I. POLICY STATEMENT

It will be the policy of the Anne Arundel County Sheriff’s Office to provide comprehensive security and services for the Security Bureau and the Operations Bureau by utilizing a K-9 team.

II. PURPOSE

The Anne Arundel County Sheriff’s Office is mandated to provide for the safety and security of the courts, court personnel, and the public at large. The objective of the K-9 unit is to provide line support teams within the Office with highly mobile, specially-trained Police/Sheriff’s dogs. The K-9 Team has particular attributes in searching for items or people which can quickly facilitate their location. In this regard, the required resources can be properly utilized with additional safety for Sheriff’s Office personnel.

III. GENERAL

Members of the Office’s K-9 Unit are under the direction of the Security Bureau Commander or the Operations Bureau Commander, according to their assignment. The decision of the K-9 officers to use their dogs in any situation is a serious decision. K-9 officers must be mindful of their duties to perform the Sheriff’s mission, along with using the K-9 dog in the area for which the K-9 unit has been trained. The actions of the K-9 can be justified only by the facts which are known to the K-9 handler at the time they participate in those actions.

In all cases involving the employment of the K-9 dog, the handler will make the final decision as to how and if the dog will be deployed. This responsibility may be superseded only by direct order of a superior officer. Should this occur, the K-9 handler will make the Chief Deputy aware of the incident, and will make the final decision on deployment of the K-9. In absence of the Chief Deputy, the Sheriff will be contacted.

IV. CAPABILITIES

Within the Anne Arundel County Sheriff’s K-9 program there are numerous canine capabilities that can do much to reinforce existing law enforcement functions. When used properly, K-9 teams can accomplish the following:
A. Specialty Dogs (narcotics and explosives)

1. Detect and locate explosives and firearms by scent discrimination to include:
   a. handguns
   b. shotguns
   c. rifles
   d. ammunition
   e. spent casings
   f. projectiles
   g. TNT
   h. black powder
   i. detonation cord
   j. plastic explosives
   k. numerous other explosives compounds

2. Detect and locate controlled dangerous substances by scent discrimination to include:
   a. marijuana or hashish
   b. cocaine or crack

3. Track fleeing criminals or escapees and lost persons who, for humanitarian reasons, must be located by the Deputies as soon as possible.

B. Utility Dogs

1. Detect, locate, and apprehend criminal offenders who attempt to elude and resist apprehension.
2. Search buildings and enclosed areas for suspected criminals and suspicious objects (E.O.D.)
3. Track fleeing criminals or escapees and lost persons who, for humanitarian reasons, must be located by the Sheriff as soon as possible.
4. K-9 teams can be used in lieu of large numbers of police/sheriff personnel to maintain order at large public gatherings and disorderly crowds. K-9 deployment for crowd control can only be authorized by the on-scene supervisor, with the approval of the Security/Operations Bureau Commander, and/or Chief Deputy/Sheriff.
5. To establish and maintain perimeter control in situations such as large fires, crime scene preservations, etc.
6. Provide a strong psychological deterrent or persuasion for the criminal element.

C. At the present time, the Sheriff’s Office K-9 teams are all specialized in Explosives/Firearms detection.
V. BREEDS OF CANINES

A. Breeds of K-9 dogs used for specialized detection work will generally be hunting breeds (i.e. Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, or Pointers).

B. Other breeds of canine may be used for patrol and/or specialized work depending on the individual dog, the needs of the Office, or availability (i.e. German Shepherds or Belgian Malinois).

C. Selection and training of breeds other than those specified must be with the approval of the Chief Deputy/Sheriff and by a certified Police K-9 training staff.

VI. ASSIGNMENTS

The members of the K-9 unit are engaged in an active overt police operation; wearing uniforms and operating marked vehicles. Their appearance is designed to be conspicuous, and they will respond to situations where the deputy requires the dog’s special attributes. The K-9 units will operate as scheduled by the K-9 supervisors. Its members shall respond to requests for service from the court and other agencies as directed by the K-9 supervisor, or supervisor on duty.

