

White Mountain National Forest

Check-In and Check-Out Program: Written Plan

5/2014

White Mountain National Forest Check-In and Check-Out Program

Prepared by Safety Committee-CI/CO Team

Reviewed by: /s/ Christopher Joosen 5/20/2014
CHRISTOPHER JOOSEN
Forest Safety Officer
Date

Approved by: /s/ Dee Hines (for) 5/20/2014
THOMAS G. WAGNER
Forest Supervisor
Date

Program Purpose

The purpose of this program is to account for the location and safety of on-duty employees of the White Mountain National Forest, and to ensure that the Forest is in compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standard 29 CFR 1910.38 and FSM 6700 and 6709.11, chapter 10. The program is designed to ensure a set of protocols is in place to account for on-duty employees in the office and when they are away from their duty station. All employees, including hosted, virtual, and telework employees, and volunteers shall be included in the White Mountain National Forest check-in and check-out program.

Minimum Requirements

The program will include the following requirements:

- Workplace Assessment
- Protocols
- Training
- Recordkeeping
- Program Evaluation

[Step 1] Workplace Assessment

A check-in and check-out workplace assessment of the White Mountain National Forest was conducted during February 2014, by WNMF Safety Committee (CI/CO Team). 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 dispatch or other personnel, and availability of emergency response resources.

[Item 1a] Employees Covered –

1. Permanent full time (PFT) employees
2. 18/8 or 13/13 permanent employees
3. 1039hr- seasonal employees
4. Volunteers and interns
5. Telework and virtual employees

6. Hosted employees
7. C&M crew (employees not tied directly to an administrative office for reporting)
8. Employees in travel status, including on short or long term details
9. Emergency detailers (fire/disaster incidents)
10. Non-detailed employees although assisting Forest (I.e. Monongahela staff working on Forest)

[Item 1b] Work Environments and Settings:

Office/Work Station Settings. Most employees start their day at a Forest Service facility. The White Mountain National Forest has three administrative offices located across the Forest. Each office has a Visitor Information Center.

- Forest Headquarters which houses the Supervisor Office employees and the Pemigewasset Ranger District employees located in Campton, NH is located off Exit 27 of Highway I-93.
- Saco Ranger District office is located in Conway, NH. East end of the Kancamagus.
- Androscoggin Ranger District is located in Gorham, NH approximately 2 miles south of Gorham on Highway 16.

Some employees/volunteers may work at other work stations for all or part of their work day. A variety of equipment is stored at these sites.

- Bartlett-work site of the Construction and Maintenance Crew (C&M) - A large complex of buildings in Bartlett, NH on Highway 302 co-located with Forest Service Bartlett Research Station. Forest Service employees use this facility to work on vehicles/equipment and as a storage facility. Seasonals sometimes stay at housing facilities in the summer.
- Old Evans Notch Ranger District Office and associated garages/workshop – Some employees on the Androscoggin RD work remotely at this office in Bethel, Maine.
- Dolly Copp campground workshop and garage.
- Pinkham Notch/Hermit Lake complex - Snow Ranger staff work at Pinkham Notch and The Hermit Lake Complex from November until June. They base work from the Hermit Lake cabin located on East side of Mt. Washington and work throughout the Cutler River drainage.

Forest Service employees and volunteers also work at four satellite Visitor Information Centers located across the Forest.

- Lincoln Woods Cabin located along the Kancamagus Highway
- White Mountain Visitor Center located in Lincoln, NH
- Brickett Place located in Chatham, NH on the south side of Evans Notch on Highway 113
- Russell/Colbath House located along the Kancamagus Highway.

