



The Aberdeen Police Department Policies & Procedures Manual Chapter Contents



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Section 01 Operations

GO 17-004, 01/18/2017
Supersedes None

A. Policy

1. The Aberdeen Police Department will appoint officers as Canine Handlers and will utilize specially trained Canines to protect and enhance the quality of life for the citizens and visitors to our community.
2. A Police Canine Team will to respond to critical incidents.
3. All Canines assigned to Canine Handlers are the property of the City of Aberdeen.

B. Definitions

1. **Police Canine (K9)** – A trained Canine (working dog) recognized for its ability to serve the law enforcement community and aid officers in their law enforcement duties.
2. **Canine Handler** – An Officer always charged with the responsibility of using a Canine in the performance of his/her duties and attending to that Canine.
3. **Canine Coordinator** – A Canine Handler assigned to oversee the administration, training, education, and operations of the Canine teams.
4. **Canine Team** – one Canine and one Canine Handler.
5. **Canine Supervisor** – A Supervisor, appointed by the Chief of Police, to oversee Canine Unit operations.
6. **Cross-Trained Canine** – A Canine trained to perform multiple functions, such as routine patrol operations; tracking, and/or detecting explosives or drugs; locating articles.
7. **Dog Bite** – Any injury or wound inflicted by the mouth of a Canine, whether accidentally or intentionally, to a human being. A breaking, tearing or puncturing of the victim's skin need not be present to be considered a dog bite, as long as there is a visual indication as to where the Canine inflicted the wound (e.g., bruise, teeth, impression, etc)
8. **Off Lead** – The condition when there is no physical attachment or connection between the Canine and the Canine Handler.
9. **On Lead** – The condition when there is a physical attachment or connection between the Canine and the Canine Handler by means of a chain, rope, strap, etc. for purpose of control and restraint.
10. **Alert (Positive Alert)** – The Canine exhibits behavior indicating it recognizes a scent, such as an explosive or drug.
11. **No Alert (Negative Alert)** – The Canine does not alert.

C. Conditions of Use (41.1.4a)

1. Officers may use Canines for legitimate law enforcement purposes only.
2. Officers may request Canine teams to accomplish the following missions, which may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Detect, locate and apprehend criminal offenders who attempt to elude and resist apprehension.
 - b. Search buildings and enclosed areas for suspected criminals.
 - c. Track fleeing criminals or lost persons.



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- d. Provide a strong psychological deterrent for the criminal element.
- e. Detect and locate CDS, explosives, and articles.
- f. Crowd control:
 - 1) To establish perimeter control in potentially disruptive situations such as crime scene preservations, etc.
 - 2) To maintain order at potentially disruptive public gatherings and to assist in gaining control of a disorderly group.
- g. Provide community policing services by attending and participating in *scheduled* community events.

D. Authority of the Canine Handler (41.1.4a)

- 1. The Canine Handler has the final authority in deciding when to deploy a Canine.
- 2. The Canine Handler will be in charge of the search area and direct other personnel to aid him/her in the search, when the Canine is deployed.

E. On Call Status

- 1. All Canine Handlers are subject to being called out during off-duty hours except when Handlers are on sick or vacation leave.
- 2. Canine Handlers will be compensated for time worked.

F. Call-out Procedures

- 1. The Supervisor, the Division Commander, or above, will approve the use of an off-duty Canine. (41.1.4a)
- 2. The approving Supervisor or designee will contact directly the appropriate Canine team.

G. Arrest & Apprehension Procedures

- 1. A Canine may be used to apprehend an individual if the Canine Handler has probable cause to believe that the individual has either committed or is about to commit a criminal offence, and if any of the following conditions exist:
 - a. There is a reasonable belief that the individual poses an immediate threat of violence or serious harm to the public, another law enforcement officer or the Canine Handler.
 - b. The individual is resisting arrest and the use of the Canine is necessary to overcome the resistance.
 - c. The individual is concealed in an area where entry by other than the Canine would pose a threat to the safety of law enforcement officers or the public.
- 2. The Canine Handler will evaluate each situation and carefully consider all available information known at the time of the incident prior to utilizing a Canine for the apprehension of an individual. Such information includes but is not limited to the following: (41.1.4a)
 - a. The individual's estimated age
 - b. The nature and severity of the offense
 - c. The potential danger to the public and/or other law enforcement officers