A. Operational Deployment

1. Working Hours

a. The duty hours of the deputies assigned to the K-9 unit shall generally be during the hours of Court/Operations Division and shall be dependent upon the overall Office needs. These hours shall be set by the K-9 supervisor.

2. Assignments

a. Every effort will be made to ensure K-9 deputies are available for K-9 duties. However, the K-9 deputies may be called upon to provide coverage for regular Deputy assignments within the Circuit Court facility as staffing requires.

b. The following duties will not be performed by K-9 deputies:
   (1) transportation of prisoners, except for extreme circumstances and only as directed by the rank of Lieutenant and above.
   (2) traffic accident investigation
   (3) any function which involves placing personnel other than the K-9 deputies/other police personnel in the K-9 vehicle.
3. Special Assignments
   a. All requests for special assignments, i.e., demonstrations, VIP details, etc., will be made through the K-9 supervisor, the Security/Operations Bureau Commander. The request should be made in writing if time permits.

4. Shift Start
   a. K-9 teams will advise the supervisor/court coordinator of arrival at the courthouse and when prepared to begin their initial assignments with all issued and appropriate equipment. When working with Operations Division, K-9 team will advise Dispatch and on-duty supervisor when in service.

   b. Personnel will leave their assigned areas only when:

      (1) Directed to do so by a supervisor.

      (2) Responding to assigned veterinarian for emergency treatment of the canine, after advising the supervisor.

      (3) Members of the K-9 unit may leave their assigned area one hour prior to the end of their tour of duty to care for and feed their canines. Members will remain in radio service during this time and will respond to calls for K-9 service as requested.

VII. UNIFORMS

   A. Deputies assigned to the K-9 unit are expected to conform to all Office policies pertaining to uniform appearance. Due to the nature of the specialized duties they perform, K-9 deputies are issued, over and above standard issue, a black utility uniform. The seasonally appropriate uniform will be worn at all times.

VIII. HEALTH AND CARE OF CANINES

K-9 members are responsible for the health, care, and well-being of their canines.

   A. Each member will ensure their canine is kept in the best possible state of health and cleanliness.

      1. Routine bathing and dipping of canines shall be done either at the Anne Arundel County Police K-9 Center or authorized medical centers.
B. In the event of serious sickness or injury, canines will be taken to the assigned veterinarian as soon as possible, whether occurring during on-duty or off-duty hours. The K-9 supervisor will be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.

1. Routine treatment of canines will be conducted by the assigned veterinarian. Upon completion of treatment, the member will complete the Anne Arundel County Sheriff’s Veterinarian Report Form and will return same to the K-9 supervisor for approval and submission for payment.

C. During extended periods of absence or vacation, canines will be quartered only at specified kennels approved by the K-9 supervisor or the Commander of the Operations Bureau or Security Bureau.

D. Canines will be fed only the diet prescribed by the K-9 Unit’s veterinarian.

1. Should the canine’s diet change requiring a different type or brand of dog food, the handler shall promptly prepare a brief interoffice memo to the K-9 supervisor informing them of the change. This will facilitate the accurate ordering of dog food.

E. In the event a canine is sick or injured to the degree that the canine cannot perform their duties, the handler shall immediately contact the K-9 supervisor, who shall report circumstances to the Commander of the Security/Operations Bureau.

1. K-9 handlers temporarily without canines will be assigned duties as determined by the Commander of the Security/Operations Bureau or the K-9 supervisor.

F. Handlers will not use excessive force in the handling, training, or working of any Anne Arundel County Sheriff’s Office canine.

G. When the deputy leaves their canine partners in the vehicle, the vehicle’s doors will be locked and a window left partially open to facilitate ventilation. The vehicle will be left running to keep the vehicle at an appropriate temperature during cold/hot days.