Work environment	Situation	Available tools/technology
Administrative Office	Office setting. Working at duty station.	check in/check out sheet on clipboard and/or white board.
Forest – off road, low elevation, timber crews	Working solo or with crew. Some timber staff report from home to alternate work sites in the field. Remote field. Travel methods (vehicle, hiking, snowshoeing, snowmobile, ATV)	check in/check out sheet on clipboard and/or whiteboard. SPOT device, radio, cell phone (many employees use personal cell phone, some have government cell phone)
Backcountry and remote, low and high elevation recreation	Working solo or with a crew. Backcountry and remote field project work. Travel methods (vehicle, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, snowmobile, ATV). May require overnight travel and backcountry camping.	check in/check out sheet on clipboard and/or white board. SPOT device, radio, cell phone (many employees use personal cell phone).
Front country, recreation	Working solo or with crew sometimes after normal working hours. Travel methods (Vehicle, walking, snowmobile, ATV)	/check in / out sheet on clipboard and/or white board. Radio, cell phone (many employees use their personal cell phone).
Work Station/ VIS Center	Office Setting. Working in field solo or with crew.	Telephone, cell phone, radio, email, Microsoft Lync.
Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Surveys	Working solo most often or occasionally with crew often before and after normal working hours. May leave for field from home. Travel methods (vehicle, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, snowmobile, ATV, wading in streams). May require solo backcountry camping.	check in/check out sheet on clipboard and/or white board, SPOT device, radio, phone (many employees use their personal cell phone). Overnight surveys may require detailed specific CI/CO between employee and supervisor.
Virtual and telework	Working at hosted unit, at home or remote work station. Can be in office or field. Travel methods (vehicle, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, snowmobile, ATV).	Status recorded on check in/ checks out sheet. Communicate via radio, email, Microsoft Lync, telephone, cell phone, SPOT.
Travel status	Multi-day travel. In travel status-solo or in group setting. Meetings or training, fire detail.	Telephone, email, cell phone,
Incident Management/Emergency Response	Law Enforcement, Fire, Search and Rescue	LE&I, Fire, Search and Rescue. LE&I are covered by 911 dispatch.
Volunteers/Interns	May work in office setting or in field, solo or with a crew. Travel methods FS vehicle, personal vehicle, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing	Telephone, cell phone, situational-radio
Non-Detailed FS employees assisting WMNF	May work in office setting or in field, solo or with a crew. Travel methods (FS vehicle, personal vehicle, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing).	Telephone, cell phone, email, Microsoft Lync, SPOT device.
Employees on short term or long term details away from home unit.	May work in office setting or in field, solo or with a crew.	Telephone, cell phone, email, Microsoft Lync, SPOT device.

[Item 1c] Working Conditions

Field-going employees can encounter very steep rocky terrain that is densely populated with hardwood and softwood stands. Thick groundcover can also be common which can make off road/ trail work challenging. It is common for terrain to vary greatly within a working day, and employees may encounter both dry and rocky as well as wet and swampy terrain.

Employees often work from a road and trail system in campgrounds, picnic areas, swimming areas, backcountry cabins or dispersed recreation sites, trailheads, developed and backcountry skiing sites, winter and summer climbing sites, and wilderness. Employees may work with a crew or solo and could be interacting with the public or working alone in remote areas.

Habitats at elevations less than 3000 feet are characterized by northern hardwood and spruce/fir forest intermixed with rivers and streams. Larger ponds and lakes are found at the edge of the Forest while smaller, remote ponds and wetlands occur across the Forest. Above 3000 feet, dense softwoods frequent the landscape becoming more stunted at higher elevations. The Forest has forty-eight summits of 4,000 feet and higher, including Mount Washington, the highest peak in the Northeast.

Natural weather hazards can most commonly be grouped into temperature and precipitation. Temperatures can approach 100F with very high humidity in the summer and between -25 to -30F in the winter. Spring, Summer, and Fall rain storms can cause flooding and potentially trap individuals behind swollen waterways when working off road systems. Icing, sleet and snowstorms can cause significant travel hazards in the field and paved road systems.

[Item 1d] Types of Travel and Field Activities

The White Mountain National Forest has robust traditional Forest Service ecosystem and recreation Programs. Ecosystems have active, all-season, timber survey, marking, and timber sale administration responsibilities on all administrative units. Wildlife work includes summer projects, bird, bat, small mammal, fish survey, duck box placement/repair, active interdisciplinary team participation, invasive species reduction, Rx burning, mechanical treatments occur in spring and fall, etc. Recreation has active dispersed and developed programs due to the high volume of public visitation. Developed recreation day use sites and campgrounds are numerous on each unit. Dispersed, backcountry, wilderness, and trail crews are utilized by all districts for repair, maintenance and new projects. Winter recreation occurs across the entire Forest.

