

Mono County Sheriff Search and Rescue Team Policies of the Corporation

Adopted December 6, 2017

Policies may be established or amended by two thirds vote of the Board of Directors. A copy of the Policies shall be kept in the Team Records and made available to all voting members upon modification of the policy.

Policy 1. MEMBERSHIP The Corporation shall have four classes of membership: Rescue, Candidate, Support, and Lifetime.

1.1 RESCUE MEMBERS

1.1.1. Rescue Members shall be eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall have a current California drivers license, shall have telephone service, shall be physically and mentally competent to participate in the search and rescue activities of the Corporation, shall have been a Candidate Member for at least six months, and shall have completed the training requirements of a Candidate Member as required by the Bylaws and the Policies of the Corporation. Rescue Members shall be elected by a two thirds vote by secret ballot at a regular meeting of the Team.

1.1.2. Rescue Members may vote, hold office, participate in all activities of the Corporation, wear the official uniform of the organization with approved patches, carry appropriate identification card, serve as operations leaders, and have all other rights conferred on members of the Corporation. Rescue Members shall participate in activities of the Corporation as required by the policies of the Corporation.

1.2 CANDIDATE MEMBERS A Candidate Member is a person who is in training for Rescue or Support Membership. Prospective Candidate Members are nominated by the Board of Directors from applicants who have completed interviews by the recruitment committee and background checks by the Mono County Sheriff's Office. A two thirds vote by secret ballot at a regular meeting of the Team is required for a Candidate nominee to be elected as a Candidate Member.

1.2.1 Candidate Members shall be eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall have a current California drivers license, shall have telephone service, shall be physically and mentally competent to participate in the search and rescue activities of the Corporation, and possess minimum skills and qualifications as determined by the policies of the Corporation.

1.2.2 Candidate Members shall participate in activities of the Corporation as required by the policies of the Corporation. Candidate Members may wear the official uniform of the organization with approved patches. Candidate Members may not vote, hold office or serve as operations leaders.

1.2.3 New Candidate members must complete the following requirements within the first 3 months of joining or be dismissed from the Team:

- A basic or higher CPR certification
- A basic or higher First Aid certification
- SAR Building and vehicle test
- ICS online courses 100 and 200

1.3 SUPPORT MEMBERS

1.3.1 Support Members shall be eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall have a current California drivers license, shall have telephone service, and possess knowledge, training or experience in a function related to search and rescue. Support Members shall be advanced from Candidate Member status after completion of required training and by a two thirds vote by secret ballot at a regular meeting of the Team.

1.3.2 Support Members may participate in activities of the Corporation and may wear the official uniform of the organization. Support Members shall be entitled to vote and hold office. Support Members shall regularly participate in activities of the Corporation in accordance with policies of the Corporation .

1.4 LIFETIME MEMBERS

Election as Lifetime Member is an honor conferred by the Team to a Rescue or Support Member who has made unusual, faithful, and regular contributions to the Team and to the welfare of victims over a significant number of years.

1.4.1 Lifetime Members shall be elected by a two thirds vote by secret ballot at a regular meeting of the Team, or by a two-thirds majority of the Board.

1.4.2 Lifetime Members may participate in all Team activities and wear the Team uniform.

Policy 2. CANDIDATE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Candidate Members will satisfy the following training and skill requirements prior to their consideration for Rescue Membership. These requirements pertain to candidates in training for both rescue and support status. However, support candidates can be considered to have fulfilled a training requirement without demonstrating certain physical capabilities. For instance, a support candidate must attend the same technical rescue trainings as rescue candidates, but could satisfy the requirement by observation at the training rather than direct participation.

2.1.1 Attend an introductory candidate training course six hours in duration offered at least once per year, and pass the written and SAR vehicle equipment tests.

2.2 Required Skills Training: This requirement may be satisfied by participating in courses organized by the Team or in courses offered by outside organizations and approved by the Qualifications Committee, or by presenting the Qualifications Committee evidence of these skills if acquired prior to joining the Team. The Qualifications Committee will consist of the members of the Board, and designated Operations Leaders.

