

KCSARA Bylaws

As Revised: April 13, 2015.

Purpose

The purpose of the King County Search and Rescue Association (KCSARA) is to provide member units and volunteers: expertise; resources for technical consulting; field guiding service; assistance in the field of search and rescue; promotion; timely exchange of rescue techniques and procedures; dissemination of information regarding advances in equipment; and, to promote the interchange of information regarding the resources available for search and rescue operations within King County.

Objectives

1. To promote cooperation between Units of the Association and to represent and be their voice in the formulation of ways and means of better accomplishing search and rescue operations.
2. To promote the assembly of leaders who are knowledgeable in search and rescue techniques and operations to assist responsible agencies in search and rescue operations.
3. To promote the best possible utilization of personnel and equipment in the conduct of training exercises for search and rescue operations.
4. To promote cooperation with other responsible agencies involved in search and rescue operations outside of King County.
5. To promote the education of the public in wilderness safety.

Membership in the association

Membership shall be open to any active and effective search and rescue organization having an interest in promoting the objectives of the association and meeting the requisite standards set forth herein.

1. Membership Classifications
 1. Full Member Units
 1. Shall have a voice and two Unit votes in the Governing Body.
 2. Shall meet the qualifications of a Full Member Unit.
 2. Probational Member Unit
 1. A Probational Member Unit is a Unit in the process of gaining full membership.
 2. A Probational Member Unit may not duplicate the function of an existing Unit or Standing Committee.
 3. A Probational Member Unit shall have a maximum of one year to meet all qualifications and be accepted as a Full Member Unit unless the qualifications committee requests an extension and the extension is approved by a majority vote of the Governing Body.

Member unit qualification requirements

1. Full Member Unit

1. Must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a non-profit organization under the provisions of the IRS Code 501(c)(3).

May not exclude membership in their Unit based on gender, race, or religion. Due to the maturity and judgement abilities required in SAR activities, minimum age requirements are acceptable grounds for exclusion from a Unit.

2. Shall be headquartered in King County and available for direct call out by the King County Sheriff's Office.
3. Shall require all members to register as Emergency Service Workers with King County.
4. Must have a minimum of seven members certified by the King County Sheriff's Office under WAC 118.04. Those seven members must also meet the training standards established by the Unit.
5. A Unit must have its training standards approved and on file with the KCSARA Qualifications Committee as meeting the KCSARA standards.
6. When a Member Unit fails to maintain these requirements the qualifications committee shall recommend that they be reclassified to probational status or if they do not meet the Probational Unit requirements that they be dropped from membership. To reclassify a Unit to probational status requires a majority vote of the Governing Body present. The President shall then provide the Unit written notification as to their being reclassified and the reason(s) why. They shall have up to one year from the date on the written notification to re-meet the qualifications. After the one-year anniversary of the written notice, the Qualifications Committee may recommend and specify an extension or that the Unit be dropped from membership. To drop a Unit from membership requires at least 10 days notice to all Units prior to the vote and a vote of two thirds of those voting members present.

2. Probational Membership Units

1. Shall provide documentation that they have filed for their IRS 501(c)(3) classification.
2. Must be headquartered in King County and available for direct call out by the King County Sheriff's Office.
3. Must require all members to register as Emergency Service Workers under RCW 38.52.
4. Must submit a formal letter of application to the President and the letter's acceptance must be approved by a majority vote of the Governing Body.
5. Will work under the supervision of the Qualifications Committee, who shall conduct an evaluation of the Probational Member Unit's abilities and effectiveness at fulfilling their stated function. The Executive Board shall review the Qualification Committee's recommendation and submit them to the Governing Body for a majority approval or disapproval for membership.

