

***San Mateo County Sheriff's Office
Mounted Search and Rescue Unit***



Carlos G. Bolanos, Sheriff

Welcome Applicant,

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office welcomes you and thanks you for your interest in becoming a member of the Mounted Search and Rescue Unit.

The unit is comprised of volunteers who donate their time "so that others may live." While the main thrust of our unit is the use of horse and rider to search for missing and lost persons, the unit has also been trained in other aspects of Community Service. The unit is therefore available for other details and missions as needed.

If this sounds like something you would be interested in, fill out the enclosed materials and bring them to the next meeting.

Again, thank you for your interest in helping our community

Carlos G. Bolanos, Sheriff



Volunteer Mounted Search and Rescue

Thank you for your interest in assisting the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office in search and rescue operations. The following information will help you to better understand what may be involved.

The Sheriff is responsible for the protection of life and property within the county. It is, therefore, his duty to:

- 1 Search for lost persons on horseback or on foot.
2. Evacuate ill or injured persons from the areas inaccessible to conventional means by any manner necessary (on foot / horseback / 4wd).
3. Remove bodies of deceased persons from areas inaccessible to conventional means.
4. To assist the department with evidence searches and public relations on horseback or on foot.

To discharge this duty, a mounted search and rescue unit has been organized (MSAR). The unit consists of a group of regular deputies and volunteers who have been specially trained for such services.

It is important that a clear understanding of conditions and procedures be explained to all that are considering joining the volunteer search and rescue unit. These conditions and procedures include, but are not limited to, the following list:

1. No Payment will be rendered for your services and you will furnish your own personal equipment such as clothing, footwear, etc. Only in rare instances will the county be responsible for loss or damage to your equipment.
2. While on assigned duty, you will be covered by Worker's Compensation. Voluntary service to a law enforcement agency may affect the validity of your own insurance policy. Whether or not the County will be civilly liable for your actions while on assigned duty will depend upon individual circumstances. Report of injury must immediately be directed through the appropriate chain of command.

3. You will be expected to respond immediately when called, regardless of time of day or day of week, unless you can furnish a valid excuse. Habitual failure to respond, even with an excuse, could result in your dismissal from the unit.
4. You will work as assigned and at the direction of the director of operations, the field supervisor or any other person designated by either of them as your supervisor.
5. You will be expected to serve on an assigned mission until it is completed, or your services are no longer needed and the director of operations relieves you.
6. You will make arrangements with your employer for time off for search and rescue duty. The department will not take part in any such arrangements, nor intercede on your behalf should your service incur the disapproval of your employer.
7. You will conform to the Sheriff's Office standards in public relations, devotion to duty, personal conduct while on duty---and will in no way use your affiliation with the department for your own personal profit or benefit.
8. You will **NOT** be deputized with peace officer powers, entitled to wear a concealed weapon, or in any way be considered a peace officer because of your service as an Emergency Service Worker.
9. No member or other person(s) pressed into service for San Mateo County, under the appropriate process, shall coerce another or be coerced by another, to attempt any feat or perform any task for which he is not qualified, by virtue of his skill and training. Each person shall be the final judge as to his own ability and the capability of his of his horse or equipment.
10. No personnel shall attempt a feat that entails an unacceptable measure of risk.

The foregoing conditions are not intended to discourage those who wish to offer assistance. Rather, they are stated as objectively as possible, so that the volunteer will fully understand the situation and its potential disadvantages, and to protect both himself and the department.

If you have reservations about any point mentioned, you should not apply. However, if you still want to offer your assistance, the application forms may be completed, signed, and returned.

***Unacceptable risk shall be defined as any feat of danger that fails to provide a margin of safety through a back-up system capable of aborting the attempt and retrieving the participants.**

Requirements for Participation

There are a number of mandatory courses required before you will be allowed on a search. They are divided by two basic sections: Equine Certification and Personal Training.

1) The Basic Horse program brings in many aspects of mounted training. Mini equine topics are offered each month and concentrated 16 hour program is offered once a year.

2) Personal training topics include (not limited to) First Aid, CPR, Trailer Safety, Sheriff's Office History and Ethics, Map and Compass, Search Procedures, ICS/SEMS, Radio, and Equine First Aid.

Basic Horse

Participants learn and participate in mounted activities such as formation riding, basic crowd control, sensory training, proper riding techniques, search skills for evidence and lost persons and grid searches from horseback. Emphasis is placed on exposing both the horse and rider to sensory extremes with SAFETY being essential. Participation in refreshers is on going.

First Aid

Prepares students to handle various unexpected or emergency situations such as cuts, broken bones, bee stings, shock, etc. Renew per Sheriff's standards.

CPR

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation teaches the basics of compression and breathing for the patient until professional medical aid can take over. Renew per Sheriff's standards.

Trailer

Volunteers are expected to provide documentation of their Annual Servicing and Repairs as well as having their trailer inspected for safety by a qualified Unit Leader. Required only once but strongly recommend service every year.

History of the Sheriff's Office and Ethics

Gives the history of the Sheriff's Office in San Mateo County. Ethics provides guidelines for proper behavior while on a mission. Failure to adhere to the guidelines can result in dismissal from the program. Renew every three years.

Map and Compass

Gives a basic introduction to terms. Applied map reading with associated use of compass. Renew every two years.

