



TAOS SEARCH AND RESCUE NEW-MEMBER PACKET

ABOUT OUR TEAM

Taos Search and Rescue (Search and Rescue – Taos, Inc.) is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) nonprofit community organization with high standards of professionalism and service. We operate year-round, primarily in the off-road areas surrounding Taos, New Mexico, but also throughout the state and occasionally into southern Colorado. Our team searches in all seasons for lost hikers, climbers, hunters, campers, skiers, snowmobilers, etc. Our subjects may include adults with Alzheimer's disease or dementia or occasionally children. We often are called out to recover the bodies of people who have died from injuries or exposure. Our searches occur mostly in backcountry settings, i.e., the mountains, the high desert, and the Rio Grande Gorge, though sometimes we are called out for urban off-road searches. Our primary deployment is through the New Mexico State Police.

READY TO SERVE 24/7/365

TSAR is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. We provide training for all areas of expertise that might be required on a mission. This includes training for wilderness medicine, litter packaging/evacuation, low-angle rescue, survival skills, avalanche awareness, swiftwater skills, K9 support, downed aircraft search, communications, navigation with a map and compass and a GPS, the Incident Command System, lost person behavior, and computer mapping/search technologies. New volunteers are always welcome to apply. TSAR includes the following specialized units, which train for unit-specific techniques and resources to support the full team: base (incident command), bike, drone, equine (still nascent), ground, K9, medical, off-highway vehicle (OHV), swiftwater, technical (medium- and high-angle rescue), tracking (also nascent), and winter skills. We operate our own mobile command unit.

JOIN US!

If you're looking for a way to serve your community, consider joining Taos Search and Rescue.

www.sar-taos.org



TAOS SEARCH AND RESCUE

New-Member Information

- Are you interested in joining Taos Search and Rescue?
- Do you want to serve your community?
- Are you willing to commit substantial time and energy to learn the skills necessary to find lost and/or injured people in the wilderness?

Following are some considerations that may help you decide if TSAR is right for you.



We have openings on all units:

- [BASE](#)
- [BIKE](#)
- [DRONE](#)
- [EQUINE](#)
- [GROUND](#)
- [K9](#)
- [MEDICAL](#)
- [OHV](#)
- [SWIFTWATER](#)
- [TECHNICAL](#)
- [TRACKING](#)
- [WINTER SKILLS](#)

Please see unit descriptions on our website: www.sar-taos.org

One need not be proficient in any particular skills when joining TSAR. We will teach you all aspects of field and base operations. All you need to do is show up with a desire to learn and a spirit of teamwork.

Full members must remain on call 24 hours/day, 365 days/year, and may be called out any time of the day or night and must keep their contact information (phone, email and mailing address) current with the duty officer.

TSAR provides training for all areas of expertise required on a mission: base operations and the Incident Command System, navigation, communications, emergency first aid, litter packaging and evacuation techniques, search techniques, scene evaluation and assessment, crime scene preservation, man-tracking, swiftwater rescue, avalanche awareness, helicopter safety, K9 team support, and more.

TSAR holds a general meeting and classroom trainings **on the third Wednesday of each month** (this may change surrounding holidays) and a **field training on alternate Saturdays or Sundays** following the general meeting and classroom. Please refer to the posted training schedule for dates. **Full members are required to attend 50 percent of trainings, which comprise the cornerstone of our professionalism and excellence in the field.**



There are additional specialty trainings offered throughout the year, sometimes through TSAR, other times through external organizations. We regularly notify our team members of these upcoming training opportunities and encourage participation when possible because they not only enrich our individual knowledge and experience, but also that of the entire team. There may be a charge for some of these specialty trainings; full members may apply for full or partial reimbursement, including course fees, travel expenses, lodging, etc., or a per diem amount. The board will determine whether and how much to reimburse depending on the quality of the training as well as the member's service to the team, **including participation in TSAR's annual fundraiser.**

We are a volunteer organization. There is no fee for our services nor payment to our members. Your commitment to the team will involve some out-of-pocket expenses for equipment, special trainings, transportation, etc.

