



<b>Canine Policy</b>	Related Policies:
<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee’s civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>	
Applicable Arkansas Statute	
CALEA Standard: 41.1.4	
Date Implemented:	Review Date:

- I. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to outline mandates relating to the use of police service dogs in the law enforcement operations.
  
- II. **Policy:** It is the policy of this department to recognize the value of law enforcement service dogs as a part of the overall law enforcement operation as well as ensure that canine use is balanced with the rights of all persons. In cases where a canine may bite a suspect, the use constitutes a use of force and must meet the mandates of this department’s policies on use of force.
  
- III. **Procedure**
  - A. **General Operational Procedures**
    - i. When feasible and other means of transport are available, prisoners shall not be transported in a vehicle occupied by a canine. When other transportation is not available, prisoners may be restrained and belted in the front passenger seat of the canine vehicle or placed in a specialized rear seat compartment manufactured for such a purpose and transported to the Police Station and or jail. In such circumstances, the partition between the canine compartment and the prisoner shall be configured in such a manner as to prohibit contact between the passenger and canine.
    - ii. Members who are selected for a position as a canine handler have the responsibility of caring for their assigned canine. Handling and care include:
      - a. All handlers are to ensure that the general health, hygiene, and care of their assigned canine are properly maintained and that periodic veterinary exams are provided in accordance with appropriate schedules;
      - b. All handlers will groom their canines as needed;
      - c. Handlers shall conduct daily physical examinations of their canine when practical to determine any injuries, health issues, ticks, or flea infestations;

- d. A department supervisor, designated by the Chief of Police or their designee, shall make periodic visits to the canine's kennel area to inspect health, sanitation, and security conditions for the canine;
- e. In cases of extended absence of the canine handler where the handler is unable to provide the basic care for the canine, the Chief of Police or their designee may assign another person and/or a kennel facility to care for the canine; and
- f. Any changes in the living status of the handler which may affect the health, welfare, safety or security of the canine, or others coming into contact with the canine, shall be reported to the supervisor responsible for oversight of the canine.

**B. Response to Requests for Canines**

- i. Upon arrival at a request for service, the canine handler shall be responsible for determining if the circumstances of the event justify the use of a canine.
- ii. The handler will make the final determination on the deployment of the canine. A supervisor responsible for the overall event may direct that a canine not be deployed; however, the supervisor shall not order deployment where the handler determines that such deployment is inappropriate.
- iii. A canine handler shall not knowingly deploy their canine beyond the capabilities of the canine team's (handler and dog) training and certification.

**C. Canine Deployment/General Provisions**

- i. In any case where the canine is used to locate an individual or object based upon scent, first responders shall set up a perimeter and ensure that no one enters the area such that there will be a scent contamination.
- ii. First responders should be specifically instructed not to enter the area.
- iii. First responders shall exhaust all reasonable efforts to determine if innocent persons, including officers, are within the area to be searched.
- iv. Canine handlers shall give a warning anytime the canine is going to be used and the possibility exists that the canine will bite anyone.
- v. Example of an acceptable announcement (search-suspect): "Police: You are under arrest. I have a trained police dog. Make yourself known and surrender. If you do not immediately make yourself known and surrender, I will release the dog. He will find you and bite you."
- vi. Canine warning announcements shall be made in a loud and clear voice, by methods deemed appropriate for the circumstances by the handler. Such warning may be made by loud voice or by PA system depending on the circumstances with which the canine team is confronted.
- vii. After giving the announcement in search cases, the handler shall wait a reasonable amount of time to allow the subject to surrender peacefully. The amount of time will vary depending on the search area as well as any articulable exigent circumstances that may exist at the time.

