



ATC Incident Report Form Instructions

In an emergency, if you need medical attention, or need a law-enforcement response:

1. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY, even if you are uncertain if it is a crime.

If you are not sure whether to call 911, you should call. Most of the Trail is in remote backcountry and help may be hours away. It is best to call and speak with a dispatcher rather than wait until a situation turns into a true emergency.

911 dispatchers may not be familiar with Trail mileage (e.g. NOBO mile 1,456.3). Be prepared to also provide your location based on distance from the nearest road/Trailhead, town, or other major waypoint such as a shelter or campsite. If possible, tell the dispatcher what county you are in.

2. If you are in a situation where you need an immediate law enforcement or emergency services response but are unable to make a phone call or might put yourself at risk by making a call, text a friend and ask them to call 911 with your exact location, state, and nature of the incident (who, what, when, where, and why).

If you have a personal locator device or InReach beacon, activate the SOS/emergency feature.

If you do not carry a personal locator and do not have enough cell phone reception to make a call or send a text message, you or someone you are with will need to hike toward the nearest road crossing until you find reception or help. Keep in mind the nearest road crossing may be accessed via a side trail – always know where you are and what trail you are on.

3. Once you are safe and the situation has been resolved, submit a detailed report about the incident using the ATC's Incident Report Form.



For non-emergency incidents, submit a detailed report using the ATC's Incident Report form.

Examples of when you should submit an Incident Report form:

- You observe vandalism or damage to the A.T. or A.T. infrastructure, such as shelters and bridges.
- You witness bad or suspicious behavior on the Trail or at A.T. shelters or campsites.
- There is a missing or delayed hiker or a person of concern on the Trail
- You have a bad feeling about someone or a situation on the Trail, or just feel that something should be reported.
- When in doubt, submit a report.

Even if you feel the incident might have been a one-time situation, law enforcement might have had other reports that they can connect to yours. This could help identify and address a pattern of harassing, threatening, or other concerning behavior. An Incident Report can provide more context about a situation, potential witnesses, and other details that could help with an investigation.

Incident Reports do not trigger an immediate law enforcement response and are not a replacement for calling 911 or making a report to local law enforcement in the event of an emergency or a crime.

Incident Reports go directly to the National Park Service (NPS) and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). NPS or ATC may share this report, including your name and contact information, with law enforcement officials, land managing agencies, and Trail Clubs involved in the management of the A.T.

If you are not able to complete an Incident Report Form, you can email your concern to incident@appalachiantrail.org or call the National Park Service 24-Hour Dispatch/Communications Center to inform them of the situation: 1.866.677.6677.

For bear encounters, please submit a Bear Encounter Report form. Visit appalachiantrail.org/bears for more information and to submit a report.