

**File Code:** 6700
Route To:**Date:** Aug 4, 2025**Subject:** Valley Fever Exposure Notification**To:** Personnel Working on the Gifford Fire

This letter is documentation that you may have been exposed to Valley Fever, while working on the Los Padres National Forest. Valley fever, or coccidioidomycosis, is an illness caused by fungal spores found in the soil in the southwestern United States and south-central Washington. Valley Fever is contracted by breathing in spores from soil or airborne dust particles. Valley Fever is typically not contagious (cannot spread person-to-person).

During fire suppression and suppression repair activities, you may have performed wildland fire tasks associated with increased risk for exposure. These tasks are: being in close proximity to helicopter operations that throw dust into the air, digging or preparing fireline, mopping up (suppression efforts), hiking or traveling in areas with loose soil (dozer line or handline), working around and operating heavy equipment, working in camps with high traffic and minimal dust control.

The following information is summarized from the WebMD entry about Valley Fever.

Incubation period (how long it takes for symptoms to develop): 7-21 days

Common symptoms: fever, chest pains, cough, chills, fatigue, joint aches, and a red spotty rash (usually on the lower legs)

Important Notes: Most people exposed to Valley Fever do not become ill. When symptoms do appear, they usually resolve on their own. However, some cases of Valley Fever can become serious, so it is important to know if you have been in an area where the fungus is common.

Please talk to your healthcare provider and supervisor if you think you have Valley Fever.

X

CHRIS BIELECKI
Agency Administrator

