

- I. Policy
- II. Deployment of Personnel
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- IV. Tactical Use of Canines
- V. Selection of Canine Officers

- I. Policy

*The Canine Unit provides specialized assistance to operational units in the field through the use of highly trained canines. Officers should be familiar with canine functions so they are able to make informed decisions as to when canine can be useful and should be summoned.*

- II. Deployment of Personnel

- A. Deployment of personnel will be the responsibility of the Patrol Commander, under the guidance of the Assistant Chief, Patrol Operations. The Patrol Commander will assign and deploy personnel to meet the needs of the Division and the community.
- B. The canine teams will be responsible for providing narcotic detection when requested by any unit of this Division.
- C. *Supervisors will approve all canine deployments to outside agencies. Canine deployment requests received by Communications will be directed to the on-duty supervisor.*
- D. *The canine officer has the responsibility for the safety of the team. If in the officer's opinion, the request falls outside the scope of the team's capacity or places them in an unacceptable degree of danger the canine officer will not deploy the officer's canine.*
- E. *Canines may be utilized for but are not limited to:*
  - 1. *Tracking suspects*
  - 2. *Searching buildings, fields and wooded areas for suspects*
  - 3. *Searching crime scenes for evidence*
  - 4. *Apprehending fleeing suspects*
  - 5. *Searching for hidden narcotics*
  - 6. *High risk arrest/entry situations*

- III. Criteria for Deploying Canine Resources

- A. In determining whether or not to deploy a canine, the handler must have information relevant to the facts and circumstances of the incident, which lead him/her to believe, as a reasonable and prudent police officer, that the suspect(s) have committed a crime or the use of a canine is warranted and appropriate in non-criminal incidents.
  - 1. *When officers on the scene of any incident are unsure if the canine can be helpful, they should request their assistance and allow the canine officer to determine if the canine may render assistance.*

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2. *The Patrol Commander will have the authority to call out an off-duty canine officer if, in the opinion the dog can be useful. Call out should be considered in cases involving murder, kidnapping rape, burglary, robbery or lost/missing persons. Consideration should be given to location, time delay, weather and the amount of foot traffic.*
- B. Canine teams may be used to search for persons suspected of committing a crime. Outdoor searches and tracks conducted by Patrol Dogs will be performed on lead except in the case of dangerous felony searches. In those instances, a handler may choose to do off lead area seeks or tracks after making a reasonable attempt to insure the safety of innocent citizens. Canine handlers will afford suspects a reasonable opportunity to surrender. This shall not be construed as to require handlers to expose themselves or their canine partners to unnecessary risk as a result of their warning.
  - C. In the case of minor crimes *where there is reasonable suspicion* or traffic violations the *canine officer* will take precaution to avoid accidental bites. Warnings will be issued at the start of these types of searches and when, in the handler's opinion, the team may be close to the suspect. If a person suspected of a minor offense fails to respond, or indicates a refusal to surrender, the utilization of the canine to extract the suspect from his or her place of hiding is reasonable.
  - D. When a handler is preparing to deploy their canine for the purpose of apprehension, four factors must be considered:
    1. The severity of the crime
    2. Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of officers or others
    3. Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight or concealment
    4. Age of the suspect
  - E. Once a canine is released or commanded to apprehend a suspect by biting and holding him or her, it is the duty of the handler to call the dog off the bite at the earliest opportunity in order to minimize injury to the suspect. Specifically, this is when the officer is able to see the suspects hands or when it can be determined that he or she is no longer a threat.
  - F. Canine officers may use canines to protect themselves or others from the threat of death or injury. The use of a canine is considered a use of force but is NOT considered deadly force.
  - G. Canine teams shall not be used for crowd control at peaceful demonstrations.
  - H. Canine teams may be used for crowd control upon Command approval to protect property during a riot or other major unauthorized gathering that cannot be controlled by other means. In these situations, canines shall:
    1. Be short leashed, unless no other means are available to protect an individual from serious injury.
    2. Not initiate any protective action, unless to guard against imminent loss of life or serious bodily injury.

