

# Truro Police Department

## SEARCH AND RESCUE

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*REFERENCE:*

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*Mass. Gen. Law:*  
*Other:*

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1.0  
Policy

The Truro Police Department participates in search and rescue operations involving persons who are lost or missing. It is understood that many variables may be involved in such activities; therefore the procedures outlined in this policy are intended to provide general guidance in such operations.

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2.0  
Definition

### **SEARCH AND RESCUE**

Coordinated efforts to search for, rescue or recover, by means of ground, marine or air activity, a person who is lost, injured or killed.

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3.0  
Operational  
Types

The Department may be called upon to participate in search and rescue operations for various reasons, including but not limited to:

- Missing or lost persons
- Disaster situations (airplane crashes, fires, etc)
- Drowning victims
- Fleeing or escaped subjects, and
- State of Emergency events (hurricanes, etc.)

The geography of the Town of Truro may require that operations occur on land or water, or may take place in large tracts of land that are mainly inaccessible to traditional patrol vehicles.

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4.0 When a known, life-threatening situation exists and a rescue must be effected, the Incident Commander will ensure the prompt utilization of any appropriate outside resource to effect the rescue.

Departmental Resources

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4.1 If it is determined that a police canine is required to participate in tracking activities pursuant to a search and rescue operation, a Canine Unit will be notified from a neighboring community, the Barnstable Sheriff's Office or State Police.

Canine Unit

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4.2 If a search and rescue operation involves a body of water within the Town, the harbormaster or Coast Guard may provide support. The Harbormaster or Coast Guard has boats able to navigate most of the bay on the ocean side of Town, and a boat with a trailer that can be used in the Pamet Harbor area and in many of the ponds and lakes within Town.

Marine Unit

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4.3 If a search and rescue operation includes areas of the Town that are inaccessible to traditional vehicles, the National Park Service All Terrain Vehicles may be utilized for search activities.

ATVs

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5.0 The general activities of a search and rescue operation will be as follows:

Procedures

<b>Step</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	The Incident Commander (IC) determines that an incident requires search and rescue activity.
2	The IC will determine the initial area to search, and any perimeters for containment.
3	An initial search by on-scene units will begin at the missing person's last known location.
4	A BOLO will be issued to all on duty units, containing the name, description, last known location, and any possible route of travel of the missing party.

5	The IC will determine the need for additional assistance, and will advise Dispatch to notify appropriate units/resources.
6	The IC will obtain a map of the search area; if one is not available, Dispatch will seek the assistance of the Town's Management Information Systems Office.
7	A Search Plan will be developed, and will include areas to be searched, involved personnel and equipment, and search assignments.
8	When additional personnel units arrive at the scene, a briefing will be held, and appropriate information (missing person description, photo, area maps, etc) will be handed out.
9	The IC will appoint a liaison officer, and he/she will keep the immediate family and other appropriate persons advised of search progress in a timely manner.
10	Search areas and any containment perimeters will be reevaluated as necessary, and the Search Plan will be updated for each operational period (approximately 12 hours).
11	When the missing person(s) is (are) located, the locating personnel will notify the IC, provide appropriate medical assistance, and make arrangements for transportation.
12	Search units will be recalled and all personnel/equipment accounted for.
13	Critical incident stress management support will be provided to search personnel as needed.
14	Incident reports will be submitted.

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6.0 Searches may be handled with or without assistance from outside agencies, depending on the reason and the area to be searched.

Outside Assistance

The Incident Commander will determine the need for outside assistance using the following factors:

- Threat to the general public
- Urgency of the search
- Weather conditions, and
- Availability of Department personnel.

If it is apparent that additional support is needed, the Incident Commander may call for assistance from any of the following:

- Truro fire department
- Natural Park Service
- Truro Harbor Master Office
- Barnstable Sheriff's Office
- US Coast Guard
- Neighboring police agencies, and
- MA State Police, including the Air Wing.

Whenever other agencies are requested to provide assistance, the shift commander will notify the Lieutenant and Chief of Police.