



# GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

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<b>Chapter:</b> Operations	<b>Section:</b> 409.11	
<b>Subject:</b> Specialized Units	<b>Topic:</b> Project Lifesaver Team	
<b>Accreditation:</b>	<b>Revised:</b>	<b>Reaffirmed:</b>
<b>Enacted:</b> 07/30/2015	<b>Last Review:</b> 07/24/2015	<b>Review:</b> 07/30/2016

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## I. PURPOSE

It is the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to maintain and operate the Project Lifesaver Program.

## II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to describe the organization and scope of the Sheriff's Office Project Lifesaver Program and to establish guidelines and procedures to be followed when implementing this program.

## III. DEFINITIONS

A. Project Lifesaver: A proactive program and specialized operation that responds to incidents where an individual may have wandered away from his/her home environment and become lost or unable to find his/her way back home due to suffering from Alzheimer's disease or some other related medical disorder. Project Lifesaver is an electronic tracking system designed to assist in locating people who have medical conditions which may cause them to wander, become lost and/or endangered.

## IV. ORGANIZATION

A. The Operational Support Division Division Search and Rescue (SAR) Team Supervisor will act as the Project Lifesaver Coordinator and organize all Project Lifesaver responses, training and staffing. The Project Lifesaver Program will operate under the auspices of the Search and Rescue team.

B. The Project Lifesaver Coordinator ("Coordinator") will appoint a SAR Team deputy to act as the Project Lifesaver Administrative Supervisor. The Administrative Supervisor will be responsible for the day to day operation and supervision of the Project Lifesaver Program.

C. The Coordinator will appoint a SAR Team deputy to act as Project Lifesaver Training Officer. The SAR Training Officer will be responsible for the initial training of new members, periodic in-service training for existing members and roll-call training for the Field Operations Division. The Training Supervisor shall introduce the Project Lifesaver Program to all law enforcement agencies operating within Loudoun County.

D. The Coordinator or his/her designee will maintain a database of all clients and

caregivers and disseminate this information to all team members in a timely and efficient manner. In addition, the Coordinator or his/her designee will maintain statistics and provide reports for all Project Lifesaver activities and callouts.

- E. The Coordinator or his/her designee shall ensure that new and/or replacement equipment is ordered when necessary and all team equipment is maintained in proper working order.
- F. The Coordinator shall develop and advance good relations with surrounding jurisdictions to ensure cooperation between those participating agencies. This may include search and rescue training exercises with other Project Lifesaver teams or training with search and rescue units in other jurisdictions.
- G. Team members are responsible for the initial placement of clients, replacement of batteries or other equipment, and other administrative support functions.
- H. Team members will respond to missing person calls and assist with the search, recovery and safe return of clients.
- I. In the event a client is missing in or near the incorporated towns of Leesburg, Purcellville, or Middleburg, the appropriate police agency will be notified of the search as soon as possible.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Selection of Project Lifesaver Team Members

- 1. Project Lifesaver Team membership is limited to those Loudoun County Sheriff's Office employees who volunteer to participate in this part-time specialized response team. Team members will be sworn deputies. Auxiliary members may be used in a limited role during a search and rescue incident.
- 2. Minimum requirements for members:
  - a. Employed with the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office for at least one year, having successfully completed his/her probationary period.
  - b. No letter of reprimand or remediation plan within the past 12 months, no suspension within the past 18 months or involuntary demotion within the past 24 months.
- 3. When vacancies occur, the Project Lifesaver Team Coordinator will furnish all Sheriff's Office employees with a written announcement detailing a description of the duties and functions of team. Potential candidates will submit a detailed letter to the Coordinator explaining his/her interest in participating and any

related experience with search and rescue matters.

- a. The Coordinator and Administrative Supervisor will then select team members. These individuals will be required to attend an initial two-day (16 hours) operator's training class.

**B. Client Selection and System Setup**

1. All potential clients/caregivers who contact the Sheriff's Office will be directed to the Project Lifesaver Administrative Supervisor. Potential clients may include those individuals who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, Autism, Down's syndrome, or traumatic brain injury and have a tendency to wander.
2. The Coordinator and Administrative Supervisor will determine the capacity of the Project Lifesaver Program and will create a waiting list for future clients on a first come, first served basis.
3. The caregiver will be sent the Project Lifesaver application and Caregiver Contract, and will be required to read, complete and sign both documents.
4. The Coordinator or his/her designee will respond to the client/caregiver's residence and provide an overview of Project Lifesaver. A photograph of the client will be taken and client information will be documented during this visit.
5. At no time will equipment be placed on a client without the consent of a legal guardian or immediate family member.
6. A monthly donation of \$25.00 may be collected, made payable to Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Project Lifesaver. As appropriate, arrangements for future donations may be made as well.
7. The wrist band containing a transmitter will be applied to the client after the Coordinator or his/her designee ensures that the transmitter has received a unique frequency number. The caregiver will then be briefed concerning handling and care of the equipment.
8. Before leaving the client's residence, the Coordinator or his/her designee will test the equipment to ensure that a signal is being received from the applied transmitter and that the exact frequency is properly recorded.
9. After completing the home visit, the Coordinator or his/her designee will immediately update client/caregiver information in the database.
10. In accordance with the Caregiver's Contract, any client who voluntarily leaves the Project Lifesaver Program, or is removed due to program violations, shall

return all Project Lifesaver equipment to the Sheriff's Office. The Coordinator or his/her designee will respond to the client/caregiver's residence to retrieve all issued Project Lifesaver equipment.

