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**PATROL**

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**K-9 UNIT**

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this directive is to establish policy and procedures for use of department K-9 teams, inspection of K-9 housing facilities, handler evaluation, and K-9 reassignment.

**Policy Statement:** To use the special abilities of properly trained police dogs to supplement law enforcement services to the public. Duties include tactical response and support, building searches, tracking, narcotics detection and also as a high visibility deterrent. Canine deployment shall be made by highly trained and well supervised handlers operating in strict accordance with the highest ethical standards and safety practices of law enforcement.

**Summary of Changes:** New format.

**Procedure**

**1 K-9 Unit Operations**

- 1.1 The use of K-9 teams is authorized for the following purposes: [CALEA 41.1.4a]
  - 1.1.1 Tracking suspects or missing persons and locating lost or abandoned articles or hidden implements of crime,
  - 1.1.2 Searching buildings where a possible break-in is indicated or where a suspect may be hiding, provided such buildings are believed to be clear of innocent persons,
  - 1.1.3 To apprehend resisting and/or fleeing suspects,
  - 1.1.4 Protecting police officers or other persons from injury or death, or
  - 1.1.5 Assisting in the service of narcotic search warrants and other narcotic related activities.
- 1.2 Any use of the K-9 teams not specifically authorized above will **not** commence without prior approval of the K-9 unit supervisor or the on-duty shift / unit commander. [CALEA 41.1.4a]
- 1.3 K-9 teams will **not** be used for the following: [CALEA 41.1.4a]
  - 1.3.1 At the scene of any demonstration without prior approval from the official in charge of the Police Department at that time.
  - 1.3.2 Off-leash searches of schools or others areas where it is believed the person(s) being searched for are juveniles or others that may lack the mental capability to fully understand their actions or the situation they have created, unless evidence or information at hand suggests a probability of violence against the K-9 team or other persons.
  - 1.3.3 Searching a person.
  - 1.3.4 A canine sniff of a vehicle at the conclusion of a traffic stop without reasonable suspicion or consent. This does not preclude the use of a K-9 team for an unobtrusive vehicle search during a traffic stop if the violator has not yet been released.
  - 1.3.5 An off lead search of a business in which no forced entry has been found.
- 1.4 K-9 handlers will document all duty related K-9 activity on a K-9 Service Report. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the K-9 unit supervisor and the K-9 officers Division Commander.
- 1.5 There will be no teasing, petting, or feeding of any K-9 by any personnel without the expressed consent of the handler. K-9 handlers will report any such activities immediately to the on-duty supervisor.
- 1.6 To materially aid and assist the operations of the K-9 unit, the following conditions must be followed with regard to building searches:
  - 1.6.1 The initial officer arriving on the scene will decide from the physical evidence at the scene if a K-9 is to be called to assist. The officer will in turn, notify his immediate supervisor to request a K-9 team.
  - 1.6.2 In the event that the K-9 team is called to assist at the scene, the initial responding officer will not enter the building to be searched, but will secure the perimeter and allow no one to enter until the arrival of the K-9 team.
  - 1.6.3 No one will accompany the handler inside the building during the search, unless additional assistance is requested by the handler.
  - 1.6.4 In the event an apprehension is made at the scene, custody of the person apprehended will be the responsibility of the primary officer.
- 1.7 To materially aid and assist the operations of the K-9 unit regarding tracking searches, the following conditions must be followed:
  - 1.7.1 In any situation where the tracking of a person is desired and the K-9 team is called to the scene, it will be the responsibility of the initial officer arriving on the scene to protect the area where the person to be trailed was last observed from foot traffic.
  - 1.7.2 When a K-9 is being used on a track, no more than two (2) officers will accompany the handler. Their responsibilities are to assist the handler and to provide security.

