



## New Jersey Office of Emergency Management Directive

	EFFECTIVE DATE May 3, 2022	NUMBER NJOEM- 8 (2022)
	SUBJECT State Search and Rescue Program	
REFERENCE Executive Order 101 (Byrne 1980); Executive Order 248 (Murphy 2021); Directive NJOEM-1 (2021); NJ State Emergency Operations Plan – NJESF 9 Annex; N.J.S.A. App.A:9-64, et. seq., establishing the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force; National Search and Rescue Plan, Section 21; National Response Framework, ESF 9 Search and Rescue Annex	EXPIRES N/A	
	RESCINDS N/A	

In addition to serving as the lead agency for emergency management in the State, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) serves as the Primary Agency for the New Jersey Emergency Support Function 9 Annex – Search and Rescue (NJESF 9 Annex) to the State Emergency Operations Plan. NJOEM serves as the Sponsoring Agency of the State’s Urban Search and Rescue Task Force, New Jersey Task Force One (NJ-TF1), managed by the NJOEM Emergency Response Bureau’s Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Unit. The NJOEM State Search and Rescue (SAR) Coordinator serves as the Chairperson of the State’s Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force’s (DSPTF) Sub-committee on Search and Rescue, which is authorized to develop and oversee the state-level components of the State Search and Rescue Program.

Per Executive Order 248 (Murphy 2021), the National Incident Management System (NIMS) is the standard for incident management for all planned events and incidents in the State. NJOEM is responsible for NIMS compliance for New Jersey first responders, which includes meeting standards for resource typing, credentialing, training, etc. Accordingly, NJOEM is the State entity best positioned to establish NIMS-compliant standards for emergency response providers performing SAR activities. This Directive establishes the parameters for developing uniform baseline standards, training, credentialing, procedures, and guidelines for personnel who engage in SAR operations in New Jersey at the State, county, and municipal levels in response to any natural, technological or human-caused incident or event. This Directive:

- describes the State SAR Program, and the integration and coordination of State, county, local, and independent Search and Rescue Organizations;
- establishes and defines the scope of authority and responsibilities of the State SAR Coordinator;
- clarifies the requirements of SAR Organizations responding within the State; and
- defines the duties of the county and local Emergency Support Function (ESF)-9/SAR Coordinators.

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**I. Definitions**

The following words and phrases, when used in this directive, shall have the meanings given below. Words not expressly defined are consistent with the meaning contained in NIMS and other federal guidance documents.

1. **Search and Rescue** - The act of protecting and aiding individuals who are lost, stranded, entrapped, or require specialized search and rescue assistance beyond the scope of the services ordinarily provided by police, fire, and emergency medical services personnel, including but not limited to the possible SAR scenarios identified in NJESF 9. The term does not include the pursuit of fleeing/missing felons, escaped convicts, runaways, or search conducted by firefighters in a burning building.
2. **Search and Rescue Coordinator** - The individual responsible for the coordination and management of search and rescue programs for a governing body of a state, county or municipality, as well as the federal ESF 9 coordinator.
3. **State Search and Rescue Coordinator (SSARC)** – New Jersey Office of Emergency Management designee of the Commanding Officer of the New Jersey State Police Emergency Management Section to serve as the State Search and Rescue Coordinator (see Section III).
4. **State Search and Rescue Coordination Working Group (SSARCWGrp)** - The multi-agency working group to develop statewide training and operational guidelines, programs, and credentialing standards for the State Search and Rescue Program.
5. **Search and Rescue Organization** - An entity that possesses the capabilities and resources to provide SAR services in accordance with the guidelines, accreditation, training, credentialing, and reporting standards prescribed by the State SAR Program.
6. **Search and Rescue Personnel** An employee or volunteer member of a search and rescue organization that is authorized by a resolution or ordinance adopted by a governing body of a state, county, or municipality or a federal entity; or is identified as a support agency of the NJESF 9 Annex to the SEOP and which meets the training requirements set forth by the State SAR Program (see Section II, below).

## **II. The State Search and Rescue Program**

1. Administered through the State's emergency management structure, the State SAR Program seeks to enhance statewide SAR capabilities by establishing minimum baselines and standards for training, certification and response for SAR Organizations, ensuring compliance with NIMS, and otherwise filling gaps in federal guidance.
2. The SSARC, acting under the authority of the State Director of Emergency Management and pursuant to the NJESF 9 Annex to the SEOP, shall collaborate with the SSARCWGrp to ensure that the State Search and Rescue Program maintains sufficient SAR resources across a broad spectrum of capabilities. These include, but are not limited to, urban search and rescue, land search and rescue, water search and rescue, and mountain search and rescue.
3. The SSARCWGrp, acting within the scope of its authority pursuant to this Directive and in collaboration with the DSPTF Sub-committee on Search and Rescue, shall provide guidance to the SSARC on the development of the State SAR Program, including planning, organization, equipment, funding, and accident prevention. The SSARCWGrp shall guide the formulation of such policies and procedures necessary to sustain a coordinated SAR Program and facilitate uniform training and credentialing, reporting standards, accreditation, and deployment criteria. Members include:
  - a. the State SAR Coordinator (Chairperson);
  - b. the Director of the Division of Fire Safety, or designee;
  - c. the ESF 9 SAR Coordinator for each county; and
  - d. a representative from each other Support Agency of the NJESF 9 Annex.