IX. KENNELS

A. Kennels will be cleaned and disinfected after each use by dog handlers.

B. The K-9 supervisor will periodically inspect the kennel.

C. The K-9 supervisor will check to assure that kenneled dogs are being properly cared for and that the kenneled dogs have been run a minimum of twice a shift.
D. As deemed necessary, K-9 deputies will perform routine maintenance and upkeep on the K-9 kennels during regularly scheduled shifts.

X. SAFETY WITH CANINE

Safety must be the primary concern of the canine handler. A canine handler must be in complete control of the assigned canine at all times, as the handler is solely responsible for the actions of the dog. Canine handlers must be mindful that safety and control must be practiced at home as well as on duty.

A. Unless involved in Sheriff’s duties, K-9 dogs will not be taken into any public or private buildings.

B. K-9 dogs are not to be taken into police facilities unless on official business.

C. Showing-off with the K-9 dog is strictly forbidden.

D. At the handler’s discretion, K-9 dogs are not permitted to be fed or petted by anyone but the handler and members of the handler’s household and others.

E. While in public, canine handlers must be mindful of pedestrian traffic and be particularly alert for unpredictable actions from the public, such as attempts to pet or agitate the canine.

F. No one will conduct agitation training or permit K-9 dogs to be agitated unless under the direct supervision of authorized K-9 training personnel.

G. When at home, contact with the K-9 dog must be limited to the handler and household family members. K-9 dogs will be properly and safely isolated whenever friends, guests, relatives, etc., are visiting the handler’s home. Doors to areas used to isolate canines during such times will be equipped with a locking or slide bolt type lock placed high enough to prevent children from opening the door.

H. In the absence of the handler, care for the K-9 dog will be limited to mature and responsible members of the household who have demonstrated the ability to control the K-9 dog.

I. K-9 dogs will not be taken from the handler’s property by household members except under emergency conditions, such as the need for veterinarian care. This will be done only if another K-9 handler is not available to handle the emergency.

J. At no time will the K-9 dog be left unsupervised outside unless on the handler’s confined property. Gates to confined property must be locked or secured to such an extent that a child cannot open them. Note: Home and property must be
K. When handlers are away from the home for extended periods of time, housing will be provided at specified kennels approved by the K-9 supervisor or the Security/Operations Bureau Commander.

In the event the K-9 handler is injured and cannot control his/her dog on duty, the following procedures should be followed:

A. The supervisor on scene will call for another K-9 deputy/officer or K-9 Trainer to take control of the canine, or

B. A responsible family member who has demonstrated the ability to control the canine may be asked to respond, or

C. A trained canine handler from another jurisdiction may be used to take control of the canine, or

D. If no other means are available, the Animal Control Division will be dispatch to control the canine.

In the event both the handler and the K-9 dog are injured while on duty, the following procedures should be followed:

A. The supervisor on scene will call for another K-9 deputy/officer or K-9 Trainer to take control of the canine, or

B. A trained canine handler from another jurisdiction may be used to take control of the canine.

C. The K-9 handler will contact dispatch for the closest Veterinarian Hospital to their location. Dispatch will then contact the designated Vet to advise them the K-9 Unit is en route and the injuries/condition of the canine.

D. The supervisor will contact the Chief Deputy/Sheriff and advise them of the situation.

Each K-9 Unit Patrol Vehicle will contain a GREEN First Aid Kit with the following:

A. A muzzle.

B. Instructions on how to administer first aid for injuries/stabilization on scene.

C. List containing canine’s vitals and primary care facility.
XI. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Members of the K-9 unit have a specific objective, which is to provide operational/supportive service to all Office units. The police dog is most advantageous in search situations. The number of calls for K-9 service necessitate that canines are available for service. K-9 unit personnel will not routinely investigate motor vehicle accidents. However, on-site minor traffic accidents may be handled by K-9 personnel. Members will be subject to handling calls for service and submitting the required reports of incidents that are not generally time-consuming. These reports will be submitted to the K-9 supervisor or Security/Operations Bureau Commander for approval and forwarding.

