Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council, Inc.
Application and Background Investigation Authorization Form

WHO SHOULD JOIN SEARCH AND RESCUE?

Search and Rescue is for individuals who have a strong desire to help others and are willing to commit their time and energy to serving their community.

Members of Black Diamond Search & Rescue come from all walks of life. We are made up of professionals, tradespeople, students, retirees, and community members who share one common goal — helping those in need.

You do not need prior search and rescue experience to apply. We provide the training. What matters most is:

- A willingness to learn
- Dependability
- Teamwork
- A commitment to serving others

Every member brings valuable skills and strengths to the organization. There is a place for people with diverse backgrounds and abilities.

WHY JOIN SEARCH AND RESCUE?

Being a member of Search and Rescue is both challenging and deeply rewarding. When someone is lost, injured, or in crisis, SAR teams respond. The opportunity to directly assist in bringing someone home safely is an experience unlike any other.

Our community depends on volunteers who are willing to step forward during difficult times. If you are looking for a meaningful way to give back and are willing to dedicate time to training and response, Black Diamond Search & Rescue may be the right fit for you.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

All new members enter a **one-year probationary period** upon acceptance into the organization.

During the Probationary Period, Members Must:

- Attend scheduled team trainings regularly
- Actively participate with Black Diamond Search & Rescue
- Respond to missions on a time-available basis
- Complete Basic First Aid and CPR certification
- Complete S101 Body Fluid Exposure Training for SAR Responders
- Successfully complete the Search Team Operations (STO) course at SAR Academy

Probationary members may respond to missions under the supervision of a Field Training Officer.

All members must maintain good physical condition and be capable of performing safely in a variety of terrain and weather conditions.

WHAT IS THE SAR ACADEMY?

The **Search Team Operations (STO) – formerly Search Team Member -** course is the foundational training for all operational members.

This entry-level field training introduces responders to standardized search and rescue procedures and prepares them to function as a Search Team Member under the supervision of a trained Search Team Leader.

Course topics include:

- Overview of the state SAR system
- Legal considerations
- SAR organization and operations

- Search strategy and tactics
- Personal preparedness
- Wilderness survival
- Land navigation
- Basic wilderness rescue

The STO course is a **40-hour program conducted over two full weekends**. Attendance at both weekends is required for successful completion.

The course includes approximately 60% classroom instruction and 40% field training. Field exercises are conducted in most weather conditions unless extreme safety concerns exist.

The Academy is only the beginning of your SAR education. Ongoing training and real-world mission experience continue throughout your membership.

MAINTAINING ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

After successful completion of the probationary period, members must:

- Complete required online training modules
- Maintain current First Aid and CPR certification
- Meet annual training hour requirements
- Continue responding to missions on a time-available basis

While many members choose to join specialty teams such as K-9 or Wilderness Rescue Technician (WRT), participation in a specialty group is not required.

HOW DO I JOIN BLACK DIAMOND SEARCH & RESCUE?

To apply:

1. Complete all required online courses listed on the last page in this application packet.
2. Complete the membership application in full.
3. Submit the application along with copies of completed online course certificates to: **mmaggard@bdsarco.org**

A background check will be conducted on all applicants.

Upon approval of the application by the application committee and a successful completion of the background check, applicants will be placed on probationary status and begin the onboarding and training process.

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PERSONAL STATEMENT

Why would you like to join Black Diamond Search & Rescue?
(What draws you to SAR? What skills or strengths do you bring?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

What are your goals once you become a member:

_____
_____
_____

AVAILABILITY & COMMITMENT

Do you have the time to commit to training and mission response?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Typical availability (check all that apply):

☐ Weeknights ☐ Weekdays ☐ Weekends ☐ Nights ☐ Limited

Typical response time you can meet:

☐ Within 60 minutes ☐ Within 2 hours ☐ 3 + hours ☐ Unsure

Do you have support at home/work to attend training and respond to missions?

☐ Yes ☐ No

PROBATIONARY PERIOD ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand that new members are placed on a one-year probationary period and are expected to attend trainings, actively participate, respond to missions as available, and complete required certifications and SAR Academy.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you interested in one of the specialty teams:
☐Yes ☐No

If yes
☐K9 Team ☐Tracking ☐Management

NOTE: Those interested in a specialty team must first obtain a minimum of STO.

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Any prior SAR, public safety or military experience?
☐Yes ☐No

If yes please elaborate:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Within the last 3 years have you been, or are you currently, a member of another search and rescue, fire or EMS agency?
☐ Yes ☐ No

IF Yes, Name of current agency _____

Did you leave in good standing, or do you have the support of your current team to join Black Diamond?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Letter of recommendation attached.

If yes please attach a letter of recommendation from your direct supervisor.

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By completing this request and authorization, I acknowledge that Wilderness Search and Rescue Team membership of the Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council, Inc. represents the privilege of service to the citizens of Virginia. This privilege may be revoked or suspended for violation of law, or as a result of behavior that may jeopardize safety or reflect unfavorably upon the Council.