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- d. The potential danger to the Canine or the Canine Handler
 - e. The degree of resistance shown by the offender
 - f. The potential for escape if a Canine is not used
 - g. The potential for injury to the public and or other law enforcement officers if a Canine is not used.
3. If a Canine Handler makes an arrest and the suspect is injured, the Handler will notify the Supervisor, Canine Supervisor, and Canine Coordinator as soon as possible.
 4. A Canine will not be used until a proper announcement has been given in a loud and clear voice example: "POLICE K9, come out or the dog will be released".
 - a. An exception to this warning is allowed in those circumstances when such warning would increase the risk of injury to the Canine Handler or another law enforcement officer.
 - b. To allow the suspect an opportunity to surrender, and innocent persons to exit the area, the Handler will allow a reasonable amount of time after the announcement.
 5. Only under emergency conditions will another Handler or Officer command the Canine.

H. Building Searches

1. A Canine will be used to search any location, believed to have a crime occurring, to preserve life and safety of police officers.
2. A Canine will not be used until a proper announcement has been given in a loud and clear voice example: "POLICE K9, come out or the dog will be released".
 - a. An exception to this warning is allowed in those circumstances when such warning would increase the risk of injury to the Canine Handler or another law enforcement officer.
 - b. To allow the suspect an opportunity to surrender, and innocent persons to exit the area, the Handler will allow a reasonable amount of time after the announcement.
3. Only under emergency conditions will another Handler or Officer command the Canine.
4. The Handler may commit two or more Canine teams to building searches when the Handler determines that the area to be searched would necessitate more than one Canine team due to the size of the area, number of floors, etc.
5. When a suspect is contained and presumed armed, a Canine will not be sent off lead into a building, house or other confined area for apprehension purposes.
6. Under such circumstances the on-scene Supervisor will contact the Negotiation Team.
 - a. An exception to this rule may be made, by the Handler, to save the life of a law enforcement officer or an innocent person.

I. Tracking & Searching Wooded Areas

1. A Canine will only be used to track lost or missing persons in life threatening situations except when a Supervisor approves a non-life-threatening situation, subject to the Canine Handler's discretion.



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2. A Canine may be used to track criminal suspects or locate evidence that has been abandoned or hidden in a specified area.
3. The Canine Handler will determine which personnel who will have access to the area being searched or will accompany the Canine team on trails.

J. CDS and Explosive Detection

1. Canines trained in CDS or explosive detection may be used, appropriately, to:
 - a. Search or sniff buildings, vehicles, and other areas or items
 - b. Alert which will support probable cause for a search or to obtain a search warrant
 - c. Assist in the search for controlled dangerous substances during the execution of a search warrant
 - d. Assist in drug education programs and demonstrations.
2. Canines trained in CDS or explosive detection will not be used to search a person.
3. The Canine may sniff only personal possessions after being removed from the person.
4. If a Canine alert causes the Handler to believe that a person may be in possession of CDS, the investigating officer will determine how to proceed with the investigation.
5. The Handler will have final approval to use a Canine for CDS or explosives detection.

K. Crowd Control

1. A Canine team may respond as backup for crowd control but will not deploy the Canine at a peaceful demonstration.
2. A Canine team may be used to protect life or property during a riot or other major unlawful assembly, only with approval of a Lieutenant or above, after an order to disperse has been made and disregarded.

L. Public Demonstrations

1. Canine teams will provide public demonstrations with approval of the Chief of Police.
2. The Canine Handler will determine the subject of each public demonstration, to maintain the safety of the Canine and the public.

M. Bite/Scratch Procedures

1. Whenever a Canine has bitten or scratched an individual or is alleged to have bitten or scratched an individual, whether on- or off-duty, the Handler will offer medical attention by qualified medical personnel.
 - a. If the subject refuses medical attention document such refusal in the incident report and attempt to obtain their signature on a Form 145 - Medical Treatment Refusal Report.
 - b. Obtain color photographs of the affected area (the actual wound) after the wound is cleaned.
 - c. If the subject alleges that the injury is not visible, photograph the location of the affected area in the same manner as if an actual injury was sustained.
2. Notify the Supervisor, the Canine Supervisor, and Canine Coordinator as soon as possible.



