



**Tonto Rim Search and Rescue (TRSAR)
MEMBERSHIP
Policy, Procedure, Guidelines
P.O. Box 357, Pine, AZ 85544**

Approved Date: 04/27/2026

Pages: 7

Effective Date: 04/27/2026

Revision Date: 04/27/2026

SECTION I. POLICY

The Tonto Rim Search and Rescue Squad is a volunteer organization whose members serve to support the Gila County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) in search and rescue incidents and related activities. This policy and procedures establish the requirements and procedures in becoming a member. It outlines the duties and responsibilities of member categories, classification and qualifications.

SECTION II. MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY:

- A. Membership is open to any resident of Gila County.
- B. Must have a valid Arizona Driver License, or meet the State exempt License requirements
- C. Must be eighteen (18) years of age or over.
- D. Must have a Gila County address.
- E. Must complete a TRSAR application, GCSO application, and comply with the By-Laws, Policies, Federal, State and County laws.
- F. Must submit and pass a background check completed by the GCSO.
 - a. A felony conviction is a disqualifier for membership in TRSAR.

SECTION III. MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURE:

Any individual considered for membership in Tonto Rim Search & Rescue must complete the following requirements. Candidates are reviewed by the Interview Committee and Board of Directors, and final approval is determined by a vote of the General Membership.

- A. Applicants need to attend two (2) consecutive TRSAR General meetings in person.
 - 1. Exemptions may apply to the two (2) consecutive meeting requirements under special circumstances, with Board Approval.
 - 2. Applicants receive the TRSAR Application Package at their first meeting.
- B. Applicants should review the TRSAR By-Laws and Policies on the TRSAR website.
- C. Applicants must sign the membership acknowledgement form and fill out the entire TRSAR and GCSO application package.
- D. Applicants must attach copies of the following documents:
 - 1. Arizona Driver License
 - 2. Social Security Card
 - 3. Birth Certificate
 - 4. High School Diploma or GED

5. Notarized GCSO Loyalty Oath
 6. Completed Fingerprint Card (can do at the GCSO Office)
 7. Completed certificate from FEMA ICS-100 and FEMA ICS-700
 8. Any License, Certification, Training Certificates that could be pertinent and/or beneficial to the TRSAR mission and/or squad
- E. Applicants can turn in the complete TRSAR and GCSO application, and all require documents to the TRSAR Membership Chair or Designee.
 - F. The Membership Chair or Designee will keep the TRSAR portion and give the GCSO portion and copies of documents to the GCSO for review, completion of a background check and approval of the Applicant.
 - G. GCSO will notify the Membership Chair when the background check is completed, and the Sheriff has signed the application. Applicants can participate in training, squad functions and fundraisers while waiting for approval, but cannot participate in missions.
 - H. The Membership Chair or Designee will schedule the applicant's in-person interview with the interview committee. Interview committee has a minimum of three (3) TRSAR members.
 1. The Membership Chair or Designee will provide the interview committee with copies of the interview question, application and any pertinent documents.
 - J. The Membership Chair and interview committee will conduct the interview and then give their recommendations to the TRSAR Board of Directors.
 - K. The TRSAR Board will vote to accept and/or decline the interview committee recommendations.
 1. If accepted, TRSAR Board will present the prospective candidate to the next General membership for a vote by the general membership.
 2. If declined, TRSAR Board will return application, document and interview question sheets to the Membership Chair or Designee and notify the applicant.
 3. The TRSAR Board reserves the right to deny any applicant at any stage of the process without providing specific reasons and is under no obligation to disclose the rationale behind its decision.
 - L. The General membership votes to accept and/or decline the applicant for membership.
 1. If declined, the Membership Chair or Designee will notify the applicant.
 2. If accepted the Board will assign a squad number and provide the applicant (new member) with squad hat, license plate, new member packet and assign a mentor.
 3. The TRSAR Commander or designee will administer the oath of Office to the new member.
 - M. The new member will then pay their dues and attend the SAR training academy.

SECTION IV: MEMBER CLASSIFICATION and REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Active Status:** Members who have completed six (6) months of reserve status, met all reserve requirements, and are on track to meet active member requirements may request a change to active status. Advancement to active status requires approval by the Board and continued compliance with all active member requirements.
 1. Active members must meet a minimum requirement of:
 - a. Attend at least 24 official squad functions. Official squad functions are defined as:

- Community Events: Includes variety of community-focused events authorized by the Board
 - Meetings: Board Meeting and General Meeting
 - Missions: Including search, rescue, recovery and set notifications
 - Trainings: Blood Borne Pathogens, BLS/CPR, WFA, navigation, tracking, K9, ropes, and variety of team trainings
- b. Complete Blood Borne Pathogens training yearly (which is part of the 24 official squad functions).
 - c. Complete valid BLS / CPR certification every other year and WFA every other year (which is part of the 24 official squad functions).
2. Active members shall maintain the training qualifications standards and requirements established by the Board.
 - a. Training will be provided by the Squad, the Gila County Sheriff, or other organizations the Board approves.
 - b. The Active members will bear all expenses for training not approved and/or not authorized by the Board.
 3. Active members shall possess and maintain the minimum standard equipment established by the board and any equipment issued by the squad.
 - a. Active members shall bear all expenses for their personal equipment.
 - b. Suggested equipment list can be found on TRSAR.org
 4. Active members must comply with all established policies, procedures and safety standards of the squad and the GCSO.
 5. Active members may vote and hold board offices or positions.
 6. Active members must pay dues (\$20 per year individual, \$30 per year for couples).
 7. Active members may request a leave of absence.
 - a. Request must be in writing, presented to the Board for approval, and cannot be longer than six (6) months, if more can be moved to reserve status for six (6) months with approval from the Board.
 8. Active members may request a change in status, either back to reserve, to an associate, support and/or to life.
 - a. Request must be in writing and presented to the board for approval.
- B. Reserve Status:** All new members (except Support and/or Associate) and/or individuals who have not met the established requirements for active status, and any member who wishes to remain in reserve status.
1. New reserve members are on probation for one (1) year.
 2. New reserve members may request active status after completion of six (6) months on the squad and meeting the reserve requirements and on track to meet active requirements.
 - a. Request must be in writing and presented to the board for approval.
 3. Reserve members must at a minimum:
 - a. Attend at least 12 official squad functions. Official squad functions are defined as:
 - Community Events: ADOT Clean Up, Hash Knife, Pine-Strawberry Fair, and a variety of community events approved by the Board
 - Meetings: Board Meeting and General Meeting
 - Missions: Including search, rescue, recovery and set notifications
 - Trainings: Blood Borne Pathogens, BLS/CPR, WFA, navigation, tracking, K9, ropes, and variety of team trainings

- b. Complete Blood Borne Pathogens training yearly (which is part of the 12 official squad functions).
 - c. Complete valid BLS / CPR certification every other year and WFA every other year (which is part of the 12 official squad functions).
- 4. Reserve members shall maintain the training qualifications standards and requirements established by the Board.
 - a. Training shall be provided by the Squad, the Gila County Sheriff, or other organizations the Board approves.
 - b. The Reserve members shall bear all expenses for training not approved and/or not authorized by the Board.
- 5. Reserve members should possess and maintain the minimum standard equipment established by the board and any equipment issued by the squad.
 - a. Reserve members shall bear all expenses for their personal equipment.
 - b. Suggested equipment list can be found on TRSAR.org
- 6. Reserve members must comply with all established policies, procedures and safety standards of the squad and the GCSO.
- 7. Reserve members must pay dues (\$20 a year for individual, \$30 a year for couple).
- 8. Reserve members may not vote or hold a board office.
- 9. Reserve members may request a leave of absence only after completion of their first (1st) six (6) months.
 - a. The request must be in writing, presented to the Board for approval, and be no longer than six (6) months.
- 10. Reserve members may request active status at any time after they have their probation period or have met the reserve member requirements and are on track to reach active requirements.
 - a. Request must be in writing and presented to the board for approval.

C. **Associate Status:** Members who are affiliated with another Gila County Sheriff's Office organization and/or another organization that supports TRSAR. Associate members are not required to meet the requirements for Reserve or Active Status.

- 1. Associate members must complete Section III Membership Procedures.
- 2. Associate members may participate in all missions, training, social, and squad functions.
- 3. Associate members shall maintain the training qualifications standards and requirements established by the Board.
 - a. Training can be provided by the Squad, the Gila County Sheriff, or other such organizations as the Board shall select and approve.
 - b. The Associate members shall bear all expenses for training not approved and/or authorized by the Board.
- 4. Associate members possess and maintain the minimum standard equipment established by the board.
 - a. Associate members shall bear all expenses for their personal equipment.
 - b. Suggested equipment list can be found on TRSAR.org
- 5. Associate members must comply with all established policies, procedures and safety standards of the squad and the GCSO.
- 6. Associate members may not vote or hold board Office or positions.
- 7. Associate members do not pay dues.