- I. All canine community displays require prior approval.
- J. Lost, Missing or Endangered Persons
  - 1. Use of patrol trained canines in search and rescue incidents must be pre-approved by an officer of supervisory rank and the facts of the case must indicate exigent circumstances, such as death or bodily harm to the missing person if immediate action is not taken.
  - 2. Canine officers who handle patrol trained canines must conduct building/area searches for lost, missing or endangered persons with the Canine on lead and will exercise due care in the performance of these duties if requested.
  - 3. All major search and rescue incidents will be handled pursuant to the Division's Search and Rescue/Incident Command System, Standard Operating Procedure.
  - 4. The use of the canine at routine lost persons incidents will be managed and coordinated by the canine handler and the on-scene supervisor.
- IV. Tactical Use of Canines
  - A. Narcotic Detection
    - 1. Canine officers and their assigned canines that meet the minimum requirements of narcotic training may be used in narcotic detection.
    - 2. Canine officers will adhere to the prescribed training methods as taught in the narcotic detection training classes.
    - 3. Any request for use of the Division canines for narcotic detection outside of the Division's jurisdiction will first be approved by the officer-in-charge.
    - 4. Canine officers will complete a Narcotic Detection Report whenever the canine is used to locate CDS and CDS related monies or for establishing probable cause for a search warrant.
  - B. Building/Area Searches
    - 1. Canine officers and their assigned canines who meet the minimum requirements for patrol dog training may be used in building/area searches for criminal offenders.
    - 2. Only law enforcement personnel may be taken into a building while a canine search is being conducted.
    - 3. It is the canine officer's decision whether or not another officer accompanies him/her into a building during a canine search.
    - 4. Area searches may be conducted off lead if there is a secure perimeter maintained by police personnel. Reasonable precautions will be taken to ensure that no innocent persons are endangered.

- C. Tracks/Trails

Tracks/Trails *may* be attempted upon request. *The canine officer will determine if the canine may render assistance.*
- D. Evidence/Article Searches

Evidence/Article searches will be conducted off lead only if conditions warrant. Evidence/Article searches are to be conducted without endangering innocent persons.
- E. Warrant Service
  - 1. Canine officers and their assigned canines who meet the minimum requirements for patrol dog training may be used for stand-by at warrant services.
  - 2. Canines used to assist in warrant services will do so under the following circumstances:
    - a. When the warrant is for a felony, or the wanted subject possesses a significant threat to the serving officers.
    - b. Canine teams will not be used to make the initial approach on a warrant service. Canines will only enter the area after the suspect has made an overt attempt to hide.
- F. Fleeing Suspects
  - 1. Canine officers and their assigned canines who meet the minimum requirements for patrol dog training may be used to apprehend fleeing felony suspects and *suspected felons*.
  - 2. In situations where a crime has not been verified, but the canine officer is ordered to commit the canine by an officer of supervisory rank, the canine officer will notify that officer that such a commitment is in violation of canine standard operating procedures. If the canine officer is still ordered to commit the canine, the canine officer will document these facts in an Incident Report, whether an apprehension is made or not.
- V. Selection of New Canine Officers - Selection of new canine officers will be consistent with established procedures. Requirements are:
  - A. Experience: Applicants will be police employees of the rank of at least Police Officer III.
  - B. Satisfactory completion of required Division training programs.
  - C. Prior to selection as a handler, an applicant must either own a residence, or if renting, show proof that the property owner will allow a police canine on the premises.
    - 1. The residence of a canine officer will preferably be a detached, single-family dwelling.
    - 2. Prior to selection, the residence will be inspected by a canine supervisor.

- D. An applicant's performance evaluation will be reviewed with attention given to the following:
1. Attendance record
  2. Dependability
  3. Overall work performance
  4. Demonstrated ability to work with minimal supervision
  5. Recommendation from the applicant's immediate supervisor.
  6. Oral interview.

**Approved Park Police Document**  
**Signed Original on File**

**End of Directive**