

MAINE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

SAR Support Member Certification Standard

I. Introduction

- A. The Maine Association for Search and Rescue (MASAR) is dedicated to providing trained volunteer search and rescue (SAR) resources for the State of Maine. To this end, MASAR has developed the following standard for personnel who wish to provide support for SAR operations.
- B. This standard defines the minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for a member of a MASAR-certified unit to support search and rescue operations in the State of Maine.
- C. SAR Support members assist SAR operations only at the Command Post and similar locations, with the following exceptions:
 - 1. SAR Support Members, when accompanied by an agency member or MASAR-certified person, may take part in passive search methods, such as operating listening posts or providing containment by watching roads and trails.
 - 2. SAR Support Members may provide transportation for SAR resources in vehicles on state and local roads, but not off-road.
- D. Testing of an individual for certification may be done within the unit of which the individual is a member, utilizing the objectives and procedures provided by MASAR. Testing of an individual may also be done by the instructor of MASAR's BASAR course. An individual who is not a member of a unit must apply to the MASAR Standards Committee for testing.
- E. This standard applies to wilderness SAR operations only.

II. Certification

- A. The certification shall be issued by the MASAR Standards Committee.
- B. The certification is valid for three years, following which the person must be recertified by the Standards Committee.
- C. To apply for certification a person must do one of the following:
 - 1. Have certification requested by a unit officer;
 - 2. Have certification requested by an instructor of a Maine BASAR course;
 - 3. Have certification requested by an instructor of a MASAR-accepted equivalent to its BASAR course; or
 - 4. Request certification, in writing, from the MASAR Standards Committee
- D. Limited Certification
 - 1. The Standards Committee recognizes that not all people will be capable of the full range of SAR Support activities. For these individuals the Standards Committee may issue a limited ground searcher certification.
 - 2. A request for limited certification for a member shall define that member's limits, and state which activities they are not capable of performing.
- E. Suspension and Revocation of Certification
 - 1. Suspension

- a) Any person who is temporarily unable to act as a SAR operations support person for an extended period (usually greater than six months) should request inactive status from the Standards Committee.
 - b) The Standards Committee may suspend anyone who does not request inactive status when some deficiency impedes that person's effectiveness.
 - (1) When a report of someone's deficiency is brought to the attention of the Standards Committee, the committee will consult with that person and the unit training officer before taking any action.
 - (2) The person in question will have the right to challenge any report of deficiency. He or she may provide written, oral, and recorded testimony in his or her support.
 - (3) The committee may take one of the following courses of action upon the challenge of a person's ability to support SAR operations.
 - (a) The committee may confirm that person's continued certification.
 - (b) The committee may require that the person in question complete the recertification process before the normal recertification time.
 - (4) In all instances, the person in question shall have the right to request a test of his or her knowledge, skills, and abilities, in order to confirm certification.
2. Revocation
- a) The committee shall have the option of permanently revoking a support person's certification in the following circumstances.
 - (1) Retirement of the support person from active service.
 - (2) Serious misconduct on the part of a support person which endangers the operation or credibility of the SAR enterprise.

III. Documentation Required for Initial Certification

- A. For initial certification the applicant must provide the Standards Committee with copies of the following:
1. Proof of knowledge and field competency by way of one of the following:
 - a) Passage of the on-line portion of the Maine BASAR course within the past two years;
 - b) Passage of a MASAR-accepted equivalent to the Maine BASAR course within the past two years;
 - c) A score of 75% or better on the BASAR written test, and successful completion of all SAR Support Member evaluation testing objectives, administered by a MASAR-certified unit.
 - (1) The written test will be provided, and graded, by the MASAR Education Director.
 - (2) The evaluation testing objectives are defined in Appendix A of

- this standard.
2. Documentation from a unit officer showing that applicant has a complete support ready pack, equipped per MASAR recommendations in Appendix B of this standard.
 3. Certificate of completion of IS-100 “Introduction to Incident Command System”.*
 4. Current certification in basic first aid or a higher level of emergency medical training. The first aid course must require hands-on participation; it may not be an on-line course alone.
 5. Current certification in CPR from the Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council, or an equivalent organization.
 - a) The course must require hands-on participation; it may not be an on-line course alone.
 - b) The course must include training in adult, child, and infant CPR
 - c) Inclusion in the course of two-rescuer CPR training is recommended
 6. Letter of recommendation from a unit officer or the instructor of a MASAR-accepted training course.