Motorized access to the Forest is via a system of highways, secondary roads, more remote forest roads, and snow machine trails. ATV and UTV use is allowed on snow and for administrative use. Access to the Forest beyond the designated transportation systems including high elevations is via a vast network of hiking trails or by bushwhacking often through steep and rugged terrain. Fieldwork requires travel by vehicle, snowmobile, snowcat, ATV, bicycle, or by foot (snowshoes or skis may be necessary in the winter). Often more than one mode of travel may be required to reach a required destination. Winter time daylight is limited and temperatures can drop rapidly in the afternoon at any time of year. Knowledge of predicted weather, existing field conditions, and necessary field gear is very important for employees working in the field.

[Item 1e] Availability and Status of Communication Systems and Equipment

Communication systems can be limited in some areas of the Forest. Numerous dead spots are present where there is no radio contact. SPOT devices are an option for employees allowing some limited communication, but these devices also have some dead spots on the Forest. Cell phone coverage allows an additional form of communication but reception can be limited in the field. Having at least two of these devices with you in the field increases the likelihood of being able to communicate with your home unit, to other fellow employees for relay, or to your supervisor. Access to remote portions of the Forest is difficult in an emergency situation and may take a long period of time for a response team to reach affected parties.

Item 1f, Availability of Dispatch or Other Personnel:

If front desk/VIS is not open/staffed then no common dispatch is available. Employees need to stay advised as to front desk operating hours and follow the 1600 check in as described in 2d. All employees working outside of VIS staffing hours must have a specific CI-CO protocol established with their supervisor and a backup, known to both parties. E.g. SAR events at night, bird surveys, weekends, night-time meetings, overnights in the field, etc.

Item 1g, Availability of Emergency Response Resources:

All units have an emergency evacuation/ response plan available on the forest website and at front desks. All employees will know where their Unit Red Book, listing resources and protocols, is kept near the Front-Desk. (Andro- bookshelf under CI/CO and fleet book in VIS; Saco-on desk opposite map case in VIS; and FHQ-In tan 5-shelved metal unit labeled “Emergency and SAR plans” on right side of VIS desk.)

[Step 2] Protocols

The **White Mountain National Forest’s** check-in and check-out program shall account for the location and safety of all employees and volunteers described in 1a, with the following set of protocols.

[Item 2a] Definitions

The program will adhere to these definitions:

1. **In** –Employee is on-duty at their regular duty station.
2. **Out-Field**-Going to the field, traveling on forest roads, or State or Federal highways.

Out-Telecommuting- At work, but from an alternate location in accordance with a telecommuting agreement. Includes virtual employees who regularly work from a home or alternate office.

Out-Fire-Employee is on fire assignment.

Out-Travel- Working and in travel status off forest.

3. **Off** – Off duty. Includes annual and sick leave, (which can be noted in addition to “off duty”.)
4. **Duty Officer** – Rotating, assigned position who receives status update on employees who have not checked in as scheduled, and serves as initial liaison between front desk staff and supervisors or line officers.

[Item 2b] Check-In and Check-Out Procedures

Normal Duties: Check In-All administrative offices will establish a white board and/or clipboard sign in system in proximity to their front desks. The white board will have a space for every employee, and regular in-office volunteer that is responsible for following the Forest’s Check-In and Check-Out procedure. Immediately upon reporting to duty employees will update the white board and/or the clipboard with their status (“In”, “Out to Field, etc.). Employees who are on duty but traveling away from their duty station will

include their specific destination and expected time of return. The information required for check out includes: **Name of employee, specific field location, vehicle number, estimated time of arrival back at duty station, and cell phone and/or spot device numbers.**

Construction and Maintenance crew, who normally begin their day at Bartlett Station, are the only Forest employees who do not have a desk/space at an administrative unit office. At the beginning of the day all employees shall check in at the Bartlett Station which has a white board and/or clipboard. Employees will record their specific destinations, vehicles, and expected time of return. At the end of the day the first employee or the senior employee of the first crew to return to the duty station shall become the acting Bartlett Duty Officer. The Bartlett Duty Officer is then responsible for check out procedures as outlined in Item 2b. In the event that an employee does not return as scheduled, the Bartlett Duty Officer will contact his supervisor and/or the Supervisor's Office Duty Officer to coordinate a response.

