

Membership Levels

Trainee:

- Received unanimous vote of membership to participate as trainee
- Provide criminal records check
- 80%/60% training and search attendance required
- Non-voting
- Evaluated every 6 months by executive committee from mentor reports to see if making the kind of progress needed to maintain trainee status,
- Must successfully complete wilderness certification within 2 years from beginning of trainee status
- Able to participate as field advisor in searches at the discretion of their mentor and OL

Member: (may be **certified handler** or **certified field advisor** or **certified communications officers**):

- 80%/60% training and search attendance required
- Voting privileges (upon successfully passing wilderness certification.)
- Dog handlers must maintain all certification & specialty skill levels
- Provide criminal records check

Life member:

The executive committee may grant honorary life member status to any member who has made extraordinary contributions to NEK-9 SAR.

- Non-voting
- No participation level requirements
- Open invitation to participate in all unit training
- Invited on a case by case basis to assist at searches at the discretion of the OL

Auxiliary Member (might include inactive members of NEK9, or individuals whose experience with other search organizations or law enforcement make them ideal “friends” of NEK9 SAR. This status would be recommended by the executive committee and voted on by the membership:

- Non-voting
- Associate relationship with NEK9 SAR
- No participation requirements
- Open invitation to participate in all unit training
- Might be invited on a case by case basis to assist at searches at the discretion of the OL

Medical Waivers: granted on a case by case basis to members who are experiencing medical issues themselves or within their family. The member should let the OL know the details of their situation. The OL will bring the medical waiver request to the Executive Committee for their approval. The medical waiver will apply until the medical issue is resolved. The waiver will release the member from meeting the full search response and training requirements. The member will be asked to keep the OL up to date on their situation. Because of the impact of a medical waiver on the team it will be subject to on going reevaluation. If the dog and/or handler were unable to train or respond to searches during their medical waiver, then, before returning to full callout

status, the training committee chair and the OL will need to determine if they are search ready.

Leave of absence (sabbatical): Granted to members for limited periods of time (months) so they will not be penalized for missing training or searches. The following is a partial list of possible reasons for a sabbatical request. The need for a sabbatical should be seen as unusual or one-time in nature.

- Family or job issues that will be resolved within a known period of time
- Work or travel opportunity

Achieving a leave of absence requires that the member write a letter to the executive committee outlining the member's reasons for the leave of absence and date of reinstatement. The executive committee will consider the request and if granted will detail the terms for reinstatement. The dog and handler returning from a leave of absence will not be used for searches until the training committee chair and the OL consider them to be search ready.

Any member wanting to take more than a few months leave will need to resign from NEK9 SAR and if interested ask for Friend status. They will be able to make a fast track re-application for membership at any time they want to be considered for active membership.