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3. Interview possible
 - a. Suspects
 - b. Witnesses
 - c. EMS personnel
 - d. Hospital personnel
 - e. Other law enforcement officers
4. Attach the photographs and Rabies Vaccination Certification to the Incident Report.
5. The Canine Handler shall complete all required reports prior to the end of the shift.

N. Canine Vehicle

1. Canine Handlers shall not transport detainees in a Canine vehicle.
2. Canine Handlers may allow a ride-along only with approval of the Supervisor.

O. Recordkeeping

1. Canine Officers shall submit to the Canine Coordinator all original Unit Records as soon as completed:
 - a. Canine Use of Force forms
 - b. Canine Training Requests
 - c. Canine Stat Sheets
 - d. Canine Training Records
 - e. Canine Procurements forms/equipment requests
2. The Canine Coordinator shall maintain original unit records and will submit copies of Form 144-K9 Training Records to the Sr. Administrative Specialist.
3. Unit records may include but may not be limited to:
 - a. Form 144 – K9 Training Record
 - b. Form 142 – Explosive K9 Activity Sheet
 - c. Form 143 – CDS K9 Activity Sheet
 - d. Animal Bite
 - e. Training aids records
 - f. Canine Use of Force Report
 - g. Training Requests
 - h. Procurement Forms/Equipment Requests

P. Inspections

1. The Canine Supervisor will inspect the Canine Coordinator's records at least once a year.



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Chapter 33 Police Canines
Section 02 Training

GO 18-024, 03/29/2018
Supersedes 14-072

A. Policy

1. Department Canines are certified through an accepted agency or vendor approved by the Chief of Police.
2. The Canine will be registered with the Maryland Department of State Police.
3. Department Canine Teams use controlled substances (CDS); explosive substances, real and pseudo, as training aids for required training of Detection Canines.

B. Maintenance Training

1. Each Canine team will complete a minimum of sixteen (16) hours of maintenance training each month according to MPCTC standards. (41.1.4b)
2. The Supervisor may approve a change of the monthly requirement of in-service hours, on a case by case basis, still meeting MPCTC standards, documented on a Form 37.
3. The Canine Handler will maintain all K9 Training Records (form 144).

C. Procurement of CDS and Explosives Canine Training Aids

1. The Canine Handler who trains and/or evaluates CDS/Explosive Substance Detection Canines is responsible to obtain CDS and explosive substances.
2. The Canine Handler shall obtain prior written authorization and approval from the Supervisor for releasing training aids from the Property room and/or purchasing training aids from an outside source.
 - a. Outside sources might include:
 - 1) DEA,
 - 2) ATF, or
 - 3) Other Source Procurement
3. CDS Evidence Procurement
 - a. The Canine Handler shall submit a request through the chain of command.
 - b. The Evidence Custodian shall release the CDS or other property according to Releasing or Disposing Property procedures.

D. Storage and Security of CDS and Explosives Used as Training Aids (84.1.4)

1. Canine Handlers shall not leave CDS and explosives unsecured.
2. The Supervisor and Canine Handler, only, shall have access to training aids and the storage unit.
3. Canine Handlers shall secure CDS and explosives in a designated, Department-approved secured, storage locker.
4. Canine Handlers may store training aids in portable designated, Department-approved secured, storage containers in the trunks of Canine vehicles.



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E. Tracking Training Equipment and Substances

1. The Canine Handler shall maintain a check-in/check-out log removed from the storage locker, indicating:
 - a. Name and ID of officer
 - b. Date and time checked out of storage unit
 - c. Date and time checked back into storage unit
 - d. Initial & ID of Supervisor

F. Loss or Damage

1. The Canine Handler shall document in an incident report if the real drugs or explosives are damaged, or a known loss occurs during the training session.
2. The Supervisor will be notified immediately if the Canine Handler has experienced a loss of drugs/explosives through a training accident.
3. The Supervisor shall conduct an inspection of all the training drugs/explosives assigned to the affected Canine handler as soon as possible.
 - a. The Supervisor will weigh and document all of the training aids and to accurately determine amounts of the training aids were lost.