Check Out- At the end of the work day, all employees must update the white board and/or clipboard to reflect that they are Off Duty. If leaving office for more than standard lunch break timeframe employees will check out and then check back in upon their return. Employees who are in the field and will not be returning to the office before the front desk staff go Off Duty need to call the front desk with a status check by 1600. If utilizing SPOT devices to notify supervisors, employees must check in by 1600, and supervisors will update the front desk with employee status by 1600. Front desk staff will update the white board and/or clipboard with new information, and inform specific Supervisors or Duty Officers if utilized, which employees have not returned to the office by 1630, and are still Out. Specific actions taken to track employees who have not returned to their office will be based on the risk associated with employee's location, work, etc. (see 2d)

Alternative Option-Duty Officer: To offer flexibility units can utilize a scheduled Duty Officer to provide a streamlined coverage system with heavy atypical work schedules during certain times of the year. Summer is an example with heavy weekend work, overnights and late duty hours. Units can decide to delegate Supervisor CI/CO responsibilities to a Duty Officer to cover the entire unit force, or a portion, such as the Recreation shop of a unit.

Duty Officer – Rotating, assigned position who receives status update on employees who have not checked in as scheduled, and serves as initial liaison for supervisors/ line officers and the VIS/ Front Desk Staff. May work with supervisors to initiate appropriate search and rescue operations. The Duty Officer is responsible to know which employees are working on weekends or afterhours. The Duty Officer can delegate their responsibilities.

Weekends and afterhours: If Front Desks are closed employees will check-in and out on weekends and afterhours with their supervisors unless the unit has approved a designated aforementioned alternate Duty Officer protocol.

Atypical work includes: bat and bird survey, weekend snowmobile patrols, Snow Ranger duties, etc. Atypical work will establish appropriate protocols as the unique situation occurs and be documented in JHA's

Telework and Virtual: Employees who regularly telework or who are assigned to the Forest but work virtually will indicate that on the clipboard and/ or white board, and need only change their status when they are working away from their normal reporting location. Updates will be made in regards to leave, details, etc. These employees will not need to update the white board and clipboard that they are off duty when working normally, but need to coordinate their schedule with their supervisor on a weekly basis.

Occasional telework employees will sign out ahead of time with “Out Telecommuting”, and list their expected date of return. If an employee is not able to sign out ahead of time, it is their responsibility to call in to the front desk the morning they are teleworking, so that the front desk staff can update the white board and clipboard, in addition to whatever notification the employee is required to give their supervisor. Occasional telework employees do not need to update the white board at the end of shift with “Off” status.

Hosted: Hosted employees will follow the same check-in and check-out procedures as employees.

Volunteers and Interns: All volunteers will have CI/CO procedures clearly identified and signed off on in volunteer agreements. If volunteers routinely report to a Forest unit office, they will follow normal protocol. If they do not normally report to an office, volunteers may follow Hike Safe procedures, and leave an itinerary with another individual (employee or family) with specific return check in time in place. If a Volunteer is overdue their personal contacts will follow the same overdue protocols set up in 2d for employees. Emergency contact information will be shared between volunteer supervisor and each volunteer’s at-home contact. Volunteer contact and home contact info will be accessible to the Supervisor and the predetermined back up. Duty Officers, if utilized, will have access to the same information.

Travel Status: When travel involves an overnight away from the employee’s duty station, either in the field or roadside, the above CI/CO procedure in normal duties will be followed. CI/CO contact must be made by 0830 (local time for employee) and 1600 (EST) respectively. If travel entails working on another Forest Service Unit the employee shall follow the sign-in procedure on the Forest they are visiting.