IV. Documentation Required for Recertification

- A. The applicant must provide the Standards Committee with the following for recertification:
 1. Proof of continuing training as shown by one of the following:
 - a) Written records from the Training Officer (or equivalent), the President, or the Director of a MASAR-certified unit attesting that the applicant has participated in a unit-approved SAR training program.
 - (1) Actual training time shall be no less than 6 hours each year.
 - (2) Total training time since the last certification shall be no less than 18 hours.
 - b) Successful completion of a course or courses in SAR subjects which includes all the knowledge, skills, and abilities defined in Appendix A of this standard. If this method is used for recertification, written proof of successful completion must be furnished to the MASAR Standards Committee prior to the issuance of the certification. This method of recertification is predicated on the existence and approval of training programs that meet this MASAR standard.
 - c) Passage of the on-line portion of the Maine BASAR course or its MASAR-accepted equivalent within the preceding two years.
 - d) A score of 75% or better on the BASAR written test, and successful completion of all SAR Support Member evaluation testing objectives, administered by a MASAR-certified unit. The written test will be provided, and graded, by the MASAR Education Director. The evaluation objectives are defined in Appendix A of this standard.

2. Current certification in basic first aid or a higher level of emergency medical training. The first aid course must require hands-on participation; it may not be an on-line course alone.
 3. Current certification in CPR from the Red Cross, American Heart Association, National Safety Council, or an equivalent organization.
 - a) The course must require hands-on participation; it may not be an on-line course alone.
 - b) The course must include training in adult, child, and infant CPR
 - c) Inclusion in the course of two-rescuer CPR training is recommended.
 4. Request for recertification from a unit officer or the instructor of one of the MASAR-accepted courses described in Section III, Part B, Subpart 1, Paragraphs b or c, above.
- B. The Standards Committee reserves the option to independently test applicants with an evaluation team of its own choosing.

V. Appeals

- A. A person that fails any test in this standard, when that test is provided by the MASAR Standards Committee, may appeal the decision to the MASAR Standards Committee.
- B. A person that fails any test in this standard, when that test is administered by the MASAR Standards Committee, may appeal the decision to the MASAR Board.
- C. Appeals must be made in the following fashion:
 1. The appeal must be submitted in writing.
 2. The appeal must be postmarked no later than 15 days after the failed test(s) or receipt of the contested decision(s).
 3. A copy of the appeal must be sent to all members of the MASAR Standards Committee, or to the members of the MASAR Board of Directors in the case of an appeal of a decision of the MASAR Standards Committee.
 4. The appeal shall provide sufficient information for the Standards Committee or MASAR Board to make a decision. Such information may include but is not limited to:
 - a) Affidavits
 - b) Written statements of relevant parties, witnesses, and experts.
 - c) Complete description of the reason for the appeal.
 - d) The suggested remedy.
- D. The Standards Committee or the MASAR Board will have a total of 60 calendar days in which to investigate, obtain testimony (if necessary), question the parties involved, obtain outside professional assistance, or take other actions which the committee deems necessary and appropriate in the circumstances.
- E. The decision by the MASAR Standards Committee or MASAR Board will be written and sent to the appellant by certified mail (return receipt).
- F. The decision of the MASAR Board will be final.

VI. Acceptance and Amendment

- A. This standard will take effect immediately upon acceptance by majority vote of the MASAR membership present at a regularly scheduled MASAR business meeting.
- B. The MASAR Standards Committee may recommend amendments to the MASAR membership to improve or expand this standard.
 - 1. The committee will present suggestions for amendment in writing to the MASAR membership.
 - a) MASAR members will have 30 days during which to comment on proposed amendments.
 - b) Amendments will be discussed and voted on at the next scheduled MASAR meeting after the comment period has ended.
 - 2. Amendments will be accepted by a majority vote of the MASAR membership present at a regularly scheduled MASAR meeting.
- C. Any MASAR Organizational Member may propose amendments by the same process outlined in Section V, Part B.

*IS-100 may be taken on-line, or taught by a certified instructor. The on-line course can be found at the web site of the Federal Emergency Management Agency:
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c>. The course materials and test can also be obtained from a county EMA office or the National Park Service.