We are community servants. We maintain high standards of professionalism and service. Members are strictly prohibited from using alcohol or any other mind-altering substances just prior to or during official missions, trainings, or meetings. We operate in the public eye and must maintain high standards and an excellent reputation.

We operate within the scope of our limitations. No one is required to go on a mission that s/he does not feel comfortable attending (such as a body recovery) or that requires skills for which s/he is not proficient, such as a high-angle rescue. Members must realistically assess their level of fitness and adjust their participation accordingly.

Each applicant is expected to become a full TSAR member and pass any required certifications within one (1) calendar year of becoming a trainee. Please read and refer to the Taos Search and Rescue Policies and Procedures Manual for all specifics regarding membership.



QUESTIONS? CONTACT US:

Kati Roski, Recruitment Director
Delinda VanneBrightyn, President
Tamar Stieber, Vice President

(720) 548-7331
(575) 770-5633
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Taos Search and Rescue Procedures for Membership

If you decide that TSAR is for you, please follow the steps below.

To become a TSAR trainee:

1. Fill out the TSAR Application for Membership Form (available from the recruitment director or online at www.sar-taos.org/Join-Us) and submit it to the recruitment director. Be sure to include a paragraph or two about why you want to be a member of TSAR (see bottom of the application).
2. The TSAR board of directors will review your application and vote on your team membership. If the board accepts your application, you will immediately become a TSAR trainee and are on your way to becoming "mission ready".
3. You will be invited to join the online TSAR "Basecamp" communications forum, where you will have access to team communications and documents.

To become mission ready:

1. Bring your TSAR Full-Member Certification Form (below) to all classroom and field trainings.
2. When you have completed requirements #1 through 6 of the Full-Member Certification Form, with each section signed and dated by a full member, you are officially a mission-ready trainee.
3. Make sure the recruitment director has your most current contact information so you can be added to the Mission Call-Out Roster and automated communications systems.

To become a full member:

1. Complete all requirements (modules 1 through 11) of the TSAR Full-Member Certification Form, with each section signed and dated by a full member.
2. Agree to pass the New Mexico Field Certification Test within one (1) year of becoming a full member of TSAR.
3. Submit the completed Full-Member Certification Form to the recruitment director for final approval by the full TSAR board.
4. Once the president has signed and returned to you a copy of your application, you are officially a full member of Taos Search and Rescue. Congratulations!



TAOS SEARCH AND RESCUE

FULL-MEMBER CERTIFICATION FORM



APPLICANT NAME:

DATE STARTED:

DATE COMPLETED:

BRING THIS SHEET TO ALL CLASSROOM MEETINGS AND FIELD TRAININGS

On completion of certification modules 1 through 6, a trainee becomes "mission ready" and is eligible to participate in active missions. On completion of the remaining certification modules, Nos. 7 through 11, a trainee is eligible to become a full member. All certification modules must be signed and dated by a full member and approved by the board. It is the responsibility of the trainee to acquire these signatures and, upon completion of all modules, turn in this form to the TSAR president. **NOTE:** Trainees whose field activities are limited to the Base Unit are not required to complete the endurance module.

DESCRIPTIONS OF CERTIFICATION MODULES FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP:

