

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide members of the Cecil County Sheriff's Office with guidelines regarding the Canine Unit.

Policy

It is the policy of the Cecil County Sheriff's Office to provide support with a specially trained police dog.

Definitions

Patrol Team: A police canine team, which has been trained and certified by agency approved USPCA course to primarily locate and apprehend criminal offenders.

Narcotics Detection Team: A police canine team, which has been trained and USPCA certified to detect the presence of illegal narcotics.

Cross Trained Dog: A police canine team, which is trained and USPCA certified as a patrol and a narcotics detection dog.

Procedures**A. Patrol Team Deployment Guidelines**

1. A police canine dog may be used to locate and apprehend a suspect if the handler reasonably believes that the individual(s) has either committed or is about to commit an offense and if any of the following conditions are present:
 - a. There is reasonable belief that the individual poses an immediate threat of violence or serious harm to the public, any officer, or the handler.
 - b. The individual is physically resisting arrest and the use of a police canine dog reasonably appears to be necessary to overcome such resistance.
 - c. The individual(s) is/are believed to be concealed in an area where entry by other than a police canine would pose a threat to the safety of officers or the public.
2. Situations could occur which do not fall within the provisions set forth in this policy and in such case, a standard reasonable objectiveness shall be used to review the decision to deploy a police canine, in view of the totality of the circumstances.
3. Mere flight from pursuing officer(s) shall not serve as good cause for the use of a police canine team to apprehend an individual.

B. Patrol Canine Deployment

1. Prior to deployment of a police canine to search and apprehend an individual, the police canine handler and/or the supervisor on the scene shall carefully consider all pertinent information available at the time, including:
 - a. The individuals' age or estimate thereof.
 - b. The nature of the suspected offense.
 - c. Any potential danger to the public and/or other deputies at the scene if the police canine is released.
 - d. The degree of resistance, if any, the subject has shown.
 - e. The potential for escape or flight if the police dog is not utilized.
 - f. The potential for injury to deputies or the public caused by the suspect if the police canine is not deployed.
2. Generally, the decision to deploy the dog shall remain with the handler; however, a supervisor sufficiently apprised of the situation may decide to not deploy the dog.
3. The police patrol canine shall not be used to search for missing persons except under the following circumstances:
 - a. If the individual is armed and poses a threat to searching deputies.
 - b. If delaying the search is so critical as to outweigh the risk of the missing person being accidentally bitten.
 - c. If directed by the incident supervisor to do so.

C. Narcotics Detection Canine Deployment

1. A narcotics detection team may be used in accordance with the current law to:
 - a. Assist in the search for narcotics during a search warrant service.
 - b. Obtain a search warrant by using the narcotics detection dog in support of probable cause.
 - c. Search vehicles, buildings, bags, and any other articles deemed necessary.

D. Reporting Procedures

1. Whenever a police canine is deployed, the handler shall complete a Canine Unit Incident Report (CCSO Form SO-042) and forward same to the K9 Supervisor in accordance with Agency time lines for a canine deployment where there is a recovery of evidence, the subject is located, or an arrest made based on the canine use.
2. If a bite or injury results from the use of the police canine, reporting procedures will be in accordance with Use of Force Policy, Chapter 7 – Section VI.

E. Canine Bites and Injuries

1. Any time a person is injured by the canine, the following measures shall be taken:
 - a. Medical aid shall be provided as soon as possible and without delay.

- b. Both the Duty Officer and the K9 Supervisor shall be notified.
- c. Photographs shall be taken of the injuries.
- d. A supervisor's review shall be completed by the Duty Officer or K9 Supervisor
- e. An employee or handler injury shall be handled in accordance with County Policy and Procedure governing workplace injuries and required reporting.

F. Training

1. Before assignment to the field, the police canine team shall attend a certified USPCA police canine course and be licensed through the Maryland State Police as required under the Public Safety article 2-313.
2. Canine teams shall attend a minimum of sixteen hours a month of retraining.
3. Handlers shall not be restricted from performing additional approved training when normal duty assignments permit sufficient time.
4. Canine teams shall be required to successfully complete an annual certification as per USPCA guidelines.
5. If at any time a canine team fails to meet the standard USPCA certification requirements, additional training and recertification will be required prior to returning to active duty.
6. Handlers must have the ability to pass designated physical fitness and agility tests, to be determined by the training agency, related to the duties of canine handling.
7. The Cecil County Sheriff's Office maintains control over some controlled substances, which are acquired during the course of criminal investigations. Following the adjudication of those cases controlled substances will be used for Canine Unit training purposes.
8. Each canine officer shall be issued some controlled narcotics for training purposes (ONLY).
9. The K9 Supervisor shall maintain a record of the following:
 - a. Type and description of controlled substances,
 - b. Weight/quantity,
 - c. Test results, and
 - d. Photographs of the controlled substances
10. All controlled substances issued to canine officers shall be kept in secure storage within the Cecil County Sheriff's Office when not being used for training purposes.
11. In the event training narcotics are lost, misplaced, destroyed or misused, in partial quantity or the entire amount, the Duty Officer, K9 Supervisor and Patrol Division Lieutenant shall be notified immediately and the incident shall be investigated.
12. If controlled substances are lost, misplaced, destroyed or misused outside the jurisdiction of Cecil County, the Duty Officer, K9 Supervisor and Patrol Division Lieutenant shall be notified immediately and the incident shall be investigated. In such case, the Patrol Division Lieutenant may choose to have

the incident investigated by the Law Enforcement agency in whose jurisdiction the incident occurred.

