

# Checklist for Remote or In-Person Information Officer Support

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## Incident Name

## Purpose

Incident communication is a dynamic field and traditionally many units require this type of assistance only infrequently. This “cheat sheet” will help prepare before and during an emerging incident prior to help arriving – especially as supervision may not be as in-person as once before. This will ensure a smooth arrival process, get basics hashed out early, and avoid awkward issues down the line.

## Need

The desire to have PIOs working remotely is becoming more commonplace. So many of the tools now available can be accessed from nearly anywhere in the world. However, incidents occur on the ground and in places where connectivity doesn't exist or may be unavailable. Some may work from home; others may be deployed on scene away from the Incident Command Post (ICP). Incident information will be handled differently than in the past.

**Considerations – Suggestion:** *check off the boxes and fill in blanks as you go to help with communication planning*

Who will the PIO report to: Lead PIO, unit lead, someone else?

*If that person is not available, then who are the next two?*

- *PIOs assigned to an incident don't have days off, so there should be a contact available fairly quickly 7-days a week.*

Is there an established plan to check-in with any remote people assigned?

Who will greet them and provide a briefing?

*Copies of Incident Action Plan (IAP), ICS 209, burn plan, fire management plan, etc.? Meeting schedule? Conference calls for planning meetings, maps, etc.?*

Has an order/request for them been made through dispatch and/or IROC?    Yes    No

*Read the [Name Request Justification Order Form \(if needed\)](#)*

*This includes an O# (Overhead number), account code, location information, etc.*

*Make sure the order lists all needed devices or equipment such as: a computer (unless one is available through the unit), cell phone, camera, portable printer, radio, etc.*

*Is a vehicle on the order / request?    Yes    No*

*Do they need a special type? Like an SUV for off-pavement use?    Yes    No*

*It must be listed on the resource order to be authorized. A vehicle is helpful to post updates in the area, get around the incident as needed, etc. Alternatively, a unit may provide a government vehicle.*

Does the PIO need special qualifications/skillsets?    Yes    No

Willing to accept a Trainee? Red Card?    Yes    No

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2nd language skills? Yes No

Website skills? Yes No

Photography skills? Yes No

*Remember, to obtain high quality images, there needs to be a high-quality camera. Do they need to bring a camera, or does the park have one for use?*

Where is their workspace?

*Does it have a desk, network cable or WiFi, and phone? Yes No*

*Printer access? Yes No*

*Are there special building access needs - e.g., keys/codes? Yes No*

What shifts are they going to be working?

*Day Night*

*12-hour shift 14-hour shift 16-hour shift Other*

Where are they going to stay?

*Home; telework site; incident camp; off-site hotel*

If not at home, will meals be provided? Yes No

*Per diem or camp food? Per diem Camp food*

*Will per diem be reduced? Yes No*

What kind of uniforms and weather gear (e.g., cold weather) should they pack?

*Time of year and duration of stay; Job specifics (community meetings vs. field operations); Fire uniform or something else approved. List below:*

Is there PPE available for loan for the PIO and/or media? Yes No

*If so, from whom/where do they get it?*

Will they be writing or drafting news releases? Yes No

*Whom do they need to contact for approval? IC PAO Superintendent Other*

*Is there a local style guide? Yes No*

*If it's an interagency incident, is there a pre-approved template? Yes No N/A*

*Is the PIO going to be sending out news release or is someone from park doing that?*

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Are there contact lists to share?

*Local phone list?* Yes No

*E-mail list?* Yes No

*Shared e-mail for news release distribution?* Yes No

Are they going to post to your unit's digital platforms? Yes No

*Who do they need to contact for approval?* IC PAO Superintendent Other

*InciWeb access?* Yes No

*Social media or CMS?* Yes No

*Who are the contacts and backup contacts in park/region who will provide access?*

Will unit-specific communications materials be available? Yes No

*Unit communication strategies/key messages?* Yes No

*Pre-approved general talking points / current fact sheet?* Yes No

*Line of Duty Death (LODD) Handbook?* Yes No

Does your unit have an Employee Alert System? Yes No

*Will the PIO be using it to get info out?* Yes No N/A

*Will the PIO need to be added to it as a recipient?* Yes No N/A

*Who is the contact for the Employee Alert System?*

## Long-term Considerations

Does the unit have a pre-drafted Delegation of Authority letter? Yes No

Does the unit have a pre-drafted transition plan for PIOs? Yes No

- *Ex: Local support for duration of incident (some responsibilities remain with the park -website - alerts, news releases, etc., social media, all-employee / internal updates, updates for concessionaires, researchers, volunteers, etc.? Internal sites, regional newsletters, success stories, etc.).*

Do you have a physical space for required incident documentation ([NWCG Records Management](#)) and [ICS Forms](#) - unit logs, crew time reports (CTRs), general messages, etc.? Yes No

## Resources

Through the [NPS Fire Communication and Education Program](#), a list is maintained of available staff for PIO duties along with their qualifications. Potentially available NPS PIOs can be found [on Teams](#).