8. Associate members may request a change in status, to reserve or active status.
 - a. Request must be in writing and presented to the board for approval.
- D. **Support Status:** Members that provide support service to TRSAR but do not or cannot meet the requirements of reserve or active member status.
1. Support members must complete Section III Membership Procedures.
 2. Support members may participate in all squad social, general meetings or community event functions.
 3. Support members cannot participate in missions or trainings.
 4. Support members are not required to:
 - a. Maintain training standards.
 - b. Maintain minimum standard equipment established by the Board.
 - c. Maintain a minimum participation in the squad.
 5. Support members are required to pay Squad dues.
 6. The Board may authorize and approve training for Support members who are providing a specific service to the squad.
 7. Support members may not vote, hold board Office or position.
 8. Support members may request to go Active, Reserve or Associate status.
 - a. Members must qualify and meet requirements for requested status change.
 - b. Request must be in writing and approved by the board.
- E. **Life Status:** Members that are awarded life status by the majority vote of the Board for outstanding service.
1. All TRSAR Squad members are eligible for Life membership upon meeting the eligibility requirement, requested Life status, at the request of a Board member and approval of the Board.
 2. To be eligible for Life membership the member must:
 - a. Have served in an exemplary and deserving manner for ten (10) years.
 - b. Life status request should be in writing or can be recommendation of a Board member.
 - c. Life status approved by the Board.
 3. Life members may participate in all squad social, general meetings or community event functions.
 4. Life members cannot participate in missions or trainings.
 5. Life members are not required to:
 - a. Maintain training standards
 - b. Maintain minimum standard equipment established by the Board
 - c. Maintain a minimum participation in the squad
 - d. Pay dues
 6. Life members may not vote, hold board office or positions.
 7. Life membership can be revoked at any time by a majority vote of the Board.
 8. Life members may request to be returned to Active, Reserve, Associate, or Support status.
 - a. Members must qualify and meet requirements for requested status change.
 - b. Request must be in writing and approved by the board.

- F. **Honorary Status:** Members that are awarded honorary status by the majority vote of the Board for outstanding service.

An honorary member is a prestigious designation bestowed upon individuals who have made significant contributions to Tonto Rim Search & Rescue. The honorary title is awarded to someone without them meeting the necessary qualifications of TRSAR membership.

1. To be eligible for Honorary membership an individual must have one of the following or similar as deemed appropriate by the Board:
 - a. Have an extraordinary connection or contribution to Tonto Rim Search & Rescue, such as multi-generational membership
 - b. Have demonstrated exceptional leadership, expertise, or dedication but do not meet the requirements of TRSAR squad membership
 - c. Have demonstrated a significant contribution to TRSAR either through financial or physical donations (in excess of \$25,000)
2. Honorary status must be approved by the Board.
3. Honorary members of TRSAR are not mission ready. They will not be listed on the squad roster and will not have a squad radio or license plate.
4. Honorary members of TRSAR are not required to attend official squad activities, trainings, or missions.

SECTION V: LEAVE OF ABSENCES

- A. **Leave of Absence** is a request by an active or reserve member who will be away and not able to meet their status requirements for a short period of time. A maximum 6 months and minimum of 3 months.
1. A Leave of Absent request will be reviewed by the Board for approval or denial in a timely manner. A timely manner is normally no later than next Board meeting after receipt of written request.
 - a. A leave of absence can be considered and acted upon without a written request if the individual is hospitalized.
 2. A Leave of Absences will be approved and/or disapproved by a majority vote of the Board.
 - a. Member must be notified of approval or disapproval (written or email).
 - b. The member may file an appeal if the request is disapproved. See Complaint and Grievance Policy.

SECTION VI: STATUS CHANGES, SUSPENSION and TERMINATION

- A. **Status Changes:** All status changes will be reviewed for approval or disapproval in a timely manner (normally no later than the next Board meeting after receiving the request).
1. Membership status changes can be the result of a member's request, or a Board member's request.
 - a. Board member request can be for members failure to meet the requirements of

their status, arrest, misconduct, or the death of the members.

2. A members status change requires a majority vote of the Board.
 3. The members status change will be announced at the next general meeting after approval.
 4. The member must be notified of the status change.
 - a. If status change is for disciplinary action, or if member request is disapproved, the notification must be written or by email).
 - b. The member may file an appeal if status change was for disciplinary action or if members request was disapproved. (See Complaint and Grievance Policy)
- B. Suspension:** A temporary suspension is the removal of a member from the call out list. A Suspension is removal of the member from the call out list, making them unauthorized to attend missions, trainings, social functions, and fundraising events for a specific length of time.
1. There are no permanent suspensions. There must be a specific length of time established when being placed on suspension.
 2. A suspension can be requested by the Commander and/or any Board member for a member's violation of policy, safety issues, failure to follow commands during a mission, placing other members in danger, violation of a County, State or Federal laws.
 3. Members will be placed on suspension after being arrested and will remain until after their conviction.
 4. The member must be notified of the suspension in writing, by mail, and an email notice can also be sent.
 5. The member has the right to appeal the suspension. See Complaint and Grievances Policy.
- C. Termination:** There are two (2) types of termination.
1. Voluntary termination, which is at the request of the member.
 - a. The member is free to reapply for membership.
 2. Forced termination, this is a termination where a member is removed from the squad permanently by the Board.
 - a. The member is not allowed to reapply for membership.
 - b. The member has the right to appeal the termination. See the Complaint and Grievance Policy.
 3. A termination can be requested by the Commander and/or any Board member for a member's violation of policy, safety issues, failure to follow commands during a mission, placing other members in danger, violation of a County, State or Federal laws.
 4. Member will be terminated upon their conviction a felony.
 5. Member must be notified of the termination in writing by mail and an email notice can also be sent.