



Kern County Sheriff's Office

Policies and Procedures

TITLE: SEARCH AND RESCUE INCIDENTS		NO: H-400	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: June 10, 1991	REVIEWED: 10/20/2020	REVISED: 04/01/1996	UPDATED: 11/28/2007

POLICY

The Kern County Sheriff's Office recognizes its responsibility to those persons who become lost or otherwise endangered within the immediate vicinity of the County of Kern. To this end the Sheriff's Office established a volunteer Search and Rescue Unit under the supervision of the Sheriff's Sergeant as part of the Volunteer Services Division.

The Sheriff's Office also recognizes the fact that a search and or rescue of persons is an emergency and a timely response of proper urgency is imperative. Under no circumstance shall any member of the Sheriff's Office delay in reporting or causing to be reported a person lost, overdue, or in need of rescue to the appropriate member of the Search and Rescue staff. Waiting any length of time to see if the person returns on their own is unacceptable.

DIRECTIVE

The above policy applies equally to urban as well as rural situations. It is important to remember that a missing person, child or adult, may be the victim of a crime, therefore a thorough investigation conducted by a sworn officer is always necessary. Search and Rescue teams will add to or replace field deputies involved in the search, generally they will never be the only resource deployed.

PROCEDURE A

Any officer who identifies a situation as being a Search and or Rescue incident will immediately:

- Contact the Communications Center and provide all known information on the incident;
- Conduct a thorough investigation;
- Stand by at an appropriate location until relieved or ordered otherwise.

The Communications Center will:

- Notify the Search and Rescue coordinator or the on-call Search and Rescue supervisor;
- Notify the Watch Commander if after normal working hours.

The Search and Rescue coordinator or on call supervisor will:

- Assess the situation and determine what resources if any will be deployed;
- Respond with the appropriate team and act as the Operations Chief in the Incident Command System.
 - o *Can operate as the Incident Commander if necessary, however, this function is normally held by some Watch Commander, Field Sergeant, Sub-Station Sergeant or other designated personnel.*

PROCEDURE B

In the event a request from another county is made for Search and Rescue resources of the Sheriff's Office, the person receiving the request will:

- Advise the requesting party that the request must come from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (O.E.S.), unless the request is from that office;
- Advise the Search and Rescue coordinator or on call Search and Rescue supervisor.

The Search and Rescue coordinator or on-call supervisor will:

- Ensure proper O.E.S. mission number is issued and resources are properly deployed.

H-400-2

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