## **III. State Search and Rescue Coordinator**

The Commanding Officer of the NJSP Emergency Management Section or designee shall appoint a qualified member of NJOEM as the SSARC. The SSARC shall:

1. maintain and coordinate the NJESF 9 Annex;
2. develop and coordinate policies and procedures to implement all facets of the State SAR Program, including but not limited to training and credentialing, reporting standards, accreditation, and deployment criteria;
3. establish State-level task forces comprised of SAR Organizations that satisfy the requirements of the State SAR Program, and that are available for deployment outside of their primary area of responsibility within the State or outside the State upon the recommendation of the SSARC;
4. ensure capability to support SAR operations within the State and coordinate deployment of SAR resources for national SAR incidents;
5. coordinate search and rescue operations and resources by staffing the SEOC during

activations, or as needed, at county or municipal EOCs or Incident Command Posts during incidents;

6. in coordination with the SSARCWGrp, establish and oversee training programs for search and rescue personnel, ensure credentialing of search and rescue trainers and evaluators, and ensure maintenance of a database of teams and individuals certified or credentialed in search and rescue disciplines within the State;
7. establish agreements and memoranda of understanding with SAR Organizations and federal, state, county, and local agencies to coordinate and conduct SAR activities;
8. issue identification and credentials to search and rescue personnel that meet State SAR Program training requirements;
9. apply for and manage grants and other financial assistance to support search and rescue activities and training;
10. maintain communication and reporting with SAR Organizations; and
11. conduct other activities as necessary to carry out the provisions of this Directive pursuant to the direction and oversight of the State Director or designee.

#### **IV. Responsibilities of Local Search and Rescue/ESF-9 Coordinators**

##### **A. County Search and Rescue**

1. Each county shall designate a Search and Rescue Coordinator who will be responsible for the maintenance of the county ESF 9 Annex, and management of search and rescue policy, procedure, and guidelines within the county. County SAR policies, procedures, and guidance shall be consistent with (and not conflict with) State policy, procedure, and guidance and the SEOP ESF 9 Annex.
2. Duties and responsibilities of the County Search and Rescue Coordinators shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a. coordinating training and exercise to validate SAR capabilities in the county;
  - b. providing planning and operational assistance in support of any SAR incident;
  - c. notifying the SSARC of any ongoing SAR incident that has required the deployment of resources that has been in progress for more than four (4) hours; (Note: Nothing in this directive shall be construed to require a waiting period for a county to request State or local SAR resources);
  - d. submitting resource requests to the SSARC through the Regional Intelligence Operations Center – Intelligence Watch & Warning (ROIC-IW) or the state resource management system providing situational awareness reporting as requested by NJESF-9 or SEOC;
  - e. participating in the SSARCWGrp;

- f. maintaining reports of SAR incidents within the county and reporting same to the SSARC within 20 days of suspension/conclusion of SAR response; and
- g. maintaining lists of credentialed search and rescue resources and reporting the NIMS compliance and capability of SAR Organizations within the county's jurisdiction (using guidance provided by the NIMS 508 and 509s found in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Resource Library Typing Tool or NJESF 9) annually to the SSARC.

B. Municipal Search and Rescue

1. Based upon need, a municipality may designate a Search and Rescue Coordinator who will be responsible for the development and management of search and rescue policy, procedures, and guidelines within the municipality and the implementation of its Search and Rescue Annex or Plan. All municipal policies, procedures, and guidance for SAR activities shall be consistent with Federal, State and county policies, procedures, and guidance and the NJESF 9 Annex to the SEOP.
2. Duties and responsibilities of the municipal search and rescue coordinators shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a. coordinating training and exercises to validate SAR capabilities;
  - b. planning and operational assistance in support of a SAR incident;
  - c. notifying the County SAR Coordinator of any ongoing search and rescue incident that has required the deployment of search and rescue resources that has been in progress for more than two (2) hours;
  - d. providing situational awareness as requested by the County ESF 9 Coordinator;
  - e. submitting resource requests to the County SAR Coordinator through the county's required reporting platform;
  - f. maintaining reports of SAR incidents and reporting same to the County SAR Coordinator within 20 days of suspension/conclusion of SAR response; and
  - g. maintaining lists of credentialed SAR resources and annually reporting to the county the NIMS compliance and capability of SAR Organizations within the municipality's jurisdiction (using guidance provided by the NIMS 508 and 509s found in the FEMA Resource Library Typing Tool or NJESF 9).

V. Effect

This order shall take effect immediately.



Patrick J. Callahan  
Colonel  
State Director of Emergency Management