2.2.1 Mountain Navigation Skills

- a. Attend a map and compass class
- b. Attend an orienteering field class and exercise.
- c. Attend a GPS receiver operation skills field test.
- d. Pass tests in all the above.

2.2.3 Tracking Skills

- a. Attend a tracking class initially.
- b. Pass basic tracking test.

2.2.4 Search Skills

- a. Attend basic search training class.

2.2.5 Medical Skills

- a. Maintain current Basic or higher First Aid and Basic or higher CPR certifications. Members must also demonstrate proficiency in splinting (full body, femur traction, leg and arm), cervical spine stabilization, SAM splint use, litter assembly, patient tie-in, bleeding control, oxygen administration, and vital signs assessment. This may be done as part of a Team training session, or individually demonstrated to a Team instructor. Members must inform the Operations Leader if their medical certifications are not current, and may not be given a field assignment without current medical certification, unless approved by the Incident Commander.

2.2.6 Rope, Knot, and Rigging Skills

- a. Attend ALL scheduled rigging trainings. Classes will cover belaying, raising and lowering systems, anchors, victim care, and safety systems.
- b. Be able to tie basic rescue knots in individual testing: Figure 8, Figure 8 on a bight, water knot, double fisherman, prusik attached to rope, high-strength tie-off (tensionless hitch), Wrap 3- Pull 2, long-tail bowline, and radium release hitch. 100% success rate is required for passing.

2.2.7 Basic Litter Skills

- a. Attend litter handling class.
- b. Know where litters and wheels are stored and how to assemble.
- c. Know where litter raising and lowering hardware is located in rescue vehicles.
- d. Demonstrate proficiency.

2.2.8 Radio Operation Skills

- a. Attend radio operation class.
- b. Know how to operate and communicate with a hand-held Team VHF radios.
- c. Know basic radio ten-codes.
- d. Know names of the county repeater systems and their locations.
- e. Know how to operate radios in rescue vehicles.
- f. Know how to set up base station antenna and radio.
- g. Pass test.

2.2.9 Rescue Vehicle Operation Skills

- a. Attend Rescue Vehicle Class.
- b. Know how to operate and fuel vehicles.
- c. Know where equipment is located.
- d. Know how to set up radio and radio mast.
- e. Pass test.

2.2.10 Helicopter Procedures and Safety Skills

- a. Attend class.
- b. Pass test.

2.2.11 Back country Skills

Back country and survival skills will be evaluated individually by the Qualifications Committee, based on experience and observed performance during training and actual missions.

2.2.12 Blood Borne Pathogen Training.

- a. Attend training class.
- b. Obtain inoculations or sign waiver.

2.2.13 Pack Check.

- a. Demonstration of possession of the mandatory items from the required gear list.
- b. Demonstration of attachment of litter half, litter wheel frame, and litter wheel to backpack.

2.3 Special Skills. There are special skills that are not required for Rescue Membership, however training and certification will be offered on a scheduled basis that Candidate and Rescue Members are expected to participate in or to observe.

Policy 3. OPERATIONS LEADER REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Prospective Operations Leader Candidates must be voting members and are expected to demonstrate significant skill in the following leadership characteristics:

- a. Organization skills
- b. People skills
- c. Team Player

3.2 Operations Leader Candidates shall possess or acquire the following operational characteristics:

- a. Field operational experience of at least 15 diverse missions over a period of at least one year.
- b. Demonstrate dedication to all aspects of the Team, such as:
 - Team meeting attendance.
 - Training attendance – (demonstrates knowledge of members' capabilities).

3.3 Procedure to Become an Operations Leader

3.3.1. Make desire to be an OPS Leader Candidate known to the Board of Directors and the Sheriff SAR Coordinator.

3.3.2. Gain candidate approval by the qualifications committee. Evaluation will be based upon the above criteria.

3.3.3. Training period to include:

- a. Attend Ops Leader training classes conducted by approved OPS Leaders.
- b. Assist in leading SAR operations with approved OPS Leaders (as many as candidate and Leaders deem necessary). Confidence and competency is the goal.
- c. Evaluation by the Qualifications Committee and recommendation to the Team.
- d. Vote of affirmation by a two thirds vote at a Team meeting.