Extended Travel Status: If away from the WMNF (travel to detail assignments or travel greater than one week in length) the employee will prepare a basic itinerary with each day’s projected end destination and contact information (hotel name and number, cell phone number, etc.). During travel and until employee has established check-in and check-out communication with the temporary unit, employee will continue to follow WMNF check-in and check-out procedures with their WMNF supervisor. Once check-in and check-out procedures are established with employee’s temporary unit supervisor, employee will inform their WMNF supervisor. At this time, employee will follow the temporary unit’s procedures until the assignment’s end date. Before travel back to the WMNF, employee will initiate communication with their WMNF supervisor. While in travel status, employee will contact WMNF supervisor by 0830 (local time for employee) each morning.

Extended trips involving conferences, meetings, or trainings: Before travel, employee will prepare a basic itinerary and contact information (hotel name and number, cell phone number, etc.). Travelling employee will check-in upon arrival at the destination, check-in periodically throughout the trip, and check-in upon return.

Leave: When an employee anticipates an extended absence, they will update the clipboard and white board to reflect the appropriate leave (sick leave, annual leave, etc.), and indicate the date they expect to return to the office. If leave is unanticipated, employee will call in to the Front Desk to indicate “Off” status and expected return date.

Exempt: Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs): Daily check in and out for on/off duty LEOs is handled by local/or state dispatch agencies, depending on their assigned Unit. When traveling to detail assignments they will check in/out with home Supervisor, as described above for other employees, until detail supervision and CI/CO is established.

[Item 2c] Communications Equipment

The required equipment includes: whiteboard, clipboard, radio, telephone, mobile radio, SPOT, cell phone, Optional: SAT phone, temporary repeaters.

The required communication training includes: Initial radio and SPOT device training and annual refreshers as needed, or more frequently if deemed appropriate on a case by case basis.

[Item 2d] Responsibilities and response to overdue.

Employees will have compliance with CI/CO protocols included in their performance measures. Communication with Front Desk, Supervisors and/or Duty Officers when appropriate is the responsibility of all employees as part of compliance with CI/CO.

Front Desk employees will receive and account for check-in and check-out notifications for all employees during the normal business hours of each Forest administrative facility. At 1630, Front Desk staff notify supervisors or duty officers if utilized, of the status of employees who have not returned to their administrative unit, and any status updates for these employees. At that point, Front Desk staff is no longer responsible for tracking employees unless otherwise designated.

Supervisors will be aware of their employee(s) work location and will be prepared to respond to an overdue subordinate. Response follow through will occur upon notification from unit Front Desk staff, a Duty Officer if utilized, or through direct lack of notification when the supervisor was the check-in contact. (i.e. weekends, overnight bird surveys, etc.) CI/CO systems support, such as Front Desks and Duty Officers are in place to assist Supervisors' accountability of employees and to ensure their safe return at end of each work day. Ultimately the overall accountability is shared in the Supervisor and Employee relationship by staying in communication about work locations and atypical schedules when VIS staffing does not exist. Supervisors, or other employees monitoring SPOT check-in, will update the Unit Front-desk CI-CO white board/clipboard by 1600.

Duty Officers, if utilized, will initiate overdue and missing response procedures for unaccounted for employees. For routine schedules and normal working hours, employees will call into their Duty Station by 1600 each day. Front Desk staff will ensure a duty officer, supervisor or line officer is notified of an overdue person before leaving for the day. Duty Officer is responsible for tracking employee(s) at that point. Duty officer notifies supervisors and delegates or initiates appropriate response.

Overdue and missing response procedures:

1. Front Desk Staff contacts either the Supervisor directly or Duty Officer if utilized, of employees who have not returned to their administrative units.
2. The Supervisor or Duty Officer ensures employees return safely after 1630. If employees do not return, the supervisor or Duty Officer will attempt to contact the individual again and any employees who may have last been in contact with the overdue employee(s).
3. If leaving the facility the Supervisor, the Duty Officer, or person delegated will stay in radio repeater range and continue to attempt contact. A note will be left on the CI/CO board instructing the employee who to contact upon their return.

