

DEKALB POLICE DEPARTMENT

Subject: **Police Canine Use**

Policy #: **406.6**

Effective Since 3-1-09

Revision Effective: 1-1-19

FTO Training Task: # 9

Reference Material: IACP K-9 Model Policy

ILEAP Standards Covered: OPR.01.09

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the management of the department's canine unit and use of police canines in field operations.

POLICY: Because of a superior sense of smell and hearing, with natural and trained devotion to duty, the trained law enforcement canine is a valuable supplement to police manpower. Utilization of canines requires adherence to procedures that properly control their use of force potential and that channel their specialized capabilities into legally acceptable crime prevention and control activities.

DEFINITION: Canine Team: An officer handler and his assigned police canine.

PROCEDURES:

A. Canine Team Utilization

1. Canine teams are available while on duty, or when called out with permission from a shift supervisor, to conduct the following activities:
 - a. building searches for offenders in hiding;
 - b. assist in the arrest or prevent the escape of serious or violent offenders;
 - c. protect officers or others from death or serious injury;
 - d. track suspects;
 - e. locate lost or missing persons, hidden instrumentalities, or evidence of a crime;
 - f. detect the presence of concealed narcotics;
 - g. participate in public relations events.

[ILEAP ADM.01.09(a)]
2. Canine teams should not be used to respond to minor incidents but may engage in assignments not listed in this policy with the approval of the canine unit supervisor or shift supervisor.
3. Canine handlers are responsible for determining whether a situation justifies canine use and the appropriate tactical measures that should be taken. Where the on-scene supervisor disagrees with the handler's tactical assessment, the Patrol Division Commander shall be notified. Where time does not permit such notification, the directions of the on-scene supervisor shall be followed.
4. Police canines shall not be handled or given commands by anyone other than the assigned handler. Should the assigned handler be injured or otherwise unable to command the canine, another canine handler shall be contacted for assistance.
5. Canine team assistance shall be requested from police officers through the communications center while the canine team is on duty. Requests for canine assistance while the canine team is off duty shall be made with permission from an immediate supervisor through the communications center. Communications center personnel shall forward requisite information concerning the incident to the canine handler.
6. Arrestees shall not be transported in the same vehicle with a law enforcement canine unless alternative transportation is not available and immediate transport is essential for safety or security reasons.

B. Canine Team Qualifications and Training

1. Applicants for the police canine unit must have:
 - a. at least three years of uniform patrol experience with satisfactory work performance, disciplinary, and medical leave records;
 - b. a willingness to remain with the unit for at least five years;

- c. a willingness (together with other family members) to care for and house the canine at the officer's residence with a secure outdoor area for the canine that conforms with departmental requirements;
 - d. a strong desire to work with canines and willingness to care for and train the animal.
 2. The Chief of Police or his designee shall be responsible for selection of canine handlers in accordance with established departmental procedures.
 3. All departmental canines must meet established initial certification requirements. Untrained canines may not be used for canine duty.
 4. New canine handlers must complete the prescribed canine training course and successfully meet all course requirements.
 5. Canine handlers are required to demonstrate acquired abilities to the Patrol Division Commander on at least an annual basis as prescribed in departmental regulations.
- C. **Canines & Use of Force** : Use of specially trained police canines for law enforcement responsibilities constitutes a real or implied use of force. In this as in other cases, officers may only use that degree of force that reasonably appears necessary to apprehend or secure a suspect as governed by the department's use of force policy.
- D. **Releasing Canines** : Canine handlers may release a canine on a suspect in cases where all of the following is known at the time of the incident:
 1. The severity of the crime justifies canine deployment and potential bite; and
 2. The suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of law enforcement officers or others; and
 3. The suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight.
- E. **Reporting Requirement** : In all instances where a canine is deployed in a tactical situation, an incident report shall be submitted by the canine handler.
- F. **Canine Bites** : Whenever a canine bites an individual, whether or not in the line-of-duty, the handler shall:
 1. Summon a supervisory officer to the scene;
 2. Examine the affected area to determine the seriousness of the bite or injury;
 3. Obtain medical treatment for the person; medical personnel should examine the affected area irrespective of the perceived seriousness of the bite or injury;
 4. Take color photographs of the affected area if possible prior to and following medical treatment; and
 5. Complete an incident report whenever it has been alleged that a canine has bitten or otherwise injured an individual. The report must detail the circumstances surrounding the incident, the identity of the individual involved and any witnesses, the extent of injuries if known, and measures taken in response to the incident. The original report shall be filed in accordance with the department's use of force policy.
 6. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the City Legal Division.
- D. **Building Searches for Suspects in Hiding** : A primary use of departmental canines is for locating potentially dangerous suspects in buildings or related structures where search by officers would create an unnecessary risk. These searches shall be governed by the following:
 1. The building perimeter shall be secured by patrol personnel.
 2. Whenever possible, the building's owner should be contacted to determine whether there may be tenants or others in the building and to ascertain the building's layout.