Organization of the association

1. Association Governing Body

1. Each Full Member Unit of the association shall appoint two delegates and two alternate delegates, to be members of the Governing Body. The representatives and alternate names shall be submitted by January 1st of each year. Changes may be made at any time by submitting a letter to the Executive Board.
2. Executive Board
 1. The Executive Board shall be comprised of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board shall assist the President and the Governing Body in carrying out the day-to-day activities of the Association.
3. Operational Board
 1. The Operational Board shall be comprised of the Unit Leaders of each of the Full Members of the Association. The purpose of the Operational Board is the oversight of Standard Operating Procedures developed between the King County Sheriff's office and the Association. The Operational Board will meet monthly with a representative from KCSO and will have a representative attend the Association General meeting.
4. Meetings of the Governing Body
 1. Meetings shall be held every other month of the year, on even months, at a time and place determined by the President.
 2. Meetings postponed due to operational requirements or other emergencies will be held one week later or canceled at the discretion of the President.
 3. A minimum of one appointed delegate or alternate of each Unit of the association shall be in attendance at each meeting of the Governing Body. Any unit without representation at any general meeting shall forfeit \$100 per meeting missed, to be divided equally among the remaining Units receiving a share. The only excused absence to this will be if the Unit is on a King County authorized mission.
 4. Meetings will be conducted according to the Robert's Rules of Order.
 5. Special meetings of the Governing Body may be called by the President to resolve urgent problems.
 6. A quorum is necessary for all balloting issues. A quorum shall consist of simple majority (half plus one) of the voting delegates. Balloting and any associated discussions may be conducted at a meeting or online using electronic methods approved by the President. Ballots shall be secret or open at the discretion of the voting members. In meetings, a simple majority of those present shall rule, unless otherwise provided by these bylaws. For online balloting, a simple majority shall rule, provided a quorum cast their votes in the timeframe allotted for balloting. In the event of a tie, the President may cast a tie-breaking vote, provided the President hasn't already cast a vote on behalf of a Unit. If the President has voted, the Vice President may cast the tiebreaker, provided that person meets the same tie breaking criteria above for the President. If a tie cannot be broken, the motion fails.
 7. Unit activity reports shall be presented at the regularly scheduled meetings of the Governing Body. Unless a Unit has had no activity, reports should be written by the individual Units and given to the Secretary. Reports shall be prepared in the manner prescribed by the Secretary.
 8. Member Units desiring to bring issues affecting Search and Rescue activities and the Association before the Governing Body, should first submit to the President a written statement setting forth the problem and suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the Association and its Member Units. If the President cannot resolve the situation, the Unit shall submit it to the Governing Body for resolution. The Governing Body is the final authority on disputes among KCSARA Units.

9. All meetings of the Association are considered open meetings except that the President or Governing Body may declare a meeting closed for the sole purpose of considering personnel issues.
5. Officers
1. To serve as an Executive Board Member of the King County Search and Rescue Association, at the time of the election, an individual must:
 1. Be a member of a group that has full member status in KCSARA.
 2. Have served as Chairperson/President of one of the member organizations of KCSARA, or
 3. Have served as a delegate of one of the Full member Units of KCSARA, or
 4. Have otherwise demonstrated sustained interest and leadership abilities in KCSARA and search and rescue operations.
 2. An Executive Board member of KCSARA may not simultaneously serve in any equivalent position of any Full Member Unit.
 3. Terms. The President and Vice President shall be elected for a term of two years and may not serve for more than two consecutive full terms, however if no eligible or willing candidate can be found, the current President may be re-elected for a temporary one year-term or several one year terms until an eligible/willing candidate can be found.
 4. Outgoing President. The outgoing President shall serve for one year as an ex-officio advisor and liaison to the President and the Governing Body.
 5. Secretary. The Secretary shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by vote of the Governing Body. The term of office shall coincide with the term of the President.
 6. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the vote of the Governing Body. The term of office shall coincide with the term of the President.
 7. Voting by Officers. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be considered members of the Governing Body, but their right to vote shall depend solely on their being named delegate or alternate of a Full Member Unit.
 8. Duties of Executive Board Members
 1. President. The President shall perform all duties normally associated with the office. The President shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the Governing Body, the Secretary and Treasurer and the Chairpersons of the Standing Committees. All other appointments shall be at the President's discretion.
 2. Vice President. The Vice President shall perform all duties normally associated with the office and during the President's absence shall have the power and duties of the President.
 3. Secretary. The Secretary shall:
 1. Keep the minutes of the meeting of members of the Governing Body and Executive Board and maintain a file of meeting minutes provided by Standing Committees.
 2. See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by governing laws.
 3. Be custodian of the corporate records of KCSARA.
 4. Keep records of the post office address of each Officer.
 5. Sign with the President, or other officers authorized, deeds mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments.

6. In general, perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President.
7. In the absence of the Secretary, an Assistant Secretary may perform the duties of the Secretary.
4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:
 1. Have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of KCSARA.
 2. Receive and give receipts for moneys due and payable to KCSARA from any source.
 3. Deposit all moneys in the name of KCSARA in banks, trust companies or other depositories.
 4. In general perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President.
 5. In the absence of the Treasurer, an Assistant Treasurer may perform the duties of the Treasurer.
5. Any Executive Board Member may serve as District SAR Representative for KCSARA.

Finances

1. CONTRACTS

1. No individual or Unit may obligate KCSARA financially without approval of the Governing Body.
2. Any request that obligates non-SAR related actions by KCSARA must be approved by the Governing Body.
3. All grant requests for KCSARA or by KCSARA for a member Unit must be approved by the Governing Body.

