



## Kootenai County Sheriff's Office VSAR Unit

KCSO Volunteer Search and Rescue (VSAR) Unit was developed as a part of the Kootenai County Sheriff Office Volunteer Program as a professional Search and Rescue organization to serve the citizens of Kootenai County and those who use the Kootenai County Backcountry. The capabilities of the Unit not only extend to Backcountry Searches but Urban and metropolitan searches for lost or injured people.

The VSAR Organization is a single Unit that consists of members who have one or more Specialty Area. These include: Specialty Vehicles (ATV, UTV, 4X4, Snowmobile), Canine, Food, Hasty Search, Man Tracker, General Search, Search Manager, Command Post Logistics.

Each new member will attend a SAR academy. The academy includes classroom instruction along with field exercises. Traditionally the SAR Academy is taught during a Wednesday evening, with a Saturday (all day) field application. These field exercises include, but are not limited to map/compass reading, mock searches, field first aid, shelter/fire building, etc.

After successfully graduating from the SAR academy, each member is mandated to volunteer a minimum amount hours during the year. These hours can include, but are not limited to search call outs, public outreach programs (i.e. hug a tree, hunter safety, lost child booth at county fair), training sessions and fundraisers for the group. As you may already know, the KCSO VSAR group is a non-profit volunteer entity that depends on funding from the public and grants obtained through the state. Even though VSAR is under the Sheriff's Office, it receives very little monetary compensation from the county.

Months may go by where a search doesn't occur, but when it does it could be early in the morning and during inclement weather. The group understands the balance of personal life and volunteer service and where that balance can be a challenge for some, however at the same time, the unit, the community has expectations of its members in public safety and we need to be available when the need arises.

At this time KCSO VSAR is not accepting any applications, however if you are still interested in becoming a VSAR member, KCSO VSAR can keep you contact information for a possible opening in either the fall 2019 or winter 2020.

All interested applicants are encouraged to send an E-mail to Deputy Fletcher: [bfletcher@kcgov.us](mailto:bfletcher@kcgov.us)

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