C. Call-Out Procedures

1. Initial Notification

- a. If a client wanders away from his/her home environment, the caregiver will contact ECC through the Project Lifesaver telephone line. The caregiver will provide ECC with the last known location as well as any other descriptors.
- b. ECC will verify the client through the Project Lifesaver database and then notify the Project Lifesaver Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator and on-duty patrol supervisor. ECC shall dispatch the appropriate sector unit. All actions shall be in accordance with existing General Orders.
- c. ECC will dispatch a minimum of three Project Lifesaver team members to the location where the client was last seen. The initial Project Lifesaver Response Team shall consist of the first three available team members.
- d. Upon the direction of the Coordinator, Administrative Supervisor, Operational Support Division Commander, or Assistant Division Commander, ECC will notify all team members by group page as necessary, any team member who is on duty and has Project Lifesaver equipment will be notified to proceed to the scene and assist with the search.
- e. If appropriate, ECC will notify the Leesburg, Purcellville and Middleburg Police Departments.
- f. Available team members may be requested to respond and assist in the search. All team members who do not have agency vehicles will be responsible for obeying all normal traffic laws during their response. No member is authorized to respond in an expedited manner without proper equipment and authorizations.
- g. Any "call out" for a client search will be considered a medical emergency. Due care will be taken when responding to the vicinity of the missing person. When engaged in a search, the police vehicle's emergency equipment (lights) may be activated to ensure visibility by other vehicles. All actions shall be in accordance with General Order 405.1.
- h. The first team member on scene will report to the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander and the Search Coordinator will direct all responding units to an appropriate location to assist in the search. All communication

will be conducted via radio during the search. ECC will notify Project Lifesaver respondents to use another radio channel if necessary.

2. On-Scene Procedures

- a. The highest ranking on-scene team member or designee shall assume the duty of the Search Coordinator. He/she may be relieved of that duty by a more senior member of the team, if necessary.
- b. The Search Coordinator shall gather all available information from the caregiver, establish the Place Last Seen (PLS) and relay that information to responding team members. The Search Coordinator shall begin an initial electronic search of the PLS.
- c. The Search Coordinator shall meet with the on-scene, on-duty patrol supervisor and/or affected town police supervisor. Information regarding the ongoing client search and appropriate look-out information for units in the vicinity shall be updated frequently.
- d. The first team member to receive a signal will notify the Search Coordinator via radio of his/her location. The Search Coordinator will then direct other units to the appropriate search locations. Any member who receives a strong signal may announce that he/she is "going to ground" and will provide his/her exact location and direction of travel.
- e. In the event a search has been in progress for more than 30 minutes, the Search Coordinator may request additional resources through the Incident Commander to assist in the search. This shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - i. Additional personnel from the Sheriff's Office
  - ii. Additional personnel from another agency
- f. At no time will any tracking equipment be operated by non-certified individuals.
- g. Under no circumstance will a search end until all reasonable efforts to locate the client have been exhausted. The Search Coordinator will consult with the Incident Commander to determine when a search is to be terminated.

3. Post-Search Procedures

- a. Upon the location and recovery of the missing client, the client's medical condition shall be immediately assessed and appropriate medical personnel

shall be dispatched without delay. Should the client not require further medical attention, the Search Coordinator shall determine the appropriate means of transporting the client home.

- b. Once the search has been concluded, the Search Coordinator shall debrief all Project Lifesaver members on scene. The Search Coordinator will write an "After Action Report." A copy of this report will be forwarded to the Sheriff, the Public Information Officer and the Project Lifesaver Coordinator.
- c. The Search Coordinator will ensure that the number of man hours of both Sheriff's Office employees and authorized volunteers have been documented and forwarded to the Project Lifesaver Coordinator within 48 hours after the conclusion of the search.

#### D. Training

1. Team members are required to attend periodic training exercises. Failure to attend two consecutive training sessions may result in suspension and/or dismissal from the program.
2. Team members must attend Project Lifesaver recertification classes every year. The Project Lifesaver Team Training Officer will ensure that members are notified of upcoming certification classes.
3. All official training records, to include certificates of initial training and recertification, will be maintained within the Sheriff's Office Training Section. Other training records, to include periodic training exercises, may be maintained by the Project Lifesaver Team Training Officer to ensure compliance with this General Order.

#### E. Equipment Maintenance and Procurement

1. All Project Lifesaver equipment shall be inspected for operational readiness and inventoried on a monthly basis. This inspection shall require a written report to the Operational Support Division Commander.
2. All wrist transmitter batteries will be changed in accordance with manufacturer recommendations.
3. The Project Lifesaver Administrative Supervisor will maintain and equipment and maintenance log.