Search Procedure

Defines the different types of searches and their specific uses. Renew every two years

ICS/SEMS/NIMS

Incident Command System/Standardized Emergency Management System/NIMS. Explains the operation and management of an official search, giving structure to participating volunteers. Renew every three years

Radio

Explains the basics of Radio use during a search. Includes discussion of the different types of radios available to us, choice of channels, and problems volunteers might encounter with the radios. Renew every three years

Equine First Aid

Explains some basic medications and their appropriate use. Renew every three years.

Knots

Demonstrate ability to tie several basic knots associated with equine care and safety including a makeshift halter, bowlines, square knots, etc. Renew every three years.

MSAR Callout Procedure

Explains the process of MSAR's callout procedure, how to respond to a callout when attending mounted. Also recommends materials to have packed and ready in anticipation of a callout. Renewal every three years.

Helicopter Safety Video

Video explains helicopter safety, hot and cold loading. Renew every two years.

Explanation of Participation: Level 1, 2, and 3

The .Level. determines the degree of participation a volunteer is allowed.

Level 3

Level 3 typically is a newcomer who has not completed the Basic Horse Course or many of the General Courses (non horseback courses). *Status is Probationary* and the volunteer is not qualified for SAR callouts. He/she may participate in trainings and must move into Level 2 or 1 within one year to remain on the team. No Badge or patches will be issued. Application and background check forms will be held until they are ready for Level 2 or 1 qualification. They may wear MSAR/Sheriff uniform without patches.

Level 2

Level 2 is accomplished when the volunteer has completed a majority of the mandatory General Courses, but has yet to complete the Basic Horse Course. Or conversely, has completed the Basic Horse but not the all mandatory General Courses. Application forms are submitted to the Sheriff's Office, including background check application. Level 2 is qualified for callout but may only provide Administrative and Ground level support. Level 2 may not be mounted except for training. Level 2 will be sworn in with Sheriff's office, wear full uniform and again, may work in any ground capacity.

Level 1

Level 1 is reached when ALL mandatory general courses are completed AND the volunteer has a certified horse AND application and background check are approved. Level 1 may participate in searches on horseback. Level 1 may operate in ANY capacity with their approved horse. Should a volunteer loose a horse etc., they can still be qualified under Level 2 to help out and work on the searches until they qualify a new horse and are back on the Level 1 callout.



SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEERING

1. Rescue work is not glamorous. It is usually only, plain, hard work.
2. There are no regular hours on a rescue mission. Working hours are at any time and for as long as anything can be accomplished.
3. It will not always be possible to return to the command center or a restaurant at mealtime or to a cabin at night. Each time a volunteer goes into the field, he/she must be willing and physically prepared to spend a night there if the situation so demands.
4. Personnel assigned a rescue mission will work as directed by the officer in charge. Discipline will be maintained. Suggestions will be appreciated, but the officer in charge will exercise final authority.
5. The most important factor in a rescue mission is its accomplishment, and not by whom it is accomplished.
6. Many rescue missions turn out to be a false alarm, however, we operate on the principle that it is better to expend time and energy and find that it is not needed, than to wait to be sure it is needed, then find it is too late.
7. Relatives and friends of victims will be treated with patience and sympathy.
8. If it becomes necessary to exercise authority to aid in the success of a mission, it will be done in a dignified, courteous manner.
9. The professional application of skills and techniques and maintenance of safety standards is mandatory in the performance of any and all search and rescue tasks.
10. Excessive griping and complaining **WILL NOT** be tolerated and may result in your dismissal.
11. Never talk to the press. Refer any questions a reporter may have to the deputy in charge.



Preliminary Application and Basic Information

Date:

Name/Address	Phones	Email Addresses	Emergency Contact
	Home	Home	
	Work	Work	
	Cell	Other	
	Other		
	Fax		

Horse Name	Age	Mare/Gelding	Own/Lease*
Own Trailer: Y N	Time Owned	Vet Name/Phone	
Description of Horse:			
Description of Past, Present and Current Uses:			
Stable Location and Phone number:			
Please describe your experience with horses:			
Please indicate your reasons for interest in the group:			

- Please provide copy of your lease agreement.

UNIT:

APPLICATION FOR SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S VOLUNTEERS

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

LAST NAME		FIRST NAME		MIDDLE	DATE			
RESIDENCE ADDRESS			CITY	ZIP CODE	PHONE ()			
PAGER ()		CELL ()	E-MAIL					
EMPLOYED BY			OCCUPATION OR POSITION HELD					
BUSINESS ADDRESS			CITY	ZIP CODE	PHONE ()			
SOCIAL SECURITY #		DATE OF BIRTH	PLACE OF BIRTH	CITIZEN YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		IF NATURALIZED: DATE & PLACE		
AGE	SEX	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLOR HAIR	COLOR EYES	DRIVERS LICENSE #	LICENSE EXP. DATE	CLASS LICENSE
EVER BEEN ARRESTED-IF YES, EXPLAIN								
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION (NAME & CONTACT NUMBERS)								
				DAY:()		EVENING:()		
				DAY:()		EVENING:()		
SKILLS / DEGREES								

PAST EMPLOYMENT

PLEASE LIST PAST THREE EMPLOYERS

EMPLOYER	ADDRESS	POSITION	REASON FOR LEAVING

PLEASE WRITE OR TYPE THE REASON WHY YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A SHERIFF'S OFFICE VOLUNTEER

I SHALL ABIDE BY ALL RULES THAT GOVERN THE VOLUNTEERS AND HEREBY DECLARE THAT ALL STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT	DATE
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OFFICE USE ONLY

PACKET IN	FINGERPRINTED	SENT TO SERVICES	EQUIPMENT ISSUED	SWORN IN
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