3.3.4 Ops Leaders should attend the annual CALOES Search Management Course as soon as possible.

Policy 4. BUSINESS WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

For the purposes of this section, a member is any person listed on the Team roster under any form of Team membership, including Candidate Members. Business is any communication with an outside agency regarding matters of interest to the Team. An outside agency is any person who is not a member, or any agency outside the Team.

4.1 No member may conduct business with an outside agency without first notifying and receiving approval of the Board of Directors. If the urgency of the business warrants, the member may conduct it prior to notifying the Board with the President's approval. Team officers and operations leaders engaging in business with outside agencies as part of their normal duties are exempt from this paragraph.

4.2 Violation of any provision of this Team policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Team.

Policy 5. OPERATING POLICIES

The standards and operating procedures for the SAR Team should be followed on all operations, training, and SAR Team activities. Each SAR Team Member is responsible for knowing and abiding by all contents of the SAR Team Bylaws and Policy documents.

No member or members of the Team shall go into the field and participate in or perform any action that purports to represent an action or position of the Team with respect to search and rescue unless an Operation Leader has been designated and that member is acting under the direction of the Operation Leader, unless a bona fide emergency exists and no Operation Leader is available. In such cases, the members participating shall designate an acting Operations Leader who shall inform the Watch Commander that he/she is acting in such a capacity.

5.1. Field Team

A Field Team typically consists of two or more field qualified Team members. Exceptions may be considered for short periods when it is both expedient and safe.

5.2 Helitac; Training and Operations

Members are encouraged to participate in live SAR Team ground training annually, when helicopter training resources are available.

5.3 Ancillary Training

A minimum of two SAR Team Members is required for an Ancillary Training to qualify as a SAR Team authorized training. The Training Leader shall notify the Sheriff's SAR Coordinator of the Ancillary Training a minimum of one day prior to the day the training is held.

5.4 Approved Agencies

Personnel from an approved public or private agency may participate in the field during operations or trainings to the extent authorized by the Sheriff's Department SAR Coordinator. An approved public or private agency is one that has its own insurance coverage and which provides a valuable service to the SAR Team.

5.5 Non-approved Agencies, Guests

Guests and/or personnel from non-approved public or private agencies may be allowed in the base camp area or on training if their presence will be a benefit to the SAR Team and only if their presence has been approved by the SAR Coordinator.

5.6 Injuries

SAR Team members are eligible for workman's compensation while performing assigned duties or undergoing authorized training activities. Coverage starts when members are notified to respond and lasts until they are able to return to their home or work, so long as no route deviations are made for personal reasons.

- a Injuries occurring during a SAR Team activity will be reported as soon as possible to a Sheriff SAR Coordinator and the Team operation leader.
- b All injuries to SAR Team personnel will be reported within 24 hours.
- c The Sheriff SAR Coordinators will be responsible for writing the report for personnel requiring treatment beyond basic first aid for submittal to the Risk Management department.

5.7 SAR Team Activities, Defined.

For the purposes of this Policy, any reference to "SAR Team Activities" shall mean any SAR Team function other than Training or Incidents. Where necessary, Training or Incidents will be specifically addressed.

5.8 SAR Team Equipment, Defined

SAR Team equipment refers to all equipment owned by the Sheriff's Department and issued or loaned to the SAR Team, owned by the Sheriff's Department whether issued to a SAR Team Member or in a SAR Team Member's possession, or owned by the Mono County Sheriff Search and Rescue Team.

5.8.1 Equipment List

Each SAR Team Member shall have, as a minimum, the equipment listed as Mandatory for Summer Operations in the Team's Personal Equipment List when the member responds for an operation or attends a training.

5.8.2 SAR Team and Sheriff's Dept. Keys

Any keys (whether issued or made by a SAR Team member) remain the property of the SAR Team or the Sheriff's Department and shall be returned upon termination of membership or by request of the SAR Team or Sheriff's Dept.