3. When a canine building search is anticipated, a preliminary search by officers should not be conducted as this will interfere with the canine's ability to discriminate scents.
4. The on-scene supervisor shall also take the following steps in preparation for the canine search:
 - a. Evacuate all tenants, workers or others from the facility.
 - b. Request that all air conditioning heating or other air-blowing systems be shut off so as not to interfere with the canine's search for scents.
5. Upon entrance to the building all exits should be secured, and communications limited to those of a tactical nature.
6. The canine should be unleashed during a building search unless there is an imminent risk of injury to innocent persons within the facility.
7. The canine should not be used to search facilities that contain substances potentially harmful to the animal unless overriding risk to human life is present.
8. Before commencing the search, the handler or other appropriate personnel shall loudly announce and repeat the statement that there are police officers on the premises and that a trained police canine will be released if the individual does not surrender. A reasonable amount of time shall be allowed for the suspect to respond. This warning shall be repeated on each level of all multilevel structures.
9. When apprehending suspects in these or related circumstances, canines shall be commanded to disengage as soon as the suspect is subdued or readily complies with officer direction.

E. Crowd Control

1. Canine teams shall not be used for crowd control at peaceful demonstrations.
2. Canine teams may be used for crowd control upon approval of the shift supervisor to protect life or property during a riot or other major unauthorized gathering that cannot readily be controlled by other means. In these situations, canines shall:
 - a. Be short leashed at all times unless no other means are available to protect an individual from serious injury; and
 - b. Not initiate any offensive action, unless to guard against imminent loss of life or serious bodily injury.

F. Drug Detection : Use of police canines in a drug detection capacity is authorized in the following situations and under the following conditions:

1. The canine handler shall maintain records that document the use and the proficiency of individual canines in drug detection. This documentation shall be readily available to canine officers and others who may need it when seeking warrants.
2. Random exploratory sniffing of luggage, packages or other inanimate objects may be conducted in public facilities such as airports, train stations, bus or marine terminals, as authorized by the canine unit supervisor or other authorized command officer.
 - a. Exploratory sniffing in these facilities shall be confined solely to those areas open to the general public and, whenever possible, with advance knowledge and consent of the appropriate facility manager.
 - b. Exploratory sniffing shall be conducted without interference or annoyance to the public or interruption of facility operations.
3. Canine sniffs conducted in areas restricted to the public, such as baggage staging areas, are considered searches and may be conducted only with reasonable suspicion or probable cause to believe that specific items contain illegal narcotics.
4. Field officers may detain specific checked luggage or related items for purposes of requesting a canine sniff if reasonable suspicion exists but may not detain the items so long as to interfere with the owner's scheduled travel.

