



DEPARTMENT CANINES

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I. MISSION & ROLE

The mission of the K-9 Unit is to provide line support to Department personnel by providing highly mobile, specially trained police dogs. The police K-9 is capable of searching for items or people and apprehending criminal suspects while providing additional safety for the police officer.

II. DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Utility/Patrol Dogs

- 1. Detect, locate, and apprehend criminal offenders who attempt to elude and resist arrest.
- 2. Search buildings and enclosed areas for suspected criminals.
- 3. Track fleeing criminals and escapees, or lost persons who for humanitarian reasons must be located by the police as soon as possible.
- 4. Establish and maintain perimeter control in situations such as large fires, crime scene preservation, etc.
- 5. Provide a strong psychological deterrent for the criminal element.

B. Specialty Dogs

- 1. Drug K-9 – Detect and locate controlled dangerous substances by scent discrimination to include: marijuana or hashish, cocaine, amphetamines, Quaaludes or other illegal narcotics.
- 2. Gun/Bomb K-9 – Detect and locate explosives and firearms by scent discrimination to include: handguns, shotguns, rifles, ammunition, spent casings, projectiles, TNT, black powder, detonation cord, plastic explosives, and numerous other explosive compounds.
- 3. Non-Aggressive Search/Track K-9 – Used to search for critically missing/lost, injured or sick persons.

III. DEPLOYMENT

A. The value of the use of K-9's in law enforcement activities is indisputable. However, it must be understood that whenever a utility/patrol K-9 is deployed on any type of call, the possibility exists that the incident will result in a K-9 bite.

B. All K-9 bites require use of force reporting.

C. *The severity of a K-9 bite* can range from no injury, to a severe bite requiring hospitalization. The severity of the bite (use of force) is dependent on the suspect's level of resistance once apprehended by the K-9. For that reason and the inability to predict a suspect's response, K-9 deployment is a resource that must be carefully managed and constantly scrutinized to maintain both the Unit's and the Department's professional standards and credibility.

D. The following guidelines for K-9 deployment will serve to help ensure the proper use of police K-9's:

Felonies - K-9's may be deployed on any felony cases/calls.

Violent Misdemeanors - K-9's may be deployed for violent misdemeanors such as violent domestic assaults, assaults on officers, and violent disorderly subjects.

Non-Violent Misdemeanors - K-9 deployment for non-violent misdemeanors will require the permission of an on-duty sergeant (acting sergeants excluded) or above. In this event, the K-9 officer will briefly explain to the supervisor their opinion on the use of the K-9 for the call and the potential for a K-9 bite and use of force. Should the supervisor then decide to deploy the K-9 team, that supervisor will be required to submit a supplement report for the case which delineates his/her justification for the K-9 deployment.

Crowd Control - K-9 deployment for crowd control or civil disorder can only be authorized by an on-duty sergeant or above (Acting sergeants excluded) and will be conducted with the utmost consideration for the facts at hand and the severity of the incident. Under exigent circumstances and when no supervisor is at the scene, a K-9 handler may use his/her K-9 for crowd control if he/she deems it necessary. A Special Operations supervisor and district patrol supervisor are to be made aware of the deployment immediately after the event has stabilized and the situation is under control.

Humanitarian Searches - K-9's may be deployed to search for lost, injured or sick persons.

Non-Aggressive Search/Track K-9 – The department's non-aggressive search/track K-9 may be deployed to search for lost, injured or sick persons. The non-aggressive search/track K-9 will not be deployed to search for persons facing criminal or traffic charges, regardless of injury or other critical circumstances.

Patrol K-9's – In the event the department's non-aggressive search/track K-9 is not available, and critical circumstances exist, patrol K-9's may be deployed after careful consideration and consultation between the patrol supervisor and K-9 handler. The "critical circumstances" must outweigh the potential that the victim may suffer a K-9 bite if or when located by the K-9.

E. The responsibility for a K-9 use of force resides with the K-9 handler. The use of force will be reviewed by his/her chain of command. In the event the K-9 officer feels the circumstances of the *incident* are not sufficient to justify a K-9 deployment, the K-9 officer will *notify the requesting supervisor of their concerns. If the requesting supervisor insists on a deployment, the K-9 officer will* contact the K-9 sergeant, SOS lieutenant or his/her designee before deploying the K-9.

IV. PROPONENT UNIT: Special Operations Division.

V. CANCELLATION: This directive cancels Index Code 1661, dated 09-17-07.