



# Foothills Search and Rescue Society

P.O. Box 549 • Turner Valley • AB • T0L 2A0 • www.foothills-sar.ca

## RULES

That  
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### Purpose

*These Rules have the purpose of assisting the membership of the Foothills Search and Rescue Society (hereinafter “the Society”) and specifically the Board of Directors of the Society (hereinafter “the Board”) comply with the requirements set out in the Charter and the By-Laws of the Society in a manner that is reasonable, consistent and defensible. These Rules are not intended to include detailed working level instructions. According to By-Law 14.f, these Rules may only be changed by the passing of a special resolution at a properly convened meeting of the Society.*

### **Rule 1      Membership**

- 1.a** The Board recognizes the need for the members of the Society (hereinafter “Member” or “Members”) to function as a cohesive and effective team and shall therefore undertake to:
- i) Provide a meeting place for Society activities.
  - ii) Facilitate training and informational lectures.
  - iii) Establish and maintain a resource library and supply of team (that is, not personal) equipment.
  - iv) Provide the necessary team equipment for training.
  - v) Establish an effective organizational system for search and rescue situations.
  - vi) Establish an effective communication system amongst the Members.
  - vii) Encourage Members to organize and participate in group recreational activities.
- 1.b** The Members individually and collectively acknowledge the Society needs a membership that is committed to fulfilling the purpose of the Society and shall therefore undertake to:
- i) Successfully complete Search and Rescue Fundamentals / Basics.
  - ii) Hold at all times a valid St. John’s Ambulance certificate for Standard First Aid / CPR - C / AED. The training received must include all elective lessons dealing with children and infants. Another certificate that is shown equal to or better than the St. John’s Ambulance certificate may be accepted by the Board.
  - iii) Participate in at least five (5) of the general meetings in each calendar year.
  - iv) Participate in at least three (3) cyclical training events in each calendar year.
  - v) Participate in any combination of at least two (2) real and mock searches in each calendar year.
  - vi) Pay the membership fee prior to the annual general meeting of the Society when renewing membership. According to By-Law 2.c, failure to renew membership by the annual general meeting means membership is automatically suspended.
  - vii) At least once annually and upon request of the Board verify the Society membership register has complete and accurate personal and emergency contact information. In the event adjustments are necessary, accordingly inform the Board via electronic mail.
  - viii) Upon request of the Board submit to the Board the original of an updated *Criminal Record Clearance* certificate. The approval date of the certificate must be within three (3) months of receipt by the Board.



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When applying for an updated *Criminal Record Clearance* certificate, Members are encouraged to submit a duly completed copy of the Society's *Request for Criminal Record Clearance Form Letter*. Members are responsible for paying any fees involved in acquiring the certificate.

- 1.c** Individuals who are applying for membership in the Society shall submit the following to the Board for review:
- i) Executed copies of the *Membership Application*, *Applicant Waiver*, and *Non-Disclosure Agreement*.
  - ii) The membership fee.
  - iii) The original of a *Criminal Record Clearance* certificate (hardcopy or image not acceptable). The approval date of the certificate must be within three (3) months of receipt by the Board. The applicant is responsible for paying any fees involved in acquiring the certificate.
  - iv) A hardcopy or image of a valid St. John's Ambulance certificate for Standard First Aid / CPR – C / AED. The training received must include all elective lessons dealing with children and infants. The applicant is responsible for paying any fees involved in acquiring the certificate. Another certificate that is shown equal to or better than the St. John's Ambulance certificate may be accepted by the Board.
  - v) A hardcopy or image of a valid ICS-100 or higher level certificate. The applicant is responsible for paying any fees involved in acquiring the certificate.

The Board at its discretion may accept or reject an application for membership in the Society, and the Board shall not be obliged to divulge to anyone the reason for its decision.

Until an applicant is accepted into the Society as a Member, that individual shall be treated as belonging to the general public.