5. When a drug detection canine alerts to luggage or related items, in this or other circumstances, a warrant or consent to search must be obtained before it is opened unless exigent circumstances exist to conduct an on-site search.
 6. Sniffing of an individual's person is permitted in all circumstances when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the individual is in possession of illegal narcotics.
 7. The use of drug detection canines in public schools is permitted only when:
 - a. The school's principal or designated authority requests or approves use of the canines;
 - b. There is reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal narcotics are being distributed and/ or consumed on the premises such that the interests of the school are being unacceptably compromised; and
 - c. The search is limited to inanimate objects in public areas and the exterior of student lockers unless reasonable suspicion exists to gain admission to lockers and related areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.
 8. Sniffs of the exterior of residences—either individual dwellings or the common areas of multiple unit dwellings—are not permitted without a search warrant.
 9. Drug-sniffing canines may be used to sniff motor vehicles when:
 - a. Reasonable suspicion exists to believe the operator or passengers are in possession of illegal narcotics or,
 - b. During a vehicle stop, the canine is used to sniff the vehicle's exterior in an exploratory manner. Unless the canine alerts to the vehicle, the vehicle may not be detained longer than necessary to conclude the business associated with the initial stop.
- G. Tracking:** Police canines are available with supervisory approval to track missing persons or suspects, or to locate evidence that the officer has reason to believe has been abandoned or hidden in a specified open area. Such searches are subject to the following conditions and limitations:
1. When officers are pursuing suspects and contact with the suspect is lost, the officer, prior to summoning a canine team shall:
 - a. Stop and pinpoint the location where the suspect was last seen;
 - b. Shut off engines of vehicles in the area if possible; and
 - c. Avoid vehicle or foot movement in the area where the suspect or subject was last seen.
 2. Canines used for tracking persons should remain on a leash of sufficient length to provide a reasonable measure of safety to the subject of the search without compromising the canine's tracking abilities.
 3. Canine teams may be used to locate small children. The risks of attack to the subject shall be explained to the parents or next of kin and their approval obtained to use the dog. The use of the canine shall be explained by the canine handler and on-scene supervisor.
 4. Canine teams should not be used to apprehend the mentally disturbed if no crime is involved.
 5. On-scene supervisory personnel shall:
 - a. Secure the perimeter of the area to be searched;
 - b. Secure the integrity of the area to be searched by keeping all personnel out of the area.
- H. Canine Use and Care :**
1. Police canines shall not be used for breeding, participation in shows, field trials, exhibitions or other demonstrations, or for off-duty employment unless authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee.

2. Canine handlers are personally responsible for the daily care and feeding of their animal to include:
 - a. Maintenance and cleaning of the kennel and yard area where the canine is housed;
 - b. Provision of food, water and general diet maintenance as prescribed by the department-authorized veterinarian;
 - c. Grooming on a daily basis, or more often as required by weather, working conditions or other factors;
 - d. Daily exercise (police canines are not permitted to run at large); and
 - e. General medical attention and maintenance of health care records.
3. Where the handler is unable to perform these and related duties due to illness, injury or leave:
 - a. Another canine handler may be assigned to temporarily care for the dog; or
 - b. The canine may be housed in a departmentally approved kennel when the handler is unavailable.
4. Teasing, agitating or roughhousing with a police canine is strictly prohibited unless performed as part of a training exercise.
5. Handlers shall not permit anyone to pet or hug their canine without their prior permission and immediate supervision. Should a civilian express a desire to do so, he should be informed that police canines are serious working dogs and that they can be dangerous if improperly approached.
6. A canine handler may apply to take personal possession of his dog where:
 - a. The dog is retired from duty or relieved due to injury; or
 - b. The handler is transferred, promoted or retires and a decision is made not to retrain the dog for another handler.

I. Equipment:

1. The department is responsible for purchasing or providing the canine team with the following equipment: bite suit; 6' leather general purpose lead; 15' nylon/leather/gripper tracking lead; 30' agitation training lead; muzzle; pinch collar; leather strap collar; fur saver collar; electric training shock collar; badge with holder; body armor; bite sleeve; hidden bite sleeve; scratch pants or apron; reward toys (tugs & balls); food and water bowls; water bowl for squad car; kennel for residence on concrete slab; dog house; crate; brush; nail clipper. [ILEAP OPR.01.09(c)]
2. The equipment list may be modified as needed to accommodate any special needs that arise.
3. The handler is responsible for the proper use and maintenance of all canine-specific equipment.
4. Any damaged or lost equipment will be reported through the chain of command to the Patrol Division Commander for replacement.
5. Canine-related equipment is for use by a canine team only.

J. Training:

1. The canine handler shall perform monthly maintenance training for a minimum of sixteen hours per month.
2. The canine handler shall be permitted to perform this training on duty for up to eight hours per week, as time permits. The operational needs of the department will take precedence over training matters.
3. The canine handler shall make an effort to train with the canine during each shift.
4. The canine must meet the established requirements of an annual certification.
5. Officers interested in becoming a canine handler are encouraged to assist canine teams with training.

[