

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION # 9 - SEARCH AND RESCUE

Primary Agency

ESF-9 Coordinator: Campbell County SAR Coordinator (*per KRS 39F.200 as designated by the Emergency Management Director*)

Local Support

- Chief Elected Official(s)
- County/Local Law Enforcement (ESF-13)
- Campbell County Search & Rescue (CCSAR)
- NKT Technical Rescue Team
- Campbell County Coroner (fatality management)

Local Resource Partners

- Campbell County Road Department / Public Works (ESF-3)
- Northern Kentucky Independent Health District (NKIHD) (ESF-8)
- Campbell County Cooperative Extension
- Campbell County Finance (documentation/reimbursement)

State/Regional/Federal Partners

- KyEM Search & Rescue (Area Manager/Duty Officer)
- Kentucky National Guard (as requested)
- Justice & Public Safety Cabinet
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) – navigable waterways
- Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC) – inland aviation SAR/ELT
- EMAC partners via KyEM

ESF-9 organizations expand/contract by incident; additional teams/agencies may be integrated as required.

Purpose

Provide coordinated guidance to plan, activate, manage, and demobilize Search & Rescue operations (ground, water, technical, and aviation support) to locate, access, stabilize, and remove persons who are lost, injured, trapped, stranded, or deceased—and to coordinate medical handoff and recovery operations.

Situation & Assumptions

- **Authority:** The ESF-9 Coordinator is the EM Director or designee per **KRS 39F.200**; ESF-9 executes SAR in accordance with **KRS 39F.090** and applicable regulations.
 - SAR may occur **anywhere** in the county: wilderness/urban interface, structures/confined space, swift-water, ice, trench, high-angle, submerged/underwater, and transportation corridors.
 - SAR scenes can be **crime scenes**; evidence protection and close, frequent coordination with law enforcement are required.
 - Incidents may require **specialized personnel and equipment** and could exceed local capacity, requiring mutual aid, state assistance (KyEM SAR), federal assistance (AFRCC/USCG/DMAT/DMORT via KyEM), or EMAC.
 - Natural hazards (floods, tornadoes, earthquakes), technological events, and **terrorism/WMD** can trigger complex SAR.
 - Some SAR actions become **recovery** when victims are deceased; the Coroner assumes medico-legal authority for remains.
 - Mobilization for a credible report of a missing/endangered person may mirror actual rescue operations.
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Mission

- Organize and direct SAR operations (ground/marine/aviation support) to **find, access, treat, and evacuate** victims, and to support recovery of decedents.
 - Integrate with ESFs 2 (Communications), 4 (Firefighting/Rescue), 8 (Public Health & Medical), 13 (Law Enforcement), 1 (Transportation), and 7 (Logistics/Resource Support).
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Direction & Control

- When activated, ESF-9 operates within the **County EOC** and under **ICS/Unified Command**.
 - **Incident Command** is established at the scene by the first qualified agency; ESF-9 supports the IC and coordinates county, state, and federal SAR resources.
 - **AFRCC** has operational control for inland federal aviation SAR/ELT missions; **USCG** leads SAR on navigable waterways.
 - **Coroner** directs fatality management and coordinates with ESF-8 for family assistance and with law enforcement for investigations.
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Concept of Operations

Core Functions

1. **Incident Intake & Triage:** Validate incident, determine urgency (age, weather, medical/behavioral risks, hazards), and initiate the appropriate SAR posture.
 2. **Planning & Intelligence:** Develop IAPs with search theory (lost-person behavior), probability of detection/coverage, segmenting, clue awareness, and documentation.
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3. **Operations:** Ground teams, K-9, UAS (per policy/FAA), technical rescue (rope, confined space, trench), swift-water/boat, ice, avalanche/earth collapse as applicable.
4. **Medical Coordination:** Triage, treatment, packaging, and transport; coordinate with **ESF-8/EMS** and destination facilities.
5. **Communications:** Establish interoperable comms with ESF-2 (VHF/UHF/800, repeaters, caches, amateur radio), common channels, and comms plan (ICS-205).
6. **Safety & Evidence Protection:** Scene safety briefing (ICS-208/215A), PPE, environmental hazards, HAZMAT awareness, evidence preservation, and access control.
7. **Logistics & Staging:** Resource ordering/tracking, credentialing, check-in/out, base/camp/staging management, rehab, and sustainment (ESF-7).
8. **Public Information:** Coordinate missing person alerts/public assistance messaging with **ESF-15/JIC** and law enforcement; protect investigative integrity.
9. **Demobilization & After-Action:** Account for personnel/equipment, rehab/decon, documentation, family notifications, and AAR/IP.

Activation Triggers

- Missing/endangered persons; overdue hikers/boaters; ELT activation/downed aircraft; structural collapse; swift-water/ice incidents; major disasters; credible 911/LE referrals.
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Phases of Management

Preparedness

- Maintain ESF-9 **SOPs**, checklists, call-out rosters, mutual aid/EMAC contacts, and **training/qualification** lists (ground SAR, tech rescue, swift-water, ICS/NIMS).
- Pre-identify **staging areas, command posts, and helicopter LZs**; map high-risk zones and access constraints.
- Sustain resource typing and inventories (teams, boats, UTVs, drones, K-9s, tech rescue kits) and ensure serviceability.
- Exercise with law enforcement, fire/EMS, NKT Technical Rescue, USCG, AFRCC partners; integrate after-action improvements.
- Establish redundant **notification** methods and comms; pre-plan evidence protection and family liaison procedures with LE/Coroner.
- Coordinate with NKIHD on responder health/rehab and with ESF-8 for **medical surge** and hospital notifications.

