Printed November 6, 2026

Last checked against official sources: November 3, 2026

Mailing this to someone inside? Print one side only, black ink, plain white paper. No staples or clips. Put their full name and number on the envelope. Some facilities limit pages per envelope: check their mail rules first.

FEDERAL PRISON GUIDE

VISIT PACKET: MDC LOS ANGELES

Metropolitan Detention Center · Los Angeles, CA · Phone 213-485-0439

VISIT CARD · CUT OUT AND KEEP IN THE CAR

WHEN
Sunday and Saturday
Visits happen only on the day assigned to their housing unit.[1]

HOURS
8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Each housing unit has only one visiting day a week, so first ask them which unit they are in.[1]

WHO CAN COME
3 adults
No more than 3 adults at each visit.[1]

BRING
not accepted
Everyone except children under 16 must show ID: a valid driver's license, state ID, military ID, passport or...[1]

CALL FIRST
213-485-0439
Call before you drive, every time.

THE BOP'S OWN PAPERS DISAGREE. The BOP page for this prison does not link visiting rules. The only visiting schedule is in the handbook (revised May 2022), which is old. Call 213-485-0439 before you drive.[1]

BEFORE YOU GO: GET ON THE LIST

1. Your loved one mails you the **Visitor Information Form (BP-S102)**.
2. Fill it out and mail it **directly to their correctional counselor**.
3. Staff run a background check and build their visiting list. The handbook says this typically takes **two weeks**.
4. They tell you when you are approved. Do not drive until you are approved.
5. Designated (sentenced "cadre") inmates may have up to **10 visitors** who are not immediate family, if proof of a relationship before prison is shown.
6. Special visits for family emergencies can be asked for through their unit team, case by case.[1]

AT THE DOOR

WHO CAN VISIT	People who are pretrial or holdover can have **immediate family only** (mother, father, sibling, spouse, children). Immediate family must prove the relationship and pass a background check approved by the Unit Manager.[1]
SCREENING	You must pass the metal detector, and you may get an Ion Track test for drugs.[1]
DRESS CODE	No bathing suits, sweatshirts, sweat pants, warm-up suits, jackets (unless worn with a suit), sweaters, shorts of any kind, see-through clothes, mesh or bare-back clothes, plunging necklines, low-cut blouses, skirts or sun dresses more than one inch above the knee cap, leotards, stretch pants, crop tops, halter tops, tube tops, medical scrubs, tight clothes, midriff shirts, hats, caps or hoods, camisoles or scarves. **No solid white, green or grey t-shirts, and nothing tan or khaki.**[1]
FOOD AND DRINK	No food or drink in the lobby or front area.[1]
BABIES	One diaper, one pacifier, one baby blanket and one clear bottle per infant.[1]
TOUCHING	The only touching allowed is a closed-mouth kiss when they come in and when they leave. They may not receive anything from a visitor.[1]
VIDEO VISITS	Anyone in the SHU, and some people in general population whose behavior was disruptive, have video (non-contact) visits on their unit's day. The same dress and conduct rules apply.[1]
LAWYERS	Attorneys with a valid Bar Association card: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on weekends. No time limit.[1]
PARKING	Paid parking is across the street at Joe's Auto Park and at Union Station, and there are parking meters.[1]

ALL VISITING DAYS AND HOURS

WHERE	DAYS	HOURS
5 North	Sunday and Saturday	8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (the handbook prints the Saturday end time as "1:00 AM", which looks like a typo)
6 North and 6 South	Monday	2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
7 South	Tuesday	2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
9 South and 5 South	Wednesday	2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
7 North and the Special Housing Unit (SHU)	Thursday	2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
8 South Annex and 9 North	Friday	2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Federal holidays	Each unit keeps its own day	8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Each housing unit has only one visiting day a week, so first ask them which unit they are in. The handbook does not give a last-entry time. Call before you drive.[1]

Visits happen only on the day assigned to their housing unit. Inter-floor visits are on Wednesdays, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. A regular visit on the floors lasts 1.5 hours; 5 North visits on Saturday and Sunday have no time limit.

GETTING THERE

By car or train	The prison is at 535 North Alameda Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, right off Highway 101 and across from Los Angeles Union Station. Highway 101 can be reached from Interstates 5 and 10. Union Station has Amtrak, Metrolink and bus service.

WHAT TO WEAR TO A VISIT

The BOP beats to its own drum. The front desk has the final say. Keep a spare outfit in the car.

MAIL AND THE MAILING ADDRESS

Your full name
Your street address
City, State ZIP

STAMP

Their committed name, exactly as the BOP Inmate Locator shows it

Reg. No. _____-___
MDC Los Angeles
Metropolitian Detention Ctr
P.O. Box 531500
Los Angeles, CA 90053

The envelope, filled in. Their name and number must match the BOP Inmate Locator exactly.[1]

Ask your loved one for their unit and floor. Every letter must have their **name and register number** or it is returned or thrown away.[1]

> **USE THE P.O. BOX ONLY.** Never mail to the street address.

THE MAIL RULES

NAME AND NUMBER	All mail must carry their name and register number.[1]
READ AND INSPECTED	All mail in and out can be read and inspected. They cannot seal outgoing mail, except legal mail.[1]
BOOKS AND MAGAZINES	Only directly from the publisher. Anything with nudity or sexually explicit material is returned to the sender.[1]
PACKAGES	Arranged through their counselor and approved by the Unit Manager.[1]
LEGAL MAIL	Delivered to the unit within 24 hours, opened in front of them and scanned for contraband.[1]
MONEY	Never put money in a letter to the prison. The mail room sends it back. Use the BOP lockbox in Des Moines (see the Money tab).[1]

Sources

1. MDC Los Angeles Admission and Orientation Handbook (revised May 2022) bop.gov/locations/institutions/los/los_ao-handbook.pdf