All arrests, apprehensions, or unusual circumstances involving K-9 personnel or the use of K-9 dogs shall be documented (in detail) on the proper Office reports, which shall be submitted to the K-9 supervisor for approval, without delay.

K-9 handlers are permitted to deploy their canine for all **FELONIES** and **VIOLENT MISDEMEANORS**. K-9 handlers who encounter other requests for **NON-VIOLENT MISDEMEANORS** will explain to the on-duty Sergeant their opinion on the use of K-9 for this call and the potential for a K-9 bite and “use of force”.

The ultimate responsibility of a K-9 “use of force” resides with the K-9 handler and is reviewed by his/her chain of command. In the event that a K-9 officer disagrees with the supervisor’s direction to deploy his/her K-9, the Chief Deputy will be contacted and made aware of the situation. If the Chief Deputy is not available, the Sheriff will be contacted.

A. Arrest/Apprehension Procedures

The K-9 unit is a reactive type unit; when it responds to assist a deputy/oicer, the K-9 team often is able to locate and apprehend the violator. The apprehended suspect will be turned over to the deputy/oicer who will make the arrest and complete the necessary documents. When a K-9 deputy/oicer observes a criminal violation and makes the arrest, a deputy/oicer will transport, and the K-9 member will complete all the necessary documents.

1. On routine **building** searches, **woods** searches, and **tracks**, the individual canine handler will be in charge of the search area and shall deploy and/or direct other personnel to aid in the search.

2. When a K-9 dog is **released off-lead** to apprehend a fleeing suspect, exceptional care and judgment must be used to insure against injury to innocent persons.

3. Under no circumstances is a K-9 dog to be released off-lead for apprehension purposes in crowded areas when other persons, and/or
deputies or officers are in or near the path of the fleeing suspect. In addition, extremely close attention should be given to possible injury to the K-9 dog by vehicular traffic on streets and highways.

4. In the event a K-9 deputy effects an arrest and the suspect receives serious injury, i.e., hospitalization, whether from the use of physical force or the use of the canine, that member shall immediately notify the K-9 supervisor. It will be the K-9 supervisor’s responsibility to respond to the scene and complete the necessary reports. The K-9 supervisor will ensure that these reports are forwarded to the Commander of the Security or Operations Bureau as soon as possible.

5. In the case of accidental canine bites or any time an innocent person is injured by a canine, it is the handler’s responsibility to have that person transported to the nearest hospital for treatment. This will be done by the deputy/officer, or if necessary, by ambulance. At no time will a handler transport the injured person. The handler will immediately notify the K-9 supervisor or, in the supervisor’s absence, the Security/Operations Bureau Commander. Photos will be taken of all accidental bites and a written statement will be requested from the victim. Statements should be taken by the K-9 supervisor or, in the supervisor’s absence, the Security/Operations Bureau Commander. NOTE: If the victim refuses treatment or refuses to give a statement, it will be so noted in the report. Also, an attempt will be made to have the victim sign a form stating that he/she refused treatment.

6. A Spleen Risk Notification Form will be utilized anytime it is believed that a department K-9’s saliva has come into contact with a subject. The subject will sign the form and the subject will be given a copy of the completed form. If the subject refuses to sign the form, the K-9 handler will mark “REFUSED” on the signature line. In the event a juvenile has come into contact, a parent or legal guardian must sign the form. The form will be filed with all other necessary reports.

7. Canine handlers will use, and/or permit their canines to use only that amount of force necessary to apprehend and render safe a fleeing, hiding, or combative suspect who fails to heed the warning of “stop” or “surrender.”

8. No K-9 dog will be committed until proper announcement has been given, such as “Sheriff/Police K-9. Stop, or the dog will be released.” This will afford innocent persons the chance to exit the area and to afford the suspect the opportunity to surrender.

