



Kern County Sheriff's Office
Policies and Procedures

TITLE: DUTIES OF PERSONNEL – PARK RANGERS		NO: B-225	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: February 10, 2025	REVIEWED: February 10, 2025	REVISED:	UPDATED:

POLICY

The Kern County Sheriff's Office recognizes that Park Rangers have responsibilities and limitations imposed by law that do not apply to other employees. It is therefore necessary to list duties for Park Rangers.

Park Rangers are peace officers, as defined in Penal Code § 830.31(b), whose authority extends to any place in the state only while engaged in the performance of assigned duties in order to carry out the primary function of employment relating to his or her assignment, or while performing other law enforcement duties directed by the Sheriff-Coroner during a local state of emergency.

Park Rangers shall prioritize enhancing the quality of life within our County Parks by focusing on proactive solutions and emphasizing education over enforcement whenever appropriate. Their efforts should center on addressing issues that directly affect park visitors, such as ensuring safety, preserving natural resources, and fostering inclusive, welcoming public spaces where everyone can enjoy the beauty and tranquility of the parks.

DIRECTIVE A

Failure to comply with the duties as listed in this section may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All Park Rangers will:

- Maintain the operation of county parks, waterways and assigned facilities, including the safety and security of the employees and visitors.
- Protect life and property, maintain order, prevent and investigate crimes related to a county park, waterway or county facility.
- Make legal searches, seizures, and arrests related to a county park, waterway or county facility (on county grounds, directly related to your assignment).
- Give first aid treatment to the sick, injured, and mentally ill when safe to do so.
- Furnish name and badge number (or Sheriff's Office CAD identification number) upon request of any person.

- Not intervene in situations that require a law enforcement response, when the response is unrelated to the Park Rangers duties. In situations where officers witness an unrelated crime in progress or are contacted by a citizen regarding such an incident, the Ranger will contact dispatch to have the appropriate law enforcement personnel dispatched.
- Except as otherwise permitted by law, Park Rangers are prohibited from affiliating with any organization that would prevent them from the proper performance of their lawful duties.

DIRECTIVE B

Duty Status:

A Park Ranger is considered “on duty” during the scheduled hours of his/her scheduled work shift(s), including scheduled overtime and when in response to a subpoena. During unscheduled hours or days, a Park Ranger is considered “off duty.”

The authorization of a command/ranking officer or his/her designee is required for a Park Ranger to be “on duty” at a time other than his/her scheduled hours. However, this authorization is not required if, at the end of a scheduled shift, the Park Ranger is engaged in an authorized activity that cannot reasonably be interrupted. In such situations, the authorization to extend “on duty” hours are implied, and it is not necessary to seek authorization. However, the Park Ranger must inform his/her supervisor of such instances as soon as practicable.

During “off duty” hours, a Park Ranger does not have peace officer authority.

COUNTY ORDINANCE 2.74.040 – PARK RANGERS

- Employees designated as "park ranger" by the classified position in which they are employed, and who are regularly employed and paid as such, are peace officers with the primary duty of protection of park property and other property owned by the County of Kern and preservation of the peace therein and, such park rangers are designated peace officers for the purposes of Penal Code Section 830.31.
- Any employee designated as a park ranger and regularly employed as such shall have the power, and authority of a public officer as set forth in Penal Code Section 830.31 and Penal Code section 836.
- Each employee designated "park ranger" shall satisfactorily complete a course of training in the exercise of his powers to arrest and in carrying and use of firearms, which courses of training shall meet the minimum standards prescribed by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

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DIRECTIVE C

Park Rangers shall handle calls for Service (CFS) in the county parks, waterways and county facilities. However, calls for service that require extensive follow-up investigation, or that are so complex they are beyond the training of a Park Ranger, (Homicides, Sexual Assault related crimes, Child Abuse/Neglect or Missing Persons), shall be dispatched to a Deputy Sheriff or Senior Deputy Sheriff. If during the course of an investigation, a Park Ranger recognizes the call for service he/she is handling is beyond their training or will require extensive follow-up, the Park Ranger will notify dispatch and have a patrol Deputy or Senior Deputy respond to handle the investigation.

DIRECTIVE D

The Kern County Sheriff's Office Park Rangers adopts an unequivocal and unwavering "No Pursuit Policy" with the primary and unwavering objective of safeguarding human lives and minimizing risks to the public, law enforcement personnel, and suspects. Pursuits of any nature are categorically prohibited under all circumstances, without exception.

Pursuits are highly volatile situations that demand officers be alert to rapidly changing conditions. When the driver of a pursued vehicle clearly exhibits the intention of avoiding detention or arrest, or when a suspected violator refuses to stop, the ranger shall terminate the intended stop (deactivating overhead lights and/or sirens) and transmit pertinent information to the communications center via radio. This information will minimally include the following:

- The ranger will clearly identify they are not involved in a pursuit, however the vehicle they intended to stop has failed to yield.
- The ranger shall provide reasonable suspicion for the stop.
- The ranger shall provide vehicle description- make, model, color, license plate, damage or custom identifiers.
- If possible, the ranger shall provide driver description and number of occupants in the vehicle.
- The ranger shall provide approximate speed and direction of travel.
- The ranger shall request appropriate law enforcement resources to initiate the stop if feasible.

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- The ranger shall notify his/her supervisor of the intended stop and complete all necessary forms.
- Park Rangers shall not trail the vehicle they intended to stop, nor shall they attempt to establish a “barricade” by blocking the roadway.

DIRECTIVE E

The Kern County Park Rangers adopts an unequivocal and unwavering "No Emergency Driving or Response" policy unless the Park Ranger has attended and successfully completed a POST certified Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC), presented by the Kern County Sheriff's Office.

This policy was developed and implemented with the primary and unwavering objective of safeguarding human lives and minimizing risks to the public, law enforcement personnel, and residents and visitors of Kern County.

Emergency Driving or Code 3 response of any nature are categorically prohibited under all circumstances, unless the Park Ranger has attended the aforementioned course.

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