## **2 Responsibilities**

- 2.1 K-9 handlers will be responsible for the use of their K-9 unless acting upon the direct order of a supervisory officer.
- 2.2 K-9 handlers will immediately notify an on-duty supervisor when their K-9 bites or causes injury to any person, whether on or off-duty, and regardless of the location of the incident.
- 2.3 Written reports of K-9 bites or other injuries inflicted because of K-9 aggression will be submitted by K-9 handlers as follows:
  - 2.3.1 Incidents occurring on or off-duty, inside or outside the City of North Little Rock, will be reported on an Incident Report or Supplemental Report form.
  - 2.3.2 Bites or injuries inflicted as the result of K-9 aggression occurring in other jurisdictions will additionally be reported to the law enforcement agency of that jurisdiction. The fact that such a report was made and the incident number will be included in the required general report.
  - 2.3.3 Incidents of injury resulting from K-9 aggression will be investigated in accordance with Policy Directive 11-2, *Reporting Use of Force*.
- 2.4 K-9 handlers will present their K-9 to the Department's veterinarian for examination within 72 hours of any biting incident. [CALEA 41.1.4c]
- 2.5 K-9 handlers will maintain a kennel which is both secure and sanitary at his or her place of residence. [CALEA 41.1.4c]
- 2.6 If, upon inspection by the K-9 unit supervisor, the kennel is found to be in improper condition, the supervisor will advise the handler of the deficiencies.
  - 2.6.1 The handler will be given five (5) days to correct the condition of the kennel.
  - 2.6.2 At the expiration of the five (5) days, the supervisor will again inspect the kennel.
  - 2.6.3 If the deficiencies still exist, the officer's position as a K-9 handler will be reevaluated.
- 2.7 If a K-9 handler becomes ill or is injured to the extent that he cannot perform his duties for an extended period, a decision will be made regarding the reassignment of the K-9 to another handler.
- 2.8 K-9 handlers will report all injuries and illnesses suffered by their K-9 to the K-9 unit supervisor and will be responsible for seeking proper medical attention for the animal.
- 2.9 K-9 handlers will report all illnesses and injuries of an emergency nature to the veterinarian immediately. Non-emergency cases will be reported to the veterinarian as soon as possible. [CALEA 41.1.4c]
- 2.10 Upon the death of a K-9, the assigned handler will take the following action:
  - 2.10.1 Immediately notify the K-9 unit supervisor of the death.
  - 2.10.2 Immediately contact the veterinarian to determine whether a necropsy is necessary, and if so, where the K-9 should be taken.
  - 2.10.3 If the K-9 death is the result of a line of duty injury, off-duty accident or violence, or cannot be attributed to a veterinarian diagnosed illness or disease, the crimes against persons duty supervisor will be notified and the location treated as any other crime scene until processed.
- 2.11 All agitation or attack training will be done under the direct supervision of the K-9 unit supervisor or the designated trainer.
- 2.12 K-9's will not be physically abused.
- 2.13 K-9 handlers are subject to drug testing at the discretion of the K-9 officers' supervisor or Division Commander.

## **3 K-9 Supervisors**

- 3.1 The K-9 unit supervisor will see that each K-9 handler is furnished a kennel at the handler's residence and will inspect each kennel to ensure that it meets all security and sanitary requirements.
- 3.2 Additionally, the K-9 unit supervisor will inspect a handler's kennel when:
  - 3.2.1 The veterinarian feels that a K-9's poor condition is the result of poor kenneling conditions,
  - 3.2.2 A handler moves to a new location,
  - 3.2.3 A handler receives a new K-9, or
  - 3.2.4 Complaints are received from neighbors or other citizens.
- 3.3 The K-9 supervisor will be responsible for overseeing and auditing the issuance of all controlled substances used for training purposes.
- 3.4 The K-9 unit supervisor and K-9 trainer are responsible for:
  - 3.4.1 Apprising other officials of K-9 team activities and abilities,
  - 3.4.2 Monitoring all equipment assigned to the K-9 unit,
  - 3.4.3 Assisting handlers with any K-9 related problems, and
  - 3.4.4 Maintaining statistical evaluation information.
- 3.5 Upon the implementation of any personnel action that permanently removes an officer from the duties of a K-9 handler, the K-9 unit supervisor will cause an evaluation of the officer's K-9 to determine whether the dog should be reassigned or retired from police service.

#### **4 Training**

- 4.1 The canine and K-9 handler will be trained as a team in a basic course of instruction for the intended use of the canine, e.g, patrol tactics, bomb detection, drug detection, etc. and certified prior to being placed in operational status.. [CALEA 41.1.4b]
- 4.1.1 K-9 teams will be re-certified on an annual basis.
- 4.1.2 K-9 teams will be required to train eight hours, twice monthly. [CALEA 41.1.4b]
- 4.2 The K-9 unit supervisor will maintain training records on all K-9 teams and forward K-9 training reports to the K-9 officers' Division Commander. Any K-9 team that goes beyond a 12 week period without receiving the required in-service training will be considered uncertified for street duty. [CALEA 41.1.4b]
- 4.3 The K-9 unit supervisor and the trainer will be responsible for: [CALEA 41.1.4b]
- 4.3.1 Ensuring that all K-9 teams are scheduled for in-service training, and
- 4.3.2 Monitoring K-9 teams and scheduling retraining in areas as needed.
- 4.3.3 Routinely inspect the controlled substances possessed by the K-9 officers to ensure secure storage procedures are being utilized.
- 4.4 K-9 officers are authorized to be in possession of the minimum amount of controlled substances necessary for training purposes. Each officer will be responsible for keeping the controlled substances secured in a locked container inside their assigned vehicle.
- 4.5 Upon direction from the K-9 officer's Division Commander or K-9 supervisor, officers will present the controlled substances to the K-9 supervisor for audit purposes.
- 4.6 When possible, controlled substances will be packaged in tamper proof containers. In the event that controlled substances are lost or damaged during training, an incident report detailing the circumstances will be completed.
- 4.7 All drugs checked out of the Evidence Control Room for K-9 training purposes shall be weighed prior to transfer of custody to the K-9 officer, and returned every 60 days to be weighed. K-9 training drugs will also be field tested every 180 days by a Patrol Administration supervisor.