2. BUDGET

1. An Annual Budget shall be submitted at the January meeting to the Governing Body for approval at the February meeting. If a budget is not approved, KCSARA may only operate from the funds left in the Emergency fund (general checking account) from the previous year. No fund raising disbursements will be made to the Units until KCSARA has an approved budget. The approved budget will be distributed at the next Governing Body meeting and at the next Unit Leaders meeting. An expense not covered in the budget may be paid after receiving the approval of the majority of the Executive Board and/or a majority approval from the Governing Body. A budget for the Rapid Alpine Deployment Team will be included in the KCSARA budget as separate line items in the budget.
2. Internal Review Committee. Each February one member from two separate units of KCSARA will review the KCSARA books. These members cannot be a member of the Executive Board or have signature authority on any of the KCSARA accounts.

3. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

1. Authorized signatures. Withdrawals of KCSARA funds require the signature of one of the following four people: President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer. Committees established by KCSARA, for example the KCSARA Store and Ways and Means, may maintain separate accounts for their committee

needs. The authorized signatures on those accounts will be the committee chairperson(s), the committee treasurer -- if appointed, and the KCSARA Treasurer. Monthly reports, normally the account statements, on all account activity will be forwarded to the KCSARA Treasurer.

2. Disbursement formulas for special circumstances. Donations received in conjunction with a particular mission, or activity are to be distributed according to the expressed intentions of the donor(s). Where the donors have not expressed such intentions, the funds are to be placed in KCSARA's general fund.

Election & removal of officers

1. TERMS. The terms of all elected officers shall be for two years unless otherwise provided in these bylaws. If an elected officer does not serve for the entire elected term, an appropriate replacement shall serve for only the remainder of that term.
 1. Elections of officers shall be at the regularly scheduled August meeting of the Governing Body. The President will be elected on even years and the Vice President on odd years.
 1. The President shall appoint qualified individuals to fill un-expired terms. Subject to confirmation by the Governing Body.
 2. Elections Committee.
 1. An Election Committee of not fewer than three persons shall be appointed by the President by the June meeting.
 2. The committee shall seek and nominate the best possible candidates for the elective positions.
 3. All nominees must meet the minimum qualifications set forth in these bylaws.
 4. Each member of the committee shall review each nominee.
 5. The Committee shall solicit opinions from appropriate officials of the King County Sheriff's Office regarding potential candidates for President and Vice President.
 6. The committee will present its slate of nominees to the Governing Body at the July meeting of the election year. If there is no July meeting, the committee will notify the Unit Leaders of the slate within a week of the scheduled meeting.
 3. The election of officers will be conducted by the Chairperson of the Election Committee. Voting shall be by secret ballot and in accordance with these bylaws. Election will be by simple majority.
2. Removal of Officers. Any officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Governing Body provided that those members receive at least 10 days notice of the proposed action.

Committees

1. Standing Committees. There shall be twelve Standing Committees: Communications/Repeater, Qualifications, Training, KCSARA Merchandise/Store, EMT/Medical, Database/Computer Support, Equipment, Ways and Means, Rapid Alpine Deployment (RAD), Publications/Publicity and Public Education/Speakers. All Standing Committee chairpersons shall be appointed by the President subject to confirmation by the Governing Body. When requested by that committee's chairperson, each Full Member

Unit shall provide at least one member to serve on the committee. The President may grant exemption for smaller Units with limited membership. The responsibilities described below are the responsibility of the entire committee, but the committee chairperson will ensure they are executed.