4. Dependent on the risk of the employees specific working environment, the supervisor or Duty Officer might elect to take immediate action to find overdue employees. If no action is taken immediately, and the employee has not returned to the office within two hours of expected return, emergency contacts will be notified of the situation. If a Duty Officer has been in place they will contact the Supervisor, SAR-prepared employees will be contacted to assist where necessary, and a designated employee will travel to the location the missing individual(s) signed out was to be working if on Unit. The Duty Officer or delegate will notify Fish and Game and a formal search will ensue if initial response procedures prove unsuccessful.
5. If unaccounted for in Travel status the basic itinerary contacts and information, including hotel, personal contacts, other Unit personnel, other emergency response staff, etc. until resolved.

[Item 2e] Weekend and Afterhours Protocol (see 2b)

[Item 2f] Travel Status Protocol (see 2b)

[Item 2g] Protocol for Hosted/Virtual/Telework Employees (see 2b)

[Item 2h] Protocol for Volunteers and Interns (see 2b)

[Step 3] Training

The White Mountain National Forest's employees, virtual, hosted, telework employees, volunteers and interns must be properly instructed in the contents and use of the check-in and check-out system. Training will include:

1. Overview of written CI-CO Plan specific to the unit implementing CI-CO (white board or clipboard) and also include how the unit will respond if a field team member does not check in.
2. Overview and demonstration of primary CI-CO routine including special situations
 - Atypical hours: bird, bat surveys, Campground/Dev Rec Patrols, Night programs (RC, Russell Pond, Dolly Copp), overnight operations.
 - Atypical operations: Snow Ranger Program, Search & Rescue, Special activities such as Rainbow gathering.
 - Non-WMNF employees: Volunteers, Interns, visiting employees.
3. Overview of Communication tools and equipment (Radios, SPOT, Cell phone, Sat, Mobile repeaters)

[Step 4] Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping. The WMNF Safety Manager will keep a signed copy of the written CI-CO plan. He/She will ensure each Unit has a copy. The Line Officers will designate a representative to keep this copy available to all unit staff. The unit representative will also maintain a record of CI-CO training, dates, and attendees.

[Step 5] Program Evaluation

District Rangers will ensure feedback on suggested changes/edits to the WMNF CI-CO Plan are forwarded to the Forest Safety Manager in a timely manner. The Forest Safety Manager will solicit suggestions for annual review prior to reprinting and resigning of the CI-CO plan.

Check In/Check Out quick reference

All Employees, Volunteers, and Interns will record their status for each work day on whiteboard and /or clipboard. This includes travel, leave, details, and telework status.

Employees in the Office

- Check in upon arrival to office.
- Check out if leaving administrative site for longer than standard lunch break-Check in upon return.
- Check out at the end of the day.

Employees in the Field

- Record required information in Check In Check out board/book, Routes and work site, vehicle number, spot device, cell phone #and estimated time of return.
- Have communication devices such as radio, SPOT device, or cell phone that is appropriate for work location.
- If doing atypical work ensure supervisor has details on routes and time expectations and check in / out procedure in place
- Notify Front Desk if plans change
- Update Front Desk no later than 1600 if you will not return to the office by 1630
- Check in/ out upon return to the office; if after 1630 check in with Duty Officer/Supervisor as previously arranged

Employees on Travel Status

- Backcountry Overnight on Forest – check in and out at established times
- Travel to Forest (Home or off unit) details/meetings /training – check in/out on a daily basis, once on site utilize local Forest check in/out protocol
- Travel off FS lands- After arrival – check in periodically with supervisor depending on assignment.