Response

- **Activate ESF-9** at EOC on request of EM Director/IC.
- Stand up **ICS** at the incident; assign Operations/Planning/Logistics; publish ICS-201 then ICS-202/203/204/205/206 as needed.
- Deploy appropriate **SAR modalities** (ground/K-9/UAS/tech/water) and request additional resources via EOC → KyEM (and AFRCC/USCG as applicable).
- Implement **search strategy**: hasty, containment, attraction, segment/track/task; manage POD/POC; maintain clue logs.

- Coordinate **medical care/transport** with ESF-8; ensure decon if CBRNE suspected.
- Preserve evidence; coordinate restricted access with LE per **KRS 39F.090(1)**.
- Maintain resource tracking, accountability, and operational period reporting (SITREPs).

Recovery

- Support transition from rescue to **recovery**; assist Coroner with safe, respectful remains recovery per medico-legal procedures.
- Demobilize resources systematically; conduct **personnel accountability** and rehab.
- Complete documentation (maps, logs, costs, timesheets); support finance for reimbursement.
- Conduct **After-Action Review**; update ESF-9 SOPs, training, and plans.

Organization & Assignment of Responsibilities

Primary – ESF-9 Coordinator (Campbell County SAR Coordinator)

- Coordinate and plan ESF-9 per **KRS 39F.090(1)**; activate and manage ESF-9 operations.
- Maintain ESF-9 SOPs; ensure training/credentialing, and resource typing.
- **Notify KyEM Duty Officer** of all SAR missions; request state/federal/EMAC resources as needed.
- Coordinate registration/credentialing of emergency SAR workers.
- Request law enforcement to **restrict access** to SAR areas as necessary (*KRS 39F.090(1)*).

Support Agencies — Duties (examples)

- **Chief Elected Official(s)**: Policy direction, emergency declarations, resource prioritization.
- **Law Enforcement (ESF-13)**: Scene security, investigations, missing person reports, restricted access, AMBER/Silver Alerts (as applicable), evidence chain, aviation crash LE liaison.
- **Campbell County SAR Teams / NKT Technical Rescue**: Field operations for assigned SAR disciplines; report clues/finds; maintain team safety/accountability.
- **Local Fire Departments (ESF-4)**: Technical rescue, initial incident command, hazard control, decon support, lighting, and rehab.
- **EMS / ESF-8**: Medical triage/treatment/transport; destination coordination; responder rehab/medical monitoring.
- **Coroner**: Fatality management, identification, family notifications, medico-legal coordination with SME/DMORT if required.
- **Road Department / ESF-3**: Access/egress, debris clearance, barricades, support for staging/LZs.
- **NKIHD (ESF-8)**: Responder health guidance, public health risk assessment, shelter/sanitation for prolonged operations.
- **Finance/Administration**: Cost capture, procurement support, documentation for reimbursement (local/state/federal).

Communications & Interoperability

- Coordinate with **ESF-2** to establish the incident **comms plan (ICS-205)** using county VHF/UHF/800 systems, caches, and amateur radio as needed.
- Use common **plain language**; maintain redundant pathways; log all assignments and status changes.

Safety & Risk Management

- Complete **ICS-215/215A** for hazards and mitigations each operational period (weather, terrain, water, HAZMAT, fatigue, night ops).
- Ensure PPE, flotation for water ops, fall protection for rope operations, and *stop operations* authority for any safety-critical observation.
- Establish **rehab** and medical monitoring; rotate crews; use LCES (Lookouts, Communications, Escape routes, Safety zones) concepts where applicable.

Initial Operational Checklist (Quick-Start)

First 30–60 minutes

- Confirm incident details; determine **urgency** factors (age, medical, weather, terrain, time since last seen).
- Notify **KyEM Duty Officer**; determine need to notify **AFRCC/USCG**.
- Assign **IC**; establish CP/Staging; issue **ICS-201**.
- Request LE to secure PLS/LKP; start **containment** and hasty teams.
- Publish initial **comms plan (ICS-205)**; ensure accountability.
- Coordinate with ESF-8 for EMS/medical support; request additional resources via EOC.

Operational Period 1

- Build **IAP (ICS-202/203/204/205/206/215/215A)**.
- Implement search segments; deploy K-9, UAS (per policy), tech/water teams as indicated.
- Maintain clue logs, POD calculations, and SITREPs to EOC/ESF-5.
- Plan next op period, demob criteria, and family liaison updates.

Demobilization

- Account for all personnel/equipment; rehab/restock.
- Transfer custody of evidence to LE; remains to Coroner.

- Complete documentation/costs; schedule **AAR/IP**.
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References

- **KRS 39A–G; KRS 39F.090; KRS 39F.200**
- **106 KAR 1:390** (SAR training/standards)
- National Response Framework (NRF)
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- ESF-9 Standard Operating Procedures (Campbell County)