- 1. Pack Check** – Print a copy of the TSAR pack checklist and bring it with you when a full member performs the check.
- 2. Endurance** – Hike, cross-country ski, snowshoe, or horseback ride for at least four hours on moderate-to-steep terrain.
- 3. Topo Map/Compass** – For the map portion, identify the following: mountaintops, ridges, ravines (including which way the water is flowing), meadows, contour intervals, elevations, and UTM and lat/long coordinates. For the compass portion: take a bearing, calculate magnetic and true north, know the declination for New Mexico, and walk a bearing with a compass to at least two points.
- 4. Radio Communications** – Know how to operate both field and FRS radios, including how to: power on/off, switch frequencies, and follow proper communication protocols. Learn how to pack and charge radios before and after a mission.
- 5. GPS Basics** – Know how to turn on a GPS, read a position, mark a waypoint, and navigate to a waypoint at least 200 meters away. Know how to upload a CalTopo map into your phone and use the app to mark a waypoint, turn a track on and off, and navigate to a point at least 200 meters away.
- 6. TSAR Policies and Procedures Manual** – Read the Taos Search and Rescue Policies and Procedures Manual (available online at www.sar-taos.org/members) and sign the form in the New-Member Packet affirming that you have read the manual in full and agree to abide by all its provisions.
- 7. Team Equipment** – Learn the location of supplies and equipment in the TSAR vehicles and shed and understand how the van's electrical systems operate, how to deploy the communications antenna, how to turn the generator on and off, and how to set up and use the computer/printer.
- 8. Knots** – Demonstrate the tying and dressing of the following knots: figure 8, figure 8 follow-through, prusik, water knot, double overhand, and double fisherman's.
- 9. K9 Unit** – Attend: a K9 Unit training as support to understand how a K9 team operates and to learn the navigation and communication skills needed to support a K9 team. Attend a K9 Unit classroom.
- 10. General Meetings/Classroom Trainings** – Attend four Wednesday evening general meetings/classroom trainings (see posted training schedule).
- 11. Field Trainings** – Attend four weekend field trainings (see posted training schedule).

Certification Module	Full Member Signature	Check	Date
1. Pack Check			
2. Endurance			
3. Topo Map/Compass			
4. Radio Communications			
5. GPS Basics			
6. TSAR Policies and Procedures Manual			
7. Team Equipment			
8. Knots			
9. K9 Unit Training	Classroom:		
	Field:		
10. General Meetings/ Classroom Trainings	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
	4.		
11. Field Trainings	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
	4.		
President's Signature (signifying board approval)			



AGREEMENT TO READ AND ABIDE BY THE TAOS SEARCH AND RESCUE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

The Taos Search and Rescue Policies and Procedures Manual is our organization's guiding document. It helps ensure that all members of the team have a clear understanding of the basic principles and guidelines under which members operate as a team. This document sets standards for how we work together to:

- serve our community;
- ensure everyone's safety; and
- strive toward a high level of professionalism in attitude, ability, and camaraderie to realize success.

I, _____, hereby agree that I have read the
[Print full name]

Taos Search and Rescue Policies and Procedures Manual in its entirety and that I agree to abide by the policies and procedures set forth in that document to serve Taos Search and Rescue and the community to the best of my ability. I understand that my operating outside the parameters set forth in the Taos Search and Rescue Policies and Procedures Manual may result in a review of my position with the team, including termination, or may make me ineligible to receive member benefits, such as reimbursement for SAR-related events and education.

Signature of Volunteer

Date

Signature of Board Director

Date

TAOS SEARCH AND RESCUE: FULL-MEMBER PACK CHECKLIST

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

APPAREL IN FIELD (Required)

Check	ITEM	DETAILS
	What to wear in the field: Garment/fabric choices must be appropriate to weather conditions. During a pandemic, you must have a mask for yourself, an extra mask for the subject and hand sanitizer.	Pants (NO jeans or cotton)
		Shirt
		Socks
		Underwear
		Boots with lug soles

GENERAL ITEMS IN PACK (Required)