5.8.2 SAR Team Equipment

SAR Team-issued equipment remains the property of the Mono County Sheriff Search and Rescue Team and shall be returned upon termination of membership or on demand.

5.8.3 Lost or Damaged SAR Team Equipment

Lost or damaged SAR Team-issued equipment shall be reported immediately to the Equipment Officer for processing. Members are responsible for the maintenance and safekeeping of all SAR Team-issued equipment. Members are responsible for the cost of replacement or repair of SAR Team-issued equipment lost or damaged (routine wear and maintenance excepted) when used outside of normal SAR Team operations or training. The SAR Team retains the right to have damaged equipment repaired or replaced at its sole option. Equipment shall be repaired at locations authorized by the SAR Team.

5.8.4 SAR Radio Frequencies

The SAR Team's radio frequencies, as licensed by the FCC, shall be used only for authorized SAR Team activities.

5.9 SAR Team Vehicle Operation

- a. SAR Team vehicle operation applies to all vehicles owned by the Sheriff's Office (Team vehicles) and personally owned vehicles (POV) used on authorized Team functions.
- b. Team Members are authorized to drive Team vehicles during all authorized Team functions including administrative meetings, service/repair work, training, and operations.
- c. The SAR Team is not responsible for any damage to POVs.
- d. If Team vehicles are used outside of scheduled Team training, meetings or incidents (e.g. maintenance, public relations, administrative meetings, etc.) the on-duty Dispatcher should be notified as to the nature and location of use.

5.10 Purchasing Policy

The Board must approve purchases of equipment, supplies, or services over \$1,000.

5.10.1 Other Purchases

The following may approve purchases up to \$100 per month:

- a. Equipment Officer for equipment, supplies or services relating to Team vehicles and equipment.
- b. Training Officer for equipment, supplies, or services necessary to conduct scheduled Team training.
- c. Recruitment Chairman for equipment, supplies, or services necessary for conducting recruitment of new members.
- d. Team President as may be needed for Team effectiveness and readiness.

5.10.2 CFO Authority

The CFO has authority to pay up to \$500 for Team expenditures and bills (excluding reimbursements to the CFO). Expenditures over \$500 require approval from the President. Reimbursements to the CFO over \$100 require approval of the President.

5.10.3 Operations Leader Authority

During an operation, the operations leader may authorize a purchase not necessarily billable to the mission, as needed to complete the operation, with the approval of one Board member.

Policy 6. PERSONNEL RULES

Mono County Sheriff Search and Rescue Team members may not simultaneously be a member of any other SAR Team.

6.1. All members must possess a valid California driver's license.

6.2. All members must have a working telephone.

6.3. All members are responsible for notifying operations leaders of their field readiness status. Members must inform the Operations Leader if their medical certifications are not current, and may not be given a field assignment without current medical certification, unless approved by the Incident Commander.

6.3.1 Call Out Information for Candidate Members

Required to be called for operations:

- Have current Basic First Aid or higher certification
- Have current Basic or higher CPR certification
- Attend Basic Candidate class and pass test
- Pass Building and Vehicle test
- Pass ICS online courses 100 and 200
- Start hepatitis series or decline by signed statement sent to the Sheriff's Office

Required to be given a field assignment:

- Have current Basic First Aid or higher certification
- Have current Basic or higher CPR certification
- Attend Basic Candidate class and pass test
- Pass Building and Vehicle test
- Pass ICS online courses 100 and 200
- Pass Gear and Ready Pack check
- Start hepatitis series or decline by signed statement sent to the Sheriff's Office

For snow assignments only: Pass 3 minute beacon test (applies to all classes of members).

6.4 Leaves of Absence.

Any member desiring leave from the Team shall submit a written request to the Board of Directors. All leaves require approval by the Board.

6.4.1 Any member who is granted a Leave of Absence must return all County and Team equipment, including Sheriff Identification Card.

6.4.2. **Maximum leave time.** One year is the maximum time a member may be on leave without repeating the application process in order to be placed back on Disaster Service Worker insurance when they return.