9. In determining whether or not to deploy a K-9 dog, the handler must have sufficient information of the facts and circumstances of the incident which leads the handler to believe, as a reasonable and prudent law enforcement
of officer, that a crime has been committed and/or the suspect(s) has/have committed a crime.

B. Building Searches

1. In contained search/apprehension situations, i.e., commercial buildings, private homes, enclosed compounds, etc., K-9 handlers must always give a loud audible warning before entering and releasing the K-9 dog (i.e., Sheriff/Police K-9. Come out or the dog will be released.”), allowing a reasonable time for a response.

2. All building searches will be conducted off-lead unless K-9 members have knowledge that would prohibit this procedure. Canine handlers shall be mindful of the degree of the crime, age of the suspect, and amount of force necessary to be used in apprehending the suspect, allowing the K-9 dog to use only that degree of force necessary to safely and effectively carry out their responsibilities of apprehension.

3. No one (deputies, officers, owners, or residents) will be permitted into the building with the K-9 unit while the search is being conducted, unless determined necessary by the canine handler.

4. Two or more K-9 teams may be committed to building searches when it is determined that the area to be searched would necessitate the use of additional teams.

5. In searching large buildings, canines must be kept separated, i.e. in multiple-floored buildings or in rooms that can be divided by locked doors.

6. In situations where a suspect(s) is contained and known to be armed, or shots having been fired, or if firearms have been used to threaten the deputy or officer at the scene, K-9 dogs will not be sent off-lead into a building, house, confined area, etc. for apprehension purposes. The only exception would be to save the life of an officer or innocent person facing death at the hands of the suspect.

C. Woods Searches

1. All woods searches will be conducted on lead. Canine handlers will permit no deputies/officers into areas being searched or allow them to accompany them on trails, unless determined necessary by the canine handler.
D. Tracking and Trailing

1. All tracking and trailing will be attempted upon request even if the handler knows the reason that the area has been contaminated, but the K-9 handler should explain this to the deputy/officer requesting this service.

E. Self Defense

1. K-9 handlers shall not hesitate to use K-9 dogs in situations where they believe that using their dog would/could prevent that deputy’s/officer’s death or injury.

   (or)

2. To protect fellow deputies/officers against death or injury.

   (or)

3. To protect a member of the general public against death or injury.

XII. TRAINING AND RETRAINING

A. Training

1. All initial canine training, patrol and specialty, will be conducted by certified approved K-9 training staff at their training facility. All Anne Arundel County Sheriff’s K-9 Units will strictly adhere to the rules and regulations of the K-9 Training Unit while training under their direction.

B. Retraining

1. All retraining will be conducted under the direction of a certified approved instructor/Police K-9 training staff.

2. Specialized K-9 units (i.e., explosive, narcotic canine) will attend retraining at an approved Police K-9 training facility twice a month.

3. Each handler will advise the K-9 supervisor of any specific problems they may experience with their canine while on patrol.

XIII. LEAVE

A. Sick Leave – members will notify the Sheriff’s Office Communications Center and an available supervisor no less than ninety minutes prior to reporting time for duty.
B. Except for emergency leave or sick leave, all leave requests must be approved by the K-9 supervisor or, in their absence, the Security/Operations Bureau Commander prior to being used.

XIV. VEHICLES

A. Use of Spare K-9 Vehicle

1. The spare vehicle may be utilized whenever assigned K-9 vehicles are down for repairs. The spare vehicle will be returned with gas and oil levels filled upon completion of its use.

B. Assigned K-9 Vehicles

1. The interior of all K-9 vehicles will be vacuumed, cleaned, and disinfected on a regular basis. The exterior of all K-9 vehicles will be kept cleaned and waxed at all times, weather permitting.

C. Maintenance of K-9 Vehicles

1. Maintenance of K-9 vehicles will be in accordance with departmental Rules and Regulations.

2. Off-duty K-9 vehicle restrictions will be in accordance with the departmental Rules and Regulations for the Operation of Personal Patrol Vehicles.