#### **5 Division, Unit and Shift Commanders**

- 5.1 Division, unit and shift commanders will consult with the handlers before directing the tactical use of K-9 teams. In instances where the physical capability of an individual K-9 is a major consideration in the success or failure of a task, they will be guided by the opinion of the handler as to the ability of the K-9 to perform the required task.
- 5.2 If the narcotics unit K-9 is not available, narcotics unit supervisors will arrange for the assistance of other Departmental K-9 teams before serving a search warrant for narcotics.
- 5.3 Requests for the use of Departmental K-9 teams for assistance in areas outside the City of North Little Rock will be approved by one of the following:
- 5.3.1 The K-9 unit supervisor,
- 5.3.2 The K-9 Division Commander, or
- 5.3.3 The on-duty supervisor.
- 5.4 A report will be made by the K-9 officer involved, detailing the circumstances and results of the use of the K-9 outside the City of North Little Rock. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the K-9 unit supervisor and the K-9 officers' Division Commander.
- 5.5 A shift/unit commander will ensure that any person bitten or injured by a K-9 is given immediate medical attention.
- 5.6 Shift supervisors will ensure that a statement is taken from any person bitten or injured by a K-9 and that a photograph of the injury is made before the person is released from custody.
- 5.7 If a handler is injured or otherwise incapable of controlling his K-9, the on-duty supervisor will see that another handler and the K-9 unit supervisor are notified to come to the scene and secure the K-9.
- 5.7.1 A K-9 snare pole will be kept in each K-9 vehicle to be used to control the K-9 until another handler or the K-9 supervisor arrives at the scene to secure the animal. [CALEA 41.1.4d]
- 5.7.2 If a delay would further endanger the life of the handler, officers at the scene will use whatever means are necessary to secure the K-9, bearing in mind that they must justify their actions.
- 5.7.3 Because controlling the K-9 is very difficult for anyone other than the handler or a member of the handler's immediate family, it is very possible that anyone else who tries to secure the K-9 will be bitten and must weigh this fact in making the proper decision on the action to be taken.
- 5.7.4 Destruction of the K-9 will be considered only as a last resort. The K-9 unit supervisor will be notified as soon as possible if a situation of this nature should develop.

#### **6 Work Schedule**

- 6.1 The work schedule will consist of a 40 hour work week of which 36 hours will be devoted solely to police duties. The remaining 4 hours are intended to compensate the officers for dog related care which cannot reasonably be performed during the 36 hours of police duties.

## **7 Canine Vehicles**

- 7.1 Patrol officers who have been assigned a police dog are issued a unit whose interior has been modified to accommodate the animal. In all other respects, however, canine vehicles are standard police units of the type used by general police officers. Consequently, no unique training is required to operate a canine vehicle.
- 7.2 All K-9 vehicles are to be equipped with a remote door opener and a temperature warning and release system (Hot Dog). [CALEA 41.1.4d]

## **8 Equipment**

- 8.1 Canine handlers will be provided with the following items to properly utilize and care for Department canines:  
[CALEA 41.1.4d]

- 8.1.1 Leash and collar;
- 8.1.2 Training lead;
- 8.1.3 Muzzle;
- 8.1.4 Training aids;
- 8.1.5 Grooming supplies; and
- 8.1.6 Food supplies.

## **9 Handler Qualifications**

- 9.1 Requirements to be a K-9 officer includes, but are not limited to, the following: [CALEA 41.1.4b]
  - 9.1.1 Have a minimum of two years law enforcement experience with the Department;
  - 9.1.2 Pass the physical fitness testing;
  - 9.1.3 Reside within Pulaski County at a residence suitable for the installation of a kennel;
  - 9.1.4 Is considered a member in good standing at the Department;
  - 9.1.5 Pass an oral interview or other testing process required by the Chief of Police; and
  - 9.1.6 Make a commitment to remain the handler of the canine for the remainder of the dogs working life.

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Mike Davis  
Chief of Police