

**Procedure**  
**11.14**

**EFFECTIVE  
DATE  
5-21-99**

**Eugene  
Police Department**



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## **Search and Rescue**

### **11.14.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This policy relates to the Search and Rescue unit of the Lane County Sheriff's Office (LCSO), their capabilities, and what we should do when we request their assistance.

#### **PART I - Responsibilities and Procedures for All Personnel**

- A. Search and rescue generally
- B. Water search and rescue
- C. Land search and rescue

### **11.14.2 RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES ALL PERSONNEL**

#### **A. Search and Rescue generally**

1. LCSO is mandated by *ORS 401.560* to provide search and rescue activities for the county. They search for a missing person whose location is unknown, and perform rescue operations when needed once the person is found.
2. The LCSO Search and Rescue (SAR) function is directed by the SAR Coordinator, who reports to the LCSO Police Services Captain.
3. One of the main functions of SAR is searching for missing persons, particularly in rural environments, by using individuals trained in searching, man-tracking, and handling tracking dogs (both air and ground scent). In addition, SAR has the capability for high-angle rescue and water rescue, as well as evidence searches at major crime scenes.
4. SAR has in excess of 200 volunteers in various units. Two groups are of particular note:
  - a. *Overhead team*: A group of search managers trained in incident command, able to manage a complex search operation.
  - b. *Hasty team*: A group of highly-trained, physically-fit members of SAR who can respond quickly to incidents with sufficient resources and survival gear for two people for 48 hours.

5. SAR can be requested, with supervisory authorization via LCSO dispatch
6. SAR resources are available at any time. Their response time will vary according to the urgency of the situation, but initial responders can be in-route as quickly as 15 minutes from the initial call, with additional personnel able to respond within 1-2 hours.
7. The state SAR radio frequency is 155.805.

B. Land Search and Rescue

1. SAR deals primarily with people lost in rural environments. They may also be used in other environments for persons under 10 years of age, or over 70 years of age; persons with Alzheimer's disease; and walk-aways from care centers.
2. If SAR is called, gain as much information as possible from the reporting party, and make that person available to a SAR representative. Among the items of information needed are:
  - number of subjects
  - age of subject(s)
  - description (including clothing)
  - location and time last seen (or known to have been)
  - experience
  - mental/medical condition(s)
  - equipment
  - weather
  - hazards
3. It is important to preserve clues, including footprints, clothing, or litter that may have been discarded by the subject(s).
4. Try to set up a perimeter around the greatest distance the subject could have travelled from the point last seen.

C. Water Search and Rescue

1. LCSO SAR requests to be notified of all water-related incidents in Lane County.
2. This unit operates under the umbrella of LCSO Search and Rescue, and includes a dive team, personnel trained in swift-water rescue, and operators for several types of water craft equipped for day and night SAR support.
3. Among other things, LCSO water rescue deals with:
  - deceased subject recovery/investigation
  - general underwater investigation/recovery

- motor vehicle accidents in water
  - vehicle recovery from water
  - surface rescues (lakes and rivers)
  - flood events
  - subjects evading capture
4. In preparation for arrival of LCSO personnel, witnesses should be contacted detained until LCSO can contact them. Relevant information should be gathered, including:
- location of entry into water, or point last seen
  - accessibility of the location from shore and via water
  - time of incident
  - subject/vehicle description
  - water current speed, water depth and visibility
  - haz-mat concerns
5. LCSO Water Rescue can be called out via LCSO dispatch. A boat operator and crew can respond to local areas within approximately 30 minutes.
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