G. Quarterly Accounting of Training Equipment and Substances

1. The Supervisor and the Canine Handler shall audit equipment and aids, other than CDS, and record findings in an *Inspection Record*.
2. The Evidence Custodian and the Canine Handler shall weigh and inventory the CDS and explosives at least quarterly and shall document status of equipment and findings of natural loss in an *Inspection Record*.

H. Returning Substances to CDS Property Room

1. The Canine Handler will follow CDS Property Room Procedures.



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Section 03 Canine Care and Health

GO 14-072, 08/18/2014
Supersedes None

A. Policy (41.1.4c)

1. Canine Handlers are responsible for the health, care and well-being of their assigned Canine(s) through proper maintenance of the vehicle and Canine home environment.

B. General Care and Housing

1. Canine officers must maintain a residence with a clean indoor kennel or outdoor kennel that is issued by the Department.
2. A Canine Handler, who is on leave and not at his/her residence for three days or more, will house the Canine only at a specified kennel approved by the Canine Supervisor and Canine Coordinator.
3. A Canine Handler, who is on leave and not at his/her residence for fewer than three days, will house the Canine in the Department-issued kennel keeping the Canine separate from other pets and family members.
4. Household members will not remove the Canine from the Handler's property except in case of emergency.
5. Canine Handlers will be compensated for the "at home care" of their Canines—time spent on care, feeding, grooming, and other needs of the Canine—at the rate of one (1) hour per day, seven (7) days a week.

C. Food (41.1.4d)

1. Canine Handlers will submit Form 98 - Uniform Procurement form for food as needed, to be purchased through a business approved by the Canine Supervisor.
2. Canine Handlers or designees will purchase food with approval of the Chief of Police.

D. Equipment and Supplies Required for Canines (41.1.4d)

1. A kennel will be provided for each Canine so that they may be housed separately from other pets and family members.
2. Equipment issued to each Handler may include but will not be limited to:
 - a. 1 leather 15ft lead
 - b. 1 30 ft lead
 - c. 1 harness
 - d. 1 slip collar
 - e. 1 6ft lead
 - f. 1 agitation collar
 - g. 1 muzzle
 - h. 1 leather collar
 - i. 1 bite sleeve
 - j. Traffic lead
 - k. 6ft x 8ft kennel
 - l. Shock Collar
 - m. 2 kong toys
 - n. Jute tug
 - o. Pinch Collar
 - p. Food and water dishes
 - q. Crate
3. Equipment may be modified according to the preference of the Handler and the Canine.



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4. Equipment issued to the Canine unit may include but will not be limited to:
 - a. Bite suits
 - b. Bite sleeves
 - c. Training leads
 - d. Scent boxes
5. Canine Handlers will submit a Form 98 - Uniform Procurement form for supplies as needed to the Canine Coordinator to the Chief of Police through the chain of command.

E. Canine Safety

1. Canine Handlers are responsible for the control of their Canines at all times and are responsible for the actions of their Canines both on- and off-duty.
2. Canine Handlers will not use excessive force in the handling, training or working of any assigned Canine.

F. Canine Health

1. Each Canine Handler is responsible for maintaining the health of the Canine through regular visits to the veterinarian.
2. The Canine Supervisor shall approve in advance any veterinarian visits, except for emergencies and routine medical shots.
3. Only veterinarians approved for use by the Canine Coordinator, Canine Supervisor, and Chief of Police may be used for checkups and routine medical shots.
4. If there is a serious sickness or injury, the Handler will
 - a. Take the Canine to the approved veterinarian, whether on- or off-duty,
 - b. Notify the Canine Supervisor and Canine Coordinator as soon as practical, and
 - c. Complete an Incident Report.
5. The Canine Handler will submit all receipts and documentation related to veterinarian visits to the Canine Coordinator.

G. Incapacity or Death of a Canine Handler

1. If a Canine Handler becomes incapacitated and is unable to maintain necessary care and security of the assigned Canine, or if a Canine Handler dies; the Chief of Police or designee will appoint another Canine Handler or a qualified officer to take custody of that Canine.
2. A determination of incapacitation shall be made, at the Chief's discretion, after consideration of the totality of the circumstances.