisor.	Approves travel with knowledge of departure and return dates.
Employee travels for fire assignment/incident.	Mobile/Demobilization tracked through the Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC). Notifies Supervisor or LPCC when arrives back at home unit. (Fire Resources need to notify dispatch of return only)	Approves assignment, reminds employee to notify LPCC or supervisor upon return. (Fire Resources need to notify dispatch of return only)
Employee travels on forest. (Meeting/training/fieldwork)	Check-in/out with LPCC	Knows employee is trained on Check In/Out Plan
Employee travels on forest and will remain overnight.	Completes form, Overnight Check-In/out with LPCC.	Knows employee is trained on Overnight Check-In form. Complies with form check-in/out process.
Employee is traveling between offices.	Fire Resources go in service with dispatch. Non-fire resources use local district/office Check-in/Out procedures.	Supervisor collaborates with employee.

TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Forest will make this plan available to all employees and volunteers; the plan will be posted to the Forest Website. The Forest Safety Manager will review this plan annually; the plan will be updated as needed.

Employees, Incoming Resources, and Volunteers will be trained on the following:

- Overview of the written check-in and check-out plan
- Overview and demonstration of the primary check-in and check-out system
- Overview and operation of communication equipment:

- Frequencies and Radio Coverage and Radio Operation
- Cell phone contacts
- Satellite phone operation
- SPOT or SEND device operation
- Resources for area familiarization
 - Maps
 - Relevant JHAs and Safety Briefing

Definitions

- **Travel:** In a duty status away from duty station on official business. Travel does not refer to routine commuting to and from work or personal lunchtime errands.
- **In Service:** Indicates employees are checking *into* the forest.
- **Out Of Service:** Indicates employees are *checking out* of the forest.
- **Employees:** refers to permanent, temporary, or hosted Federal employees, detailers, assigned to or working on the Forest in an official capacity.
- **Duty Station:** The assigned office or station that an employee is responsible to report to during working hours.
- **Special Area of Concern (SAC):** Any geographical area on the Forest where there are activities that should raise the safety awareness level for employees. Examples could include marijuana gardens, disgruntled private landowners or other people adjacent to or within the Forest boundary. SAC are communicated from Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) to District Rangers (DRs). DRs will communicate to employees on a need-to-know basis.
- **Backcountry Area:** Forest lands that are essentially undeveloped or natural in character and are at least 300 feet from established roadways and developed areas. A general idea of the Los Padres Forest proper and established roads is located at Appendix B, page 14.

APPENDIX A

Guidelines for Incoming Resources

1. Forest Sponsor

- a. provides FS Radio Frequency Awareness and Use training.
- b. confirms adequate tone coverage for their specific work location
- c. ensures a frequency map is issued.

2. Personnel need to

- a. abide with proper radio etiquette and the use of clear text.
- b. explain seasonal changes, i.e. fire season, prescribed fire season, winter season, and other info.

3. Forest Sponsor

- a. confirms that an LPN Forest Map is issued
- b. acquires a work plan from the visiting parties of areas they will be working in. Work plans should include areas working in, and duration of the visit.

4. Temporary/Detail/Assigned Resource

- a. completes a Risk Assessment Worksheet (RAW) for Medical Aids on the Forest
- b. has group discussions on “what if” scenarios for any medical aid during and after dispatch hours.
- c. assures the Forest Sponsor is in attendance to address the RAW or confirm that it has been addressed by Forest Sponsor. (Refer to Los Padres’ Field Procedure Guide, page 37).
- d. needs to confirm that a call sign has been established to identify the visiting resource.

5. Forest Host will

- a. need descriptions of all vehicles in the working group. When providing, the forest host will attain vehicle information such as the ownership of the vehicle (GSA, FS, or other agency) in order to identify how any emergency services

would be administered. Provide to all visiting parties, information on office hours, phone numbers, and protocol on what to do if working past return ETA.

- i. If confirmed, call the forest sponsor, and
- ii. relay the nature of the situation.

6. Working groups

- a. need to go through their Forest Sponsor to be made aware of forest road conditions
- b. will be given literature on LEI activity awareness guides on marijuana gardens.
- c. will be made aware of LPF terminology used when reporting/finding marijuana gardens (i.e. code name: instrument or agricultural interest).
- d. Can ask local LEI for additional information.

Check List

- ☐ Emergency Contact Visitor Information Completed (see attached sheet)
- ☐ Forest Map of the Forest Visiting has been issued
- ☐ Obtain information of vehicles (see attached sheet)
- ☐ Contact List, such as Forest Sponsor or Regional Sponsor. (see attached sheet)
- ☐ Risk Assessment Worksheet Medical Aids has been reviewed and copy of signed portion is on file with employee supervisor or forest sponsor.

Temporarily Assigned Resource Information

Specify Group (i.e. TEAMS, HYRDO, ROADS): _____

Call Sign (i.e. "HYDRO-1", "TEAMS-Smith"): _____

Group Leader(s) Name(s): _____

Phone # (cell): _____

Supervisor's Name: _____

Phone# (Cell) _____

(Work) _____

(Home) _____

(Other) _____

Forest Sponsor Name: _____

Forest Contact info: _____

Non-local Emergency Contact: _____

Phone _____

1. Vehicle Door #'s: _____

2. Vehicle License Plate #'s: _____

3. Owner Information (Gov't, PVT, etc.): _____

a. If Agency, which forest or district _____

b. For GSA Vehicles need to know if they have a credit card for the vehicle.

c. Other: (need know means of payment.) Specify: _____

4. Make: _____ Model _____

5. Color: _____

6. 4WD Yes No If no, specify _____

 If yes, specify _____

7. Driver(s) Name(s): _____

Contact # (cell phone) _____

(Need to have a primary contact to provide to the Tow Companies driver.

APPENDIX B

Los Padres Proper and Interconnecting Roads