13. The Patrol Division Lieutenant will conduct an annual audit of all controlled substances which are issued to the canine officers/ unit.

G. Reporting Police Canine Injuries

1. In the event that a canine is injured, the injury shall be immediately reported to the Duty Officer and K9 Supervisor. The Duty Officer shall notify command staff if the K9 Supervisor is not readily available to do so.
2. Depending on the severity of the injury, the canine shall either be treated by the Agency veterinarian or transported to a designated emergency medical facility for treatment. If the handler and dog are out of the area, the handler may use the nearest available veterinarian.

H. Assignment of Police Canines

1. The police canine teams shall be assigned to the Patrol Division Lieutenant.
2. Police canine teams should function primarily as cover units; however, they may be assigned by the Duty Officer to other functions based on the needs of the shift.
3. Police canine teams shall not be routinely assigned to handle matters that will take them out of service for extended periods of time, (i.e., serious m/v crashes and incidents that involve extended amount of time on scene or follow-ups) unless absolutely necessary, and only with the approval of the Duty Officer
4. In the event the police canine teams are working overtime to supplement manpower needs, or are working overtime on a special detail, they may be assigned as deemed necessary by the supervisor in charge.

I. Requests for Canine Team

1. The Duty Officer or the K9 Supervisor must approve all requests for the police canine assistance from outside agencies, subject to the following provisions:
 - a. Police canine teams shall not be used outside Cecil County to perform any assignment which is not consistent with this policy.
 - b. Police canine teams shall not be called out while off-duty or used outside the County unless authorized by the Duty Officer or K9 Supervisor.
 - c. All public requests for a police canine demonstration must be made in writing and are subject to the approval of the Operations Commander.

J. Police Canine Handler Responsibility

1. Canine handlers shall make every effort to remain in service to respond to requests for canine services.
2. Canine handlers shall not transport prisoners.

3. It is the handler's discretion whether or not to utilize the assistance of another deputy to assist the team as a back-up officer.
4. The handler shall be available for call-outs.
5. A call-out schedule will be established in advance by the K9 Supervisor.
6. The handler shall be responsible for carrying his/her Agency issued cell phone at all times. Exception: The handler shall not be required to carry his/her Agency issued cell phone while on extended leave (Vacation/Sick leave more than 3 days).

K. Care for Canine and Equipment

1. The handler shall ensure that the police canine receives proper nutrition, grooming, training, medical care, affection, and living conditions. The handler shall be responsible for the following:
 - a. Handlers shall permit the K9 Supervisor to conduct spontaneous on-site inspections of the affected areas of his/her residence as well as his/her patrol vehicle, to verify that conditions and equipment conform to policy.
 - b. Any changes in the living status of the handler, which may affect the lodging or environment of the police canine, shall be reported to the K9 Supervisor immediately.
 - c. When off-duty the canine shall be maintained in a secure area (i.e., Agency issued kennel, fenced yard, inside residence).
 - d. The police canine should be permitted to socialize in the home with the handler's family.
 - e. Under no circumstances shall the police canine be lodged at another location unless approved by the Patrol Division Lieutenant.
 - f. Whenever a police canine handler anticipates taking a vacation or an extended number of days off, it may be necessary to temporarily relocate the police canine.
 1. In those situations, the handler shall give reasonable notice to the Unit Supervisor and make appropriate arrangements for the dog to be kept in an agency approved facility.

L. Police Canine in Public Areas

1. At all times the canine shall be under the control of the handler.
2. When the police canine vehicle is left unattended, all windows and doors shall be secured.

M. Handler Compensation

1. The police canine handler shall be compensated for time spent in the care, feeding, grooming and other needs of the dog.
2. On work days, a handler's shift will include the time needed for care of the dog. That time will be at the end of the shift unless circumstances dictate otherwise. The handler's work shift will be shortened by one hour and included as hours worked.

3. For scheduled days off, the handler will receive one hour of compensable time or overtime for care and maintenance of the dog.

N. Supervisor Responsibility

1. The K9 Supervisor shall be appointed by the Sheriff and shall supervise the Police Canine Program.
2. The K9 Supervisor shall report directly to the Patrol Division Lieutenant
3. The K9 Supervisor shall be responsible for, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Maintain liaison with the vendor kennel.
 - b. Maintain liaison with Administrative Staff and functional supervisors.
 - c. Maintain liaison with allied agency canine coordinators.
 - d. Maintain accurate records to document police canine activities.
 - e. Recommend and oversee the procurement of needed equipment and services for the unit.
 - f. Be responsible for scheduling all police canine related activities.
 - g. Ensure the police canine teams are scheduled for continuous training to maximize the capabilities of teams.
 - h. Hold inspections of the canine patrol unit and canine's kennel.
 - i. Monitor medical/veterinary examinations, etc.