- 1.d** An individual who currently has membership in another search and rescue team may apply pursuant to Rule 1.c for concurrent membership in the Society. In such cases however, the Board requires in writing the outcome of an in-person interview with the applicant when assessing the application.
- 1.e** All Members are expected to have:
- i) Convenient access to electronic mail and an Internet browser.
  - ii) At least one telephone number at which they can be reached.
- 1.f** All Members are entitled to access the "members only" portion of the Society's website and accordingly will be apprised by the Board of the login credentials. The Board will revise the login credentials at least once annually and so inform all Members.
- 1.g** The Board shall specify a priori the criteria it uses for deeming when Members are "callout ready".
- 1.h** The Society's photo identification card will only be issued to Members who are deemed "callout ready" by the Board.



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- 1.i** The following criteria together shall determine when Members are in good standing:
- i) Not on leave nor suspended.<sup>1</sup>
  - ii) Deemed “callout ready” by the Board, or appointed a Life Member by the Board.
- 1.j** Any Member in good standing may request a leave from Society commitments as follows:
- i) Provide written notice (via electronic mail to any member of the Board) of the request to take leave. The option of taking leave is not available to Members who are not in good standing.
  - ii) The Society will continue to communicate with a Member on leave as it does with all Members with the exception that the Member on leave is removed from the callout list. The Member on leave is no longer deemed “callout ready” by the Board.
  - iii) The Member on leave is not expected to participate in any Society activities (for example meetings, cyclical training, social and public events) but may do so on an ad hoc basis with the exception of searches sanctioned by a tasking agency which the Member may not attend.
  - iv) Prior to the Society annual general meeting, a Member on leave shall repeat the provision of written notice and payment of the annual membership fee for each subsequent year the Member needs leave.
  - v) A Member on leave shall provide written notice (via electronic mail to any member of the Board) of the intent to return from leave to active status. At that time the Board shall assign a mentor to support the Member’s reactivation. Notwithstanding Rule 1.g, the Board shall subsequently determine in consultation with the mentor when the Member is deemed “callout ready”.

### **Rule 2 Society Branded Items**

- 2.a** Only Members in good standing may acquire Society branded items.
- 2.b** The Board shall determine the minimum clothing that constitutes the Society uniform, and shall make available for purchase or loan those Society branded items that together constitute the Society uniform.
- 2.c** The Board shall determine which Society branded items are purchased or loaned, and shall set for each item its sell price or deposit amount.
- 2.d** The Board shall determine which additional items if any are offered for sale, and shall set for each item its sell price. Such additional items need not be Society branded.
- 2.e** Sold items are not returnable and non-refundable.
- 2.f** Loaned items must be promptly returned upon a request of the Board, Member resignation, or Member expulsion. The Society will refund the deposit amount to the Member provided the loaned item is returned in serviceable condition. The Board shall specify a priori for each loaned item what constitutes its serviceable condition.

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<sup>1</sup> Individuals who have resigned or been expelled from the Society are by definition not Members.



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## RULES

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- 2.g** Members are expected to don the Society uniform and to wear the Society's photo identification cards whenever involved in Society activities albeit this is optional for meetings and social events of the Society.
- 2.h** Members shall only don or otherwise use Society branded items for Society activities. All other uses are prohibited.
- 2.i** Members shall only wear or otherwise use the Society's photo identification card for Society activities, and it should be worn so that it is readily visible. All other uses are prohibited.

### Rule 3 Society Activities

- 3.a** The *organizer* of a Society activity must register the activity with the Alberta Emergency Management Agency.<sup>2</sup> Registering the Society activity activates provincial liability insurance and Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) coverage for the members participating in the activity.
- 3.b** The general public may attend general meetings and annual general meetings of the Society. However, each individual of the general public wishing to attend a meeting shall be required to execute the Society's *Non-Disclosure Agreement* before being admitted.  
  