1. Responsibilities of the Standing Committees

1. Communications/Repeater: Develop procedures to standardize operational communications. Operational communications shall be defined as those required to initiate and execute missions. The committee shall prepare and maintain an inventory of communications resources.
2. Qualification: Prepare and maintain documentation defining qualification requirements. Qualification criteria shall be defined as those described in the membership section of these by-laws as well as those required for continued operations in King County. Assist the President in ensuring that member Units meet and maintain required standards. Arranges the proficiency examinations of Probationary Member Units.
3. Training: Develop training programs that enable all KCSARA members have reasonable opportunities to maintain training as required by Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 118-04 and/or the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO). Act as a focal point for information regarding training needs. May appoint a Program Coordinator who will be responsible to provide a training component during at least six of the regularly scheduled KCSARA meetings each year and other special training activities as directed by the Training Chairperson. Will compile and publish a calendar of training events available for all members. Will compile and maintain records of WAC and/or KCSO training completions by member units.
4. Property: Prepare and maintain an inventory of all equipment required for KCSARA to fulfill its mission and obligations..
5. KCSARA Merchandise/Store: Obtain and sell KCSARA logo merchandise, SAR related books and equipment. Maintain inventory and financial records for the merchandise.
6. EMT/Medical Chairperson: Facilitate the training of KCSARA members to meet initial and continuing requirements of CPR, Basic First Aid, Advanced First Aid, Winter Emergency Care, Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic certification. Keep current appropriate records of those qualified at Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic Level.
7. Ways and Means: Provides a co-Chair the KCSARA fundraiser and chair any other major KCSARA fundraising events. Research and write grant requests for KCSARA as requested by the President and provide assistance to member KCSARA Units in writing grant requests.
8. Database/Computer: Responsible for Designing, Programming, Deployment and training on KCSARA Computer Systems required by KCSARA as authorized by the Governing Body. Will work with other committees as necessary to ensure their computing needs are met.. Will assist in maintaining the KCSARA Web page.
9. Publications/Publicity: Produce the KCSARA newsletter, brochure and fundraiser "book". Coordinate Public Education activities, Hug a Tree'. Speakers bureau etc.

10. Rapid Alpine Deployment (RAD): Manage team to patrol high activity area during summer months. This includes maintaining all RAD Team documentation as required.
 11. Public Education/Speakers: Provide speakers and education materials for public gatherings.
1. The President and the Governing Body may delegate the management of any properties of the Association and the performance of Association activities to such committees or organizations as necessary and appropriate.
 1. Ad Hoc Committees. The President may create and appoint a Chairperson with the Governing Body's approval to deal with a KCSARA issue that is not addressed by a standing committee.

Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the delegates present at a regular scheduled meeting of the Governing Body, provided that the delegates receive at least twenty days notice of the proposed changes.

Bylaw revision - existing unit grace period

Certain mandates made by revising these bylaws may require actions from existing Units and the KCSARA executive board to be in compliance with these bylaws. For items that require extensive documentation, coordination and various approvals, there shall be a three-month grace period from the date of approval for compliance with these bylaws.

Conflict of interest

No members of KCSARA shall engage themselves in a position or function in an effort to gain unfair advantage for their personal gain.

Participation in activities which are illegal, impair or interfere with the conscientious performance of activities, involve misuse of influence, facilities or other resources; or reflect discredit upon the good name and reputation of KCSARA, shall be construed as a conflict of interest.

Prior to any potential conflict of interest, a written disclosure statement shall be voluntarily submitted to the Executive Board for review determination for action if required.

General grievances and penalties

1. General Grievances

- A grievance is a complaint of a general nature, which is not based upon specific rule or legal violation, or upon a specific administrative decision or lack of decision. The Executive Board may hear a written grievance on an informal basis.

1. Penalties

- No Full Member or Probational Member Unit or member of a Full Member or Probational Member Unit may invoke or threaten to invoke the aid of the Courts of any state or of the United States in resolving any matter involving Member Units or any of their members, without the expressed approval of the Executive Board.
- For violation of this rule, the offending party shall be subject to sanctions of suspension, loss of member status and or fines, and shall be liable to the Member Units and KCSARA for all expenses incurred by the Member Unit and its officers, as appropriate, in defending each court action, including but not limited to the following: court costs; attorneys fees; reasonable compensation for the time spent by members and officers in responding to and defending against allegations in the action, including responses to discovery and court appearances.

Indemnification of officers

Each Officer now or hereafter serving KCSARA and each person who at the request of or on behalf of KCSARA, is now serving or hereafter serves as a Trustee, Director or Officer of any other corporation, whether for profit or not for profit, and the respective heirs, executors and administrators of each of them shall be indemnified by KCSARA to the fullest extent provided by law against all costs, expenses, judgements, and liabilities, including attorneys fees reasonably incurred by or imposed upon him/her in connection with or resulting from any claim, action, suit, or proceeding, civil or criminal, in which he or she may be made a party by reason of his or her being or having been such Officer at the time of such costs, expenses, judgements, and liabilities, provided that in his or her official capacity with KCSARA, he or she acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed not opposed to the interests of the KCSARA, and in the case of criminal proceedings, he or she had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit or proceeding by judgement, order settlements or conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent shall not, of itself, be a presumption, that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner which he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of KCSARA or had reasonably believed his or her conduct was unlawful. The foregoing right of indemnification shall not be exclusive of other rights to which such Officer may be entitled as a matter of law.

The Governing Body may obtain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was an Officer or agent against any liability arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not they would have power to indemnify him or her against such liability. Such indemnification shall be governed by and consistent with RCW 24.03.035 (14) and RCW 23A.08.025, as amended.