**D. Deployment as Response to Resistance**

- i.** The use of a canine for purposes of apprehension is non-deadly force.
- ii.** Handlers should recognize that due to the distinct ability to recall the canine and terminate the apprehension command, there is the ability to de-escalate this type of force option.
- iii.** If a suspect surrenders or discontinues resistance, the canine apprehension will be terminated.
- iv.** A fleeing or hiding suspect creates a potentially dangerous circumstance for pursuing or searching officers since the suspect's intent is unknown. It may also be unknown as to whether or not the subject has access to weapons. Thus, use of a canine under these circumstances would normally be reasonable for:
  - a.** The protection of the handler;
  - b.** Protection of the officers and others;
  - c.** Apprehension of a suspect who continues hiding after a warning or who continues to flee after a lawful show of authority to stop; and

**E. Authorization, Deployment, and Uses of Law Enforcement Canines**

- a. Criminal Apprehension: Handlers must recognize that all uses of force, including the use of a canine must be objectively reasonable under the circumstances. Under the law, as well as this department's response to resistance policy, handlers should consider**
  - 1.** The seriousness of the offense for which the subject is suspected at the time the canine is used;
  - 2.** Whether the subject poses a physical threat to the officer or others and what degree of threat does the subject pose; and
  - 3.** Is the subject actively resisting or attempting to evade arrest by flight.
- b.** If a suspect surrenders or discontinues resistance the canine apprehension will be terminated.
- c.** Criminal apprehension will generally be accomplished off lead, but it may also be accomplished on lead.
- d.** Warning (physical threat): A warning shall be given in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- e.** No one, other than the handler should interfere with the canine once the dog is committed to make the apprehension, unless specifically directed by the handler.
- f.** The handler should continue to instruct the suspect to stop resisting during the canine apprehension.
- g.** As soon as practical following submission by the suspect, the handler shall command the canine to release the suspect or physically remove



- f. All searches will be systematically conducted as determined by the handler.
- g. Searches will be conducted off lead unless the safety of the canine would be jeopardized, and/or tactics would dictate otherwise as determined by the handler.

**iv. Open Field Searches:**

- a. Open field searches may be conducted when it is believed that a suspect has fled into a field or wooded area when the following two criteria are met:
  - 1. The handler shall give additional warnings as deemed appropriate by the handler considering the size of the area to be searched and the likelihood that a suspect would hear the warning.
  - 2. Handlers shall also consider ambient noise in the area which may limit the subject's ability to hear the warning;
- b. All searches will be systematically conducted as determined by the handler;
- c. Searches will be conducted off lead unless the safety of the canine would be jeopardized, and/or tactics would dictate otherwise as determined by the handler.

**v. Tracking**

- a. Tracking is utilized in a multitude of law enforcement events including missing persons, suspects who have fled, lost children, etc.
- b. The initial responding officers shall be directed to establish a perimeter immediately.
- c. Tracking shall be conducted on lead at a sufficient length to be determined by the canine's handler. The handler will also determine whether a back-up officer will be utilized on the track based upon the particular circumstances of the event.
- d. Alternative announcements may be used when dealing with a lost or missing person that include calling out the person's name and advising that the canine is looking for them.

**vi. Tactical Deployment**

- a. Canine teams may be used for purpose of tactical deployments in conjunction with a SWAT team or high-risk operation. Canine use in these circumstances may include:
  - 1. Perimeter Control
  - 2. Target Disruption
  - 3. Other purposes designated by the incident commander with the agreement of the canine handler. The handler will make the final determination on the deployment of the canine. A supervisor responsible for the overall event may direct that a canine not be deployed; however, the supervisor shall not order deployment

where the handler determines that such deployment is inappropriate.

**vii. Scent Searches**

- a.** To the extent that such specialized trained canines are available, canines may be used for conducting scent searches for such items as:
  - 1.** Explosives
  - 2.** Cadavers
  - 3.** Narcotics
  - 4.** Accelerants (Fire Cases)
- b.** All searches will be systematically conducted as determined by the handler.
- c.** The handler will decide if the search will be conducted on lead or off lead, based on the particular circumstances of the search.
- d.** Motor Vehicle Narcotics sniffs will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this department's motor vehicle search policy and the following:
  - 1.** The handler shall determine that the area where the vehicle is located is safe for canine deployment taking into account the safety of the officers, the canine, the occupants of the vehicle and the motoring public.
  - 2.** The handler shall ensure that the canine is controlled during the sniff to ensure that the dog has no ability to obtain physical access to the interior of the vehicle.