6.4.2.1 **Returning Members.** If returning within a year, members may resume Team activities after submitting a letter to the Team President certifying that they are in good health and have recovered sufficiently from any injuries sustained during absence to the point that they may safely return to active member status for field assignments. Any open Workers' Compensation claims must be reported to the Sheriff SAR Coordinator.

If a member is on leave from the Team in excess of one year, extension of leave must be approved by the Board of Directors. In addition to a letter of intent to return, they must submit an updated application to be vetted by the Sheriff's SAR Coordinator in order to be added to the insurance for the Team. Returning members must have a valid California driver's license. Upon completion of the above, the member may be re-issued a Sheriff Identification card.

6.5. Any member who is taking any medication that would bring into question the ability to safely perform at full capacity shall not respond to callouts or attend training.

6.6 It is the responsibility of each Team member to monitor his/her own level of fitness and notify the operations leader, and if possible, the Incident Commander, when the Team member does not feel capable of accepting a particular field assignment or performing a specific task or function because of a current health condition. This policy does not require disclosure of any specific health condition or any information that would normally be considered private or confidential. It does require notification of any restrictions or limiting factors that would affect the ability to perform in the field or cause an unsafe situation for any Team member. Any private or confidential information that may be disclosed to the operations leader or Incident Commander will be protected to the best of their ability.

6.7 No member shall consume an intoxicating substance while off duty to the extent that evidence of such consumption is apparent when the member reports for duty, or to the extent that the member's ability to perform duty is impaired. No member will consume an intoxicating substance while on duty. No member will, at any time, be under the influence of any intoxicating substance while on duty. No member will consume alcohol in public while wearing clothing identifying themselves as SAR Team members, unless it's an off-duty special event, such as the Christmas party or picnic. The use of alcohol or controlled substances during rescue and training is grounds for immediate dismissal from the Team. Alcoholic beverages or drugs are not to be transported in any vehicle displaying the Sheriff's insignia unless directed by a representative of the Sheriff's Department as evidence/clues associated with an operation.

6.8 Applicants shall not attend any operations or field training until accepted by the Team and the Sheriff's Office as Candidate Members.

6.9 Conduct Unbecoming a SAR Team Member.

The Board may take such action as provided in paragraph 6.11 that they deem appropriate for the situation for conduct that is unacceptable or unbecoming of a Member of the SAR Team. Such conduct could include, but is not limited to: willful violation of SAR Team Policy and Bylaws; disregard for the safety of SAR Team Members; misuse or reckless destruction of SAR Team equipment; misappropriation of SAR Team funds; dishonesty or making false statements to the SAR Team officers, Board, or the Sheriff's Department; misuse or use for personal advantage of the SAR Team name; making representations on behalf of the SAR Team when lacking the authority to do so; and/or impersonating a law enforcement officer or expressing law enforcement

authority without the proper authorization.

6.10 Grievances

All matters regarding SAR Team Bylaws, Policy, procedures, personnel or any Committee problems will first be referred to the Board and, if necessary, to the Sheriff's Department SAR Coordinator.

6.11 Discipline

The Board must take responsible, appropriate and timely action regarding matters of disciplinary action. Deviations from SAR Team Policy may be acceptable, providing good leadership judgment has been exercised and can be demonstrated. In matters of discipline, the Board may take action after a thorough review of the events and circumstances involving a SAR Team member's infraction with the Sheriff's Department SAR Coordinator. Action may include the following:

- a. Verbal reprimand;
- b. Written reprimand;
- c. Suspension for a specific period of time;
- d. Dismissal from the SAR Team.

Policy 7. TEAM PARTICIPATION RECORDS

7.1 In order to maintain timely records of member participation, OPS Leaders shall make a copy by paper or electronic means of the Sheriff SAR Report immediately upon its completion and mail, email, or deliver the copy to the Secretary and the Team archivist. The total of hours from start to finish, and the total of man hours spent by Team volunteers should be included so that Team statistics and annual reports can be accurately compiled.

7.2 Training Leaders shall mail, email, or telephone a list of participants in that training session to the Training Officer, including the time spent by the leader and each participant (**including travel time**).