The requirement to execute the Society's *Non-Disclosure Agreement* shall apply to each and every meeting notwithstanding that an individual of the general public wishing to attend a meeting may have previously executed the Society's *Non-Disclosure Agreement*. This requirement applies equally to an applicant who has not yet been accepted as a Member.
- 3.c** No individual of the general public who is a minor person (that is, less than 18 years of age) may attend a general meeting or annual general meeting of the Society.
- 3.d** The general public may not attend special general meetings of the Society.
- 3.e** Members may attend general meetings, special general meetings and annual general meetings of the Society.
- 3.f** Only Members may participate in public and social events authorized by the Board.
- 3.g** Training for Members not deemed "callout ready" by the Board is limited to cyclical training.
- 3.h** Participation in training that is beyond cyclical training is limited to Members deemed "callout ready" by the Board, and then only upon authorization of the Board. This limitation shall apply whether the training event is organized by the Society or another party.
- 3.i** Properly accredited persons from other search and rescue teams based in the Province of Alberta may be authorized by the Board to participate in training events organized by the Society. Any training funded in whole or part by grants from the Province of Alberta will typically be open to participation by such persons.
- 3.j** Only Members deemed "callout ready" by the Board may participate in sanctioned searches (refer to Rule 5).

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<sup>2</sup> The Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) operates a Provincial Operations Center (POC) that is staffed at all times. Before the start of a Society activity, the *organizer* is required to telephone the POC and obtain a *Task Number* for that activity.



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- 3.k** Any Member may attend a meeting of the Board as a visitor with the understanding that a visitor is not a participant. The only exception is that a visitor may not attend *in camera* portions of a meeting of the Board.
- 3.l** A Member may request the participation of a volunteer from the general public in a Society activity (for example a training exercise). If the individual is deemed suitable for participation by the activity *organizer*, the volunteer from the general public must execute the Society's *Public Volunteer Waiver* before participation.

If the volunteer from the general public is a minor person (that is, less than 18 years of age), a parent or guardian is required.

- i) A Member who is the parent of the minor person must execute the Society's *Public Volunteer Waiver* before the participation of the minor person
- ii) A Member who is not the parent but is appointed by the parent as the guardian of the minor person must execute the Society's *Public Volunteer Waiver* before the participation of the minor person.
- iii) If the parent or guardian of the minor person is not a Member, the individual must be deemed suitable for participation by the activity *organizer* and the parent or guardian must execute two of the Society's *Public Volunteer Waivers*: one for the minor person and one for the parent or guardian.

### Rule 4 Specialty Teams

- 4.a** Only the Board shall have the authority to establish a specialty team and it shall not operate without Board oversight.<sup>3</sup>
- 4.b** Each specialty team shall have a leader and a leader's assistant, both appointed by the Board.
- 4.c** A specialty team leader shall set out for review and approval by the Board the terms of reference for the specialty team:
- i) Target service delivery capability and capacity of the specialty team.
  - ii) Minimum skills required for a Member to qualify for participation with the specialty team during sanctioned searches.
  - iii) For each skill, the testing method(s) used, the record(s) produced, and any recertification requirement(s).
  - iv) Minimum number of qualified Members in the specialty team. If the roster falls below this number, the specialty team may not participate in sanctioned searches until the roster returns to minimum level.
  - v) Maximum number of qualified Members in the specialty team.
- 4.d** Only Members deemed "callout ready" by the Board may apply for assignment to a specialty team of the Society. The application must be submitted to the Board for review. The Board at

<sup>3</sup> Each specialty team when adequately resourced, equipped and trained has the potential to significantly enhance the Society's search and rescue capability and capacity. However, each specialty team by definition introduces new and unique safety risks, potential liabilities and costs that are beyond the Society's basic search and rescue capability and capacity.



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its discretion but with input from the specialty team leader and the leader's assistant may accept or reject the application, and the Board shall not be obliged to divulge to anyone the reason for its decision.

- 4.e** A specialty team leader with input from the leader's assistant shall determine when a Member assigned to a specialty team is qualified and ready to participate with that team during sanctioned searches. The specialty team leader shall periodically report to the Board the roster of qualified Members.
- 4.f** A Member not assigned to a specialty team may observe that specialty team conducting training exercises and may also participate in training exercises but only under the authority and direct supervision of the specialty team leader or in the leader's absence the leader's assistant. The Member's participation in training exercises shall be for the purpose of acquiring skills for a potential future assignment to the specialty team.
- 4.g** A Member assigned to a specialty team but not yet qualified is prohibited from participating with the specialty team during sanctioned searches.
- 4.h** Cyclical training will from time to time include the involvement of one or more specialty teams. In these situations, the participation of Members alongside the specialty team(s) shall be pursuant to and within the parameters of the training exercise.