**viii. Public Disturbances:**

- a.** An officer or an incident commander may call for the canine team to respond to the scene of a civil disturbance, imminent civil disturbance, or other unruly public disturbances.
- b.** Where no emergency circumstance exists, the canine team may be staged until a determination is made as to if the team will be deployed, and how the team will be deployed.
- c.** The responding team will determine how to deploy and utilize the team. A supervisor responsible for the overall event may direct that a canine not be deployed; however, the supervisor shall not order deployment where the handler determines that such deployment is inappropriate.
  - 1.** Canines shall not be used for crowd control or as a deterrent effect at the scene of a peaceful protest

- F. Community Relations/Demonstrations:** All requests for canine demonstrations shall be directed to the officer in charge of the Canine Unit who shall then seek approval of the Chief of Police or their designee to conduct the demonstration.

- a. Handlers conducting demonstrations shall ensure that their appearance, as well as that of the canine and the equipment utilized, reflects professionally upon the department
- b. Handlers shall maintain control of the canine at all times.
- c. Audience participation shall be restricted, and any contact with the canine shall be at the discretion of the handler who is in the best position to know the canine's reaction to others. The audience shall be instructed that law enforcement canines are working dogs and due to their specialized training, they should be approached cautiously
- d. Handlers shall not demonstrate force or criminal apprehension without express authorization from the Chief of Police or their designee.
- e. Handlers shall not roughhouse, tease, or agitate the canine unless such conduct has been expressly authorized by the Chief of Police or their designee for purposes of the demonstration.

**G. Emergency Circumstances**

- a. In a circumstance where the canine handler suffers a personal injury while on duty, if physically capable, the handler shall request emergency medical assistance as needed, the presence of necessary support officers, and a supervisor. If physically able to do so, the handler shall ensure that his or her canine is properly attended and secured. If available, another handler shall be called to the scene to assist in securing the injured handler's canine. If another handler is not available, an officer or supervisor who is most familiar with the particular canine shall be called to the scene to assist in securing the canine.

In the event that a handler sustains an incapacitating injury, the supervisor, or other available officer, shall ensure that the handler receives emergency medical treatment and transport to an appropriate medical facility. The supervisor, or where no supervisor is available, an officer will then take necessary steps to secure the handler's canine.

**H. Veterinary Care:**

- a. All non-emergency veterinary care shall be coordinated by the supervisor responsible for the canine unit through a pre-approved veterinary facility. In an emergency, an effort shall be made to bring the canine to the pre-approved facility; however, where such an effort will jeopardize the life of the canine, the handler shall take steps necessary to get the canine to the most urgent facility.
- b. All records of medical treatment shall be maintained by the canine handler and filed within a department file, stored at the department for such records.

- c. In the event that a canine is deemed unsafe, the team will be immediately taken out of service. As soon as operationally feasible, the canine shall be evaluated by the pre-approved veterinary facility. If the canine is deemed no longer suitable for service, the canine shall be retired.
- d. The Chief of Police or their designee shall be notified when a canine is taken out of service for medical reasons, as well as when the canine is returned to duty following documentation of the reasons by the treating veterinarian.

**I. Certification and Training**

At a minimum, all canines and handlers assigned by this department shall meet all **certification and training requirements** as required and/or provided by the State of Arkansas.

**J. Documentation of Canine Usage and Training**

- a. All canine deployments shall be documented in department reports of events. This shall include events where a suspect submits upon warning of the canine's presence.
- b. All canine usage related to response to resistance shall be the subject of a response to resistance report which includes all required documentation.
- c. All training must be documented in a training log and forwarded to the canine's administrative file.