

# DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS STATE OF MONTANA



Disaster & Emergency Services Division  
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February 25, 2022

To: Legislative Interim Budget Committee – Section A  
From: Montana Disaster Emergency Services, Department of Military Affairs  
Subject: Effects of HB 678 on Search and Rescue Reimbursements

Committee Members:

For State Fiscal Year 2022 Montana Disaster and Emergency Services has reimbursed two counties for eligible mission and training expenses.

- Gallatin County: **\$6,960.00** for two missions in September of 2021, and two trainings for **\$13,200.00**.
- Lincoln County: **\$749.48** for an extended SAR in August of 2021.

As of February 25, 2022, MT DES has not received any additional reimbursement requests for missions, trainings, or equipment. The next Search and Rescue Committee Meeting is scheduled for April 12, 2022, at Fort Harrison. The agency anticipates receiving more reimbursement requests by that time.

The agency continues to coordinate with the Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association and their Search and Rescue Subcommittee to promote the changes to reimbursement amounts. Search and Rescue reimbursement request forms are available on the MT DES website.

In summary, HB678 directed the following changes.

#### **Effective July 1, 2021**

- The amount of funding available for search and rescue missions conducted through a county sheriff's office increased from a maximum of \$6,000 to **\$12,000** per search and rescue team involved. Not less than 50% of money in the account will be used for this purpose.
- The remaining money in the account may be used by the department:
  - o To match local funding to purchase equipment. The amount of money available to each Search and Rescue organization increased from \$6,000 to **\$12,000**. The cost-sharing match must be 35% local funds and 65% from the account.
  - o For reimbursement of expenses related to the training of search and rescue volunteers.

#### **Effective March 1, 2022**

- The maximum reimbursement for missions will increase to **\$50,000**, regardless of the number of counties or county search and rescue organizations involved.

- For equipment purchases, the amount of money available to each Search and Rescue organization will increase to **\$50,000** per calendar year. The cost-sharing match must be 35% local funds to 65% from the account.

**Effective June 30, 2023**

Any of the segregated surcharges that remain unspent must be transferred to the general license account established in 87-1-601(1).

For questions related to reimbursement claims for Search and Rescue expenses, please contact Jake Ganieany at [jake.ganieany@mt.gov](mailto:jake.ganieany@mt.gov) or 406-417-9234.

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