### Rule 5 Sanctioned Searches

- 5.a** The Society will only initiate a callout of its Members upon a request from a tasking agency recognized by the Board. The Society's activity that results from a callout will be known as a "sanctioned search" regardless of the specific nature of the activity.
- 5.b** The Society will only initiate a callout of Members who are deemed "callout ready" by the Board. The circumstances of a tasking agency's request may result in a callout of only some of the Members who are deemed "callout ready" by the Board (refer to Rule 6.b).
- 5.c** Depending on the characteristics of a sanctioned search, the callout may request the deployment of one or more specialty teams (refer to Rule 6.b).
- 5.d** Depending on the characteristics of a sanctioned search, the Society may appeal for assistance from other search and rescue teams based within and outside the Province of Alberta. Properly accredited persons from search and rescue teams responding to the appeal for assistance shall be treated as if Members in good standing until the sanctioned search is concluded (refer to Rule 6.c). All other persons shall be treated as volunteers from the general public.
- 5.e** A volunteer from the general public may request participation in a sanctioned search. If the individual is deemed suitable for participation by the Search Manager or delegate, the individual must execute the Society's *Public Volunteer Waiver* and *Non-Disclosure Agreement* before participation (refer to Rule 6.d).
- 5.f** The requirement to execute the Society's *Public Volunteer Waiver* and *Non-Disclosure Agreement* shall apply to each and every operational period of a sanctioned search notwithstanding that a volunteer from the general public wishing to participate in a sanctioned search may have previously executed these two documents.





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- 5.g** A volunteer from the general public who is a minor person (that is, less than 18 years of age) shall be refused participation in a sanctioned search.
- 5.h** A Member who is not deemed “callout ready” by the Board may attend a sanctioned search but only on their own initiative and only as a volunteer from the general public.

### **Rule 6 Search Management**

- 6.a** A Search Manager who is a Member in good standing will be assigned to each and every operational period of a sanctioned search. The Search Manager shall attend in person the scene of the sanctioned search for the duration of the assigned operational period.
- 6.b** Only the Search Manager(s) assigned to a sanctioned search shall specify the terms of Member callout(s).
- 6.c** Pursuant to Rule 5.d, the Search Manager or delegate has sole responsibility for verifying the accreditation of all persons responding to an appeal for assistance from other search and rescue teams. A properly accredited person who is also a qualified search manager may be assigned as the Search Manager for any operational period.
- 6.d** Pursuant to Rule 5.e, the Search Manager or delegate has sole authority over the assignment of volunteers from the general public.
- 6.e** The Search Manager has a shared responsibility for determining when the outcome of a sanctioned search has elements of a critical incident. Once a critical incident has been declared, the Search Manager shall promptly initiate the response protocol set out by the Board for dealing with post-traumatic stress.
- 6.f** Members sharing responsibility for declaring a critical incident include other Search Managers and the Board.

### **Rule 7 Spending Limits**

- 7.a** Pursuant to By-Law 16.a, the spending limit for the aggregate of ordinary and emergency expenditures by a Member in good standing that are not pre-authorized by the Board shall be \$250.
- 7.b** Notwithstanding Rule 7.a, on an exceptional basis and only on written direction (typically via electronic mail), any officer of the Society may revise for a singular purpose the spending limit up to a maximum of \$2,500, and accordingly authorize a Member in good standing who is not the officer revising the spending limit to undertake expenditures for that singular purpose provided the aggregate does not exceed the revised spending limit.
- 7.c** In the event the spending limit maximum is insufficient for the singular purpose, a special meeting of the Board shall be convened to deal with the matter.
- 7.d** Notwithstanding Rule 7.a and pursuant to By-Law 16.b, the Board shall specify the spending limit for each financial instrument it authorizes.



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### **Rule 8      Personal Information**

- 8.a**    The Society will disclose its membership register or an excerpt thereof to Members with the expectation that the personal information contained in the membership register or excerpt thereof is used by Members for matters relating to the affairs of the Society.
- 8.b**    A Member may use personal information about another Member that is contained in the membership register or excerpt thereof for any matter not relating to the affairs of the Society only if that other Member gives consent to that use.