Check	ITEM		DETAILS
	EXTRA CLOTHING IN PACK	Head Cover	For warmth all year
		Gloves or Mittens	For warmth all year
		Extra Socks	In case you get wet
		Water Resistant Outer Layer	Jacket or poncho & pants – breathable; wind/water protective
		Middle Layer	In case you get wet – synthetic or wool
		Inner Base Layer	In case you get wet – synthetic, silk or wool
	SURVIVAL	Food	Enough for 24 hours for you + sealed protein bar for subject
		Water	2 quarts minimum for you + sealed bottle for subject
		Knife	Sharp knife or multi-tool
		Fire Starter	Waterproof matches, wax, steel wool, batteries, etc.
		Space Blanket	For warmth overnight
		Whistle	Plastic storm whistle
		Signal Mirror	With hole and webbing in center
	SAFETY	Sunscreen	Summer and winter
		Safety Glasses	Preferably with side protection
		Orange Vest	For hunting season and emergency visibility
		Heavy Rubber Gloves	Kitchen-type for body recovery
		Ear Plugs	For helicopters
	GENERAL TOOLS OF THE TRADE	Pen, Pencil and Notebook	Waterproof-type recommended
		Compass	Orienteering style, ideally w/declination adjustment
		Camera	For documentation (disposable or w/SIM card)
		Headlamp	For night searching and hiking
		Extra Batteries	4 AA, 4 AAA (for GPS, FRS, headlamp and other equipment)
		Work Gloves	Leather
		Trail Tape	Orange or pink, bright visible color
		Duct Tape	At least three yards
		1" Tubular Webbing	20 feet
		Parachute Cord	50 feet
		Garbage Bags	Large, thick, leaf-type

TSAR PACK CHECKLIST (cont.)

MEDICAL ITEMS IN PACK (R=Required for: Trainee=T, Full Member=F)

Check	ITEM	R	DETAILS
	STERILE DRESSINGS	3 Nonstick Gauze Pads	2" x 3"
		2 Gauze Pads	4" x 4"
		1 Surgi-pad	5" x 9"
		6 Band-Aids	¾" x 3"
	NON-STERILE DRESSINGS & BANDAGES	1 Gauze Bandage Rolls	4" x 5 yards
		2 Moleskin or Gel Dressings	
		1 Ace Bandage or Vet Wrap	3"
		1 Triangular Bandage	36" square piece of fabric
		1 Roll Adhesive Tape/Elasticon	½" or larger
	GENERAL TOOLS	1 Pair Crash Shears	Blunt scissors
		1 Sam Splint	
		1 Tweezers	
	MEDI-CATION	1 Provodone Iodine Swab Pack	
		1 Aspirin 325 mg.	
		2 Immodium Tabs	
		2 Benadryl 25mg.	
	SAFETY	3 pair surgical gloves	
	OPTIONAL	Antibiotic ointment, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, ice pack/warmer, CPR mask, personal meds	

GENERAL RECOMMENDED ITEMS (Not Required)

Check	ITEM	DETAILS
	Climbing Helmet	Required in some situations (may borrow from shed)
	GPS	Used regularly (may borrow from shed)
	Binoculars	Used moderately
	Insect Repellant	
	Toilet Paper	
	Sunglasses	
	Bivouac (Bivy) Sack	
	Foam Pad	
	PFD (Personal Floatation Device)	Required in water situations (may borrow from shed)
	Down Vest or Jacket	For extra outer-warmth layer
	Climbing Harness	Required for high angle unit members

RECOMMENDED ITEMS FOR WINTER (Not Required)

Check	ITEM	DETAILS
	Neck Gaiter and/or Balaclava	For face and neck warmth
	Extra Wool Cap	For top-of-head warmth
	Ski/Snow Goggles	For eye protection
	Hand and Foot Warmers	For extra warmth
	Leg Gaiters	To keep moisture and snow out of boots
	Snow Shoes or C.C. Skis & Ski Poles	(Ski poles can double as avalanche probes)
	Avalanche Probe	Required in some situations (may borrow from shed)
	Avalanche Beacon	Required in some situations (may borrow from shed)
	Snow Shovel	Required in some situations (may borrow from shed)



2023 BOARD MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

DIRECTOR POSITION	NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
PRESIDENT	Delinda VanneBrightyn	575.770.5633	delinda@taosnet.com
VICE PRESIDENT	Tamar Stieber	505.501.0836	tamarstieber.mac@gmail.com
SECRETARY	Carlie McGinnis	575.770.1656	tsarsearcher@yahoo.com
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EQUIPMENT DIRECTOR	Noa Roske	720.620.2686	noaroske@gmail.com
EVENT DIRECTOR/TEAM LIAISON	Paymaneh Ghaffari	575.779.0139	paymaneh@taosnet.com

Taos Search and Rescue

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www.sar-taos.org

www.nmsarc.org