Supervisors

- Know employee work locations and activities
- For atypical work ensure check in / out procedures are in place and part of JHA
- If utilized, coordinate with Duty Officer for employees with atypical work schedules
- Ensure compliance with check in/out protocol and include as part of performance measures

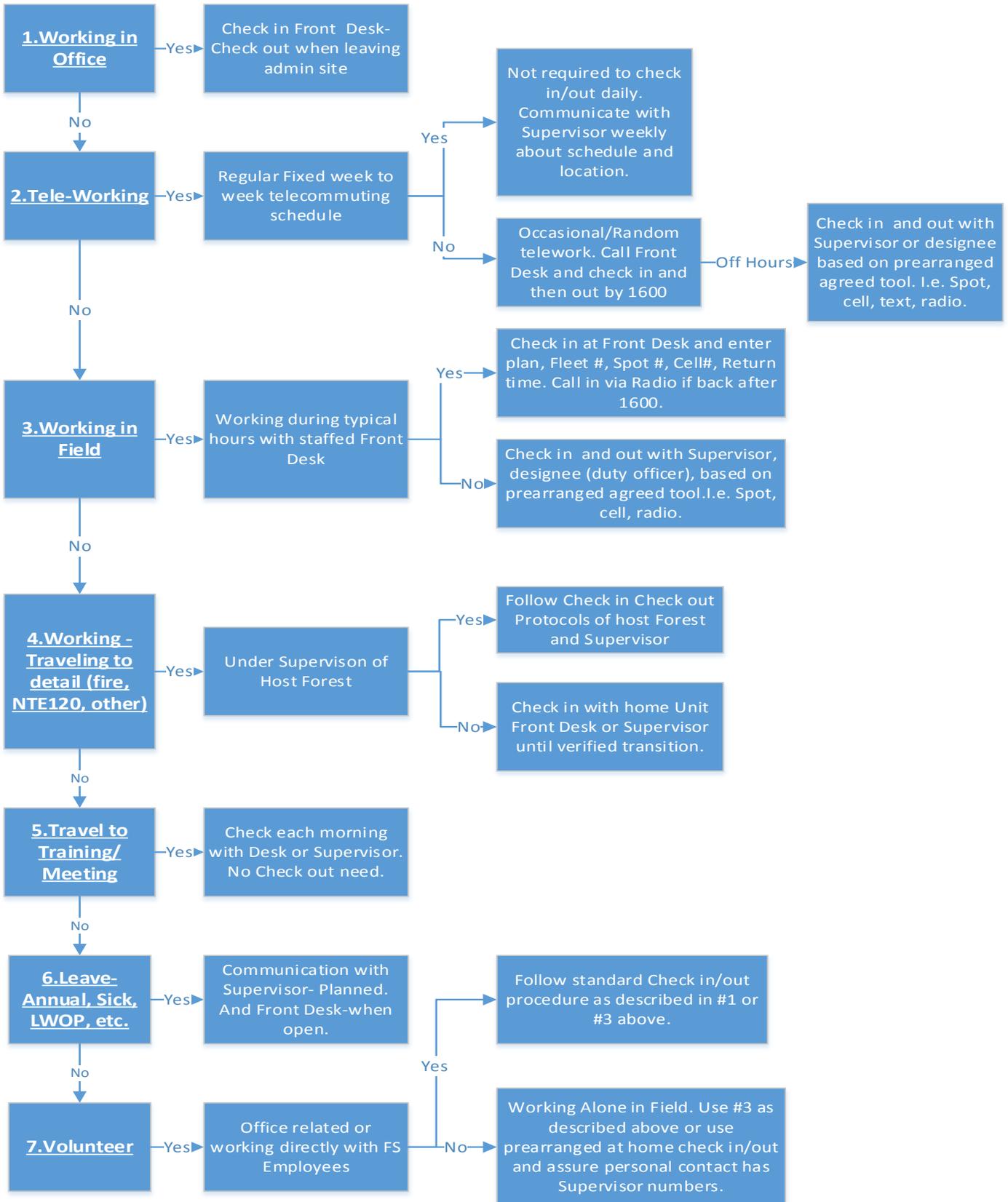
Duty Officers

- Be the liaison between the Front Desk staff and Supervisor to ensure all unit employees are accounted for and facilitate any needed response
- Ensure and communicate Acting Duty Officer assigned when unavailable

Line Officers

- Ensure all employees are aware, trained and comply with Forest Check in/out Plan
- Designate unit representative to maintain a record of check in/out training
- Assure an evaluation process recognizes improvement opportunities.

Employee Quick Reference for CI/CO



Supervisor Quick Reference for CI/CO

