

	MARICOPA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY AND PROCEDURES	
	Subject SEARCH AND RESCUE	Policy Number EJ-3
		Effective Date 10-24-14
Related Information	Supersedes EJ-3 (09-03-05)	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish guidelines for conducting search and rescue missions.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Office to maintain a group of highly trained deputies and volunteers to provide search and rescue services, in conjunction with other agencies and Office components, for the citizens of Maricopa County.

DEFINITIONS

Search and Rescue Coordinator: The on-call deputy assigned to the Search and Rescue Unit designated as the on-scene person in charge of a search and rescue mission.

Search and Rescue Unit: A component of the Lake Patrol Division responsible for initiating and managing search and rescue operations throughout Maricopa County; and assisting other counties as requested. The unit works to locate lost individuals and rescue individuals who have become disabled or injured in remote areas.

PROCEDURES

1. **Resources:** Search and rescue missions shall be handled as serious, possibly life-threatening emergencies. Necessary Office resources shall be available to the on-scene Search and Rescue Coordinator. The Lake Patrol Commander, or his designee, may request assistance from any division of the Office.
2. **Notifications and Responsibilities:** Once it is determined that a search and rescue mission should be initiated, the Search and Rescue Unit shall assume the responsibility and authority to carry out the mission.
 - A. Notifications to the on-call Search and Rescue Coordinator shall be made through the Lake Patrol Commander or supervisory personnel directly involved in the preliminary search operation.
 - B. The on-scene Search and Rescue Coordinator shall keep the Lake Patrol Commander or his designee, informed concerning the current status of each search and rescue mission.
 - C. All other command staff shall receive information regarding the mission from the Lake Patrol Commander or the on-call Search and Rescue Coordinator.
3. **District Supervisors:** Information regarding possible search and rescue missions shall immediately be given to the closest district patrol supervisor for investigation and evaluation.
 - A. The responsibility for continuing an investigation relating to the missing person's disappearance, or failure to return, shall remain with the district patrol supervisor, or district detective supervisor.

- B. The district patrol supervisor shall ensure that an *Incident Report (IR)* is completed, documenting the initial report and findings.
- C. Information shall be relayed to the on-scene Search and Rescue Coordinator in a timely manner.
- 4. **Mission Documentation:** At the completion of the search and rescue mission, the Search and Rescue members shall complete all necessary documentation.
- 5. **Mission Numbers:** Members of the Search and Rescue Unit are the only Office personnel authorized to obtain mission numbers from the State Division of Emergency Services for search and rescue operations.
- 6. **Other Agency Requests:** Requests from other agencies for search and rescue assistance shall be directed to the on-call Search and Rescue Coordinator for evaluation and recommendation to the Lake Patrol Commander, or in his absence, the Chief of Patrol and Enforcement Bureau.