Policy 8. OTHER OFFICERS

8.1 In addition to the Corporation Officers of President, Vice President(s), Secretary, and Chief Financial Officer, other Team officers may be established to handle specific duties, as follows.

8.2 Training Officer.

The Training Officer shall:

- a. Establish a list of training needed by the Team, plan a schedule, and arrange for instructors to teach the training sessions.
- b. Make sure training sessions are well publicized, with telephone calls when necessary to those who need them for candidate progress.
- c. Maintain individual training records in cooperation with the Secretary.
- d. Certify the proficiency of all members as courses are held.
- e. Coordinate with the Qualifications Committee in all the above areas.

8.3 Equipment Officer.

The Equipment Officer shall:

- a. Inventory, maintain, replace, purchase, and assess suitability of Team equipment.
- b. Bring recommendations of equipment needs to the Board of Directors for a vote.
- c. Be authorized to spend up to \$100 per month on equipment maintenance without specific approval, but must report expenditures at the next Board meeting.

Policy 9. MEETINGS

9.1. Regular meetings of the Team shall be held on the second Wednesday of each month unless otherwise ordered by the Board.

9.2. Special meetings may be called by any five Rescue Members. The request shall be in writing and shall state the purpose of the special meeting. Except in cases of emergency, at least five (5) days notice shall be given.

POLICY 10. RECORDS

10.1. The Team Secretary shall keep and maintain an updated Team Membership Roster, and Team Callout List. The Membership Roster and Team Callout List shall be made available to any Team Member.

10.2. The Team Callout List may also contain other information commonly needed for Team operations, such as other agency telephone numbers. These shall be included at the Secretary's discretion.

10.3. The Team Secretary may delegate these duties to any Team member at his/her discretion; however, a valid and current copy of the roster and callout list must be kept by the Secretary at all times.

Policy 11. PARTICIPATION

The following policies regarding Team participation are adopted:

11.1 Rescue Members are expected to attend a minimum of 4 operations and 5 trainings per year, beginning in April, and continuing through the next March.

11.2 Candidate Members are expected to respond to a minimum of 4 operations each year. The year begins in April, and continues through the following March. Candidate Members are expected to attend a minimum of 10 trainings during the first year, and 5 per year thereafter. Progress of Candidate Members will be reviewed periodically.

11.3 Support Members are expected to participate in a minimum of 5 Team events per year (missions, meetings, training, public relations, fund raising, etc.), even if only observing to gain familiarity with Team members and procedures. The year begins in April, and continues through the following March.

11.4 Members who fail to meet these requirements will have their membership reviewed by the Qualifications Committee.

Policy 12. GENERAL AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

12.1 It is the policy of the Search and Rescue Team that all members have the right to be free of harassment.

12.2 BACKGROUND

12.2.1 Most people determine harassment based on how extreme it is. For some, actions constitute harassment only when it is blatant and excessive, yet what one person considers harassment, another may perceive as a joke.

12.2.2 Harassment may be written, verbal, or visual contact with sexual overtones. It may come in the form of sexually obscene letters, notes, or invitations. It may be derogatory comments, racial slurs or jokes. It may be physical assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement. It may be gestures or physical displays/pictures/cartoons. It may also be behavior that is continued even after being informed that it is unwelcome.

12.2.3 Many victims of harassment blame themselves or feel they may not be believed if they report such actions. They may be embarrassed, ashamed, or feel powerless to ask for resolution.

12.3 The goal of this policy is to identify and prevent harassing or abusive behavior. If problems and/or concerns arise, the affected member is urged to make use of this process.

12.3.1 Members who feel they are victims of harassment are required to inform the individual that the behavior is unwanted and/or offensive. If the member feels uncomfortable in doing so, she/he is required to report such to the Team President.

12.3.2 As well, any member who has been charged with harassing behavior has the right to be informed of the origin of the complaint, and has the right to rebuttal.

12.3.3 At the conclusion of a prompt and thorough investigation initiated by the Team President, immediate action will be taken against any individuals proven to be in violation of this policy.

12.3.4 If the complaint is proven by an investigation, appropriate corrective action will be taken. A Team member found to have so harassed another member/members, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Team.