



West Virginia Emergency Management Division Lost Person Behavior

Location: WV State Police Academy, Academy Drive, Dunbar, WV

Instructors: Natural Awareness Tracking School, LLC - Melissa Weeks Gardner.

Course Dates: October 12, 13, 2026 - 8:00 to 5:00

Course Description: The Lost Person Behavior Course is a two-day classroom workshop (16 hours) based on Dr. Robert Koester's *Lost Person Behavior* research and is designed to support search planning for both ground searchers and command staff. Students will be introduced to the latest information and research regarding the lost person behavioral profiles, including important subject background information, implications for search and rescue, search statistics, behavioral statistics, and how to plan a search for each subject type. Particular emphasis is placed on the newer research concerning people with Alzheimer's, despondency, intellectual disabilities/psychosis and abducted children. The instructors present opportunities to work several practical scenarios that leave attendees with basic knowledge, skills, and confidence to create a strategic and tactical plan for their next missing persons operation. Before arriving in class, students will benefit from downloading the free Lost Person Behavior App into their phone/tablet and gaining some familiarity with SARTopo via the free CalTopo app/online platform. Students will receive Dr. Koester's *LPB* book, a *LPB* workbook, and the *Endangered and Vulnerable Adults & Children* handbook.

There will be a limit of 50 students for this class

Students will need to register through www.wvpst.org for this class.

Go to Charleston website calendar, find class needed and click on class to register.

Please contact **Eva Godbey** with questions about registration at
304-766-0011 ext. 22 or Email: eva.godbey@k12.wv.us

If you have questions, please contact **Jeff Cunningham**, SAR Training Officer at
304-414-7682 or 304-941-6025 or Email: jeff.o.cunningham@wv.gov