Applicant Information			
Applicant Legal Last Name	Applicant Legal First Name	MI	SS, DMV or Government ID Card number

						MM	DD	YYYY	
Race	Gender	Hair Color	Eye Color	Height	Weight	Date Of Birth			Place of Birth County or City and State
Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.									
Applicants under the age of 18 must use the Minor application and have parental consent.									

Your Current Mailing Address			Callout Information
Street Address			Home Phone:
	State	ZIP	Cell Phone:
City or Town of Residence			
			Cell phone and email will be used for primary
			communication

SAR Reference Information (If Applying For Transfer)				
Chairman / Coordinator's Name	Chairman / Coordinator's Phone #			Name of Current Organization
		Yes	No	
Applicant Current Status	Good			
	Current			
	Suspended			
Attach a letter of Recommendation From Current or Past (3 Years) Organization Coordinator				

☐ SAR Experience Information Form Attached
☐ Letter of Recommendation Attached

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☐ YES ☐ NO Have you been convicted or found guilty of any crime, offense, or regulatory violation, or participated in any other prohibited conduct identified by the Virginia Office of Emergency Services regulations? (Specify any violation on a supplemental sheet)

☐ YES ☐ NO have you been convicted or found guilty of any crime involving sexual misconduct where the lack of affirmative consent by the victim is an element of the crime, such as forcible rape?

☐ YES ☐ NO have you been convicted of a felony involving the sexual or physical abuse of children, the elderly or infirm, such as sexual misconduct with a child, making or distributing child pornography, or using a child in a sexual display, incest involving a child, assault on an elderly or infirm person?

☐ YES ☐ NO have you been convicted of a misdemeanor involving impersonating an officer or impersonating certain public safety personnel?

☐ YES ☐ NO have you been convicted or found guilty of any crime (including abuse, neglect, theft from or financial Exploitation of) a person entrusted to your care or protection in which the victim is a patient or resident of a health care facility?

☐ YES ☐ NO have you been convicted or found guilty of any other act that is a felony, (except the felon is eligible for affiliation five years after the date of final release if no additional felonies have been committed during that time)?

☐ YES ☐ NO are you under any disciplinary or enforcement action from another state EMS office of other recognized state or national healthcare or search and rescue licensing or certifying body? (personnel subject to these disciplinary or enforcement actions may be eligible for affiliation providing there have been no further disciplinary or enforcement actions for five years prior to application to affiliation with the Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council, Inc.).

☐ YES ☐ NO have you been subject to a permanent revocation of license or certification by another state EMS office or other recognized state or national healthcare or SAR licensing or certifying body?

☐ YES ☐ NO I understand that any references to criminal acts or convictions under this application refer to substantially similar laws or regulations of any other state of the United States. Convictions include prior adult convictions, juvenile convictions, and adjudications of delinquency based on an offense that would have been, at the time of conviction, a felony conviction if committed by an adult within or outside of Virginia.

☐ YES ☐ NO I understand that I may not be under the influence of any drugs or intoxicating substances that may impair my ability to provide patient care or operate any motor vehicle while involved in any training, mission, or public activity of the Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council, Inc

☐ YES ☐ NO I authorize the Black Diamond Search and Rescue Council, Inc. to verify the accuracy of information provided on this form, and authorize conduct of a Virginia Criminal Information Network (VCIN) records check by the sheriff of the jurisdiction.

☐ YES ☐ NO I have attached Certificates showing successful completion of required Incident Command System and National Incident Management System (ICS-100 and -200, IS-700, and 800)

☐ YES ☐ NO I understand that I am expected to complete Search Team Member certification within 12 months of submission of this completed application

☐ YES ☐ NO I understand that I am expected to keep first aid, CPR and an annual Blood Borne Pathogens for Search and rescue current with my other qualifications

☐ YES ☐ NO I understand my current credentials must be verified if transferring from another organization.

☐ YES ☐ NO I understand that Black Diamond Search and Rescue is an all-Volunteer team with no paid positions.

The above information is true and correct. By Signing, I understand the providing false information on this form is grounds for denying membership. I have read and understand the above statements and consent to a background check being completed by the Virginia State Police or other verifying means.

Applicant Signature	**Date**

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Basic On-Line SAR Training
Must be submitted with the completed and signed application.
Applications without completed online courses will not be considered for membership

The Federal Emergency Management Agency offers interactive training in search and emergency operations. These required programs are available on the internet, and printed certificates and transcripts are available upon successful completion of written examinations https://training.fema.gov	
NIMS – IS-0100.C **An Introduction to the Incident Command System**	**Completed and Attached** ☐
NIMS – IS-0200.C **Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response**	**Completed and Attached** ☐
NIMS – IS-700.B **An Introduction to the National Incident Management System**	**Completed and Attached** ☐
NIMS – IS-800.D **National Response Framework, An Introduction**	**Completed and Attached** ☐