



**San Diego County Sheriff**

**TRAINING BULLETIN**

**William D. Gore, Sheriff**

**September 2019**



**San Diego County Sheriff's Department**  
**SEARCH & RESCUE Training Guide**

**SAR RESPONSE:**

The San Diego Sheriff's Search & Rescue Team generally responds to missing and lost person's calls, evidence searches and major catastrophes.

Search and Rescue WILL GENERALLY respond to:

- Victims of Alzheimer's/Dementia
- Low functioning autistic patients
- Diminished mental capacity
- Children under the age of 12
- Lost or overdue hikers
- Evidence searches
- Mass casualty events
- Is the missing person a victim of a crime or foul play
- In need of medical attention or medicine to sustain life (e.g., heart medication)

Search and Rescue will NOT GENERALLY respond to:

- Chronic/sophisticated runaway juveniles or runaway juveniles 12 and older
- Walkaways from group or resident care facilities
- Suicidal subjects who may be armed or violent
- Missing persons who have left in a vehicle
- Voluntary missing adults

There may be exceptions, but that will be determined by the SAR Coordinator and the requesting station or agency. If in doubt, call the SAR Coordinator for a consultation. Prior to SAR activation, the on-scene staff and supervisor(s) should consider:

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Double-check the residence and surrounding properties
- Request air support
- Check with friends, relatives, and neighbors
- Check local hospitals, including Jane or John Does (subject may be non-communicative)
- Check local mental health facilities
- Check adult / juvenile detention facilities
- Obtain a recent photo and create a missing person's flyer
- Enter subject into the Missing Unidentified Persons System (MUPS)
- Broadcast BOL to other agencies, including public transportation
- Provide name, age, physical and clothing description, direction of travel, tendencies, medical/mental health condition, cell phone information (i.e., pinging), etc.
- Alert the media, if appropriate
- Be cognizant of disturbing crucial evidence, including K-9 scent articles, footprints, etc.
- Be prepared to provide investigative assistance
- Enlist help of Senior Volunteers and other appropriate resources
- Identify an "Incident Commander" from your station or agency
- Establish an Incident Command Post, suitable for several large vehicles with access to restrooms, electricity, etc.
- Broadcast public alert or alerts (i.e., Amber Alert, Silver Alert, Alert San Diego, etc.) in consultation with SAR Coordinator and approving authorities
- SAR is designed to support you and your mission

### **SHERIFF'S P&P SECTION 6.57:**

If the missing person is suffering from Alzheimer's/Dementia, Adult Protective Services (APS) should be notified (800-510-2020) even if immediately located. The notification of APS should be indicated in the narrative of the missing person's report.

When an "At Risk" juvenile is reported missing and considered unknown missing, non-family abductions, or abductions where the child is in imminent danger of serious injury or death, *immediately notify the Juvenile Services Group Sergeant* and take preliminary steps to locate child. Refer to P&P Section 6.57 for additional details.

### **JURISDICTION:**

The Sheriff's Search & Rescue Team is ALWAYS ON CALL and available to respond to any location or jurisdiction in the county. SAR also responds to statewide Search & Rescue mutual aid calls under California's Office of Emergency Services. To request SAR, simply call the Sheriff's Communications Center. SAR will not self-deploy.

### **CAPABILITIES:**

All SAR personnel have passed a Sheriff's background check and carry a Sheriff's identification card. This includes San Diego Mountain Rescue, an affiliate group. Our members also specialize in a variety of different areas such as Search Management, Canine, Communications, Medical, Motorized, Mounted, Tactical Search, Technical Rescue and Training. We're also available to respond to various emergencies (i.e. fires, floods, earthquakes, etc.). Additionally, SAR is available for public relations events and provides medical support at local athletic events.

Remember, when determining whether to call SAR or not, err on the side of caution. It's also better to call sooner, rather than later. The on-call SAR Sergeant is available 24/7 through the Sheriff's Communications Center. For additional information, please refer to the SAR intranet website: <https://ssp/LEB/EMS/SAR/Pages/default.aspx>

The information in this training bulletin was provided by Search and Rescue Sergeant, Fred Duey and edited for distribution by the In-Service Training Unit. If you have any information or expertise in a specific area and would like to write a training bulletin, please contact Corporal Brent Longfellow at the In-Service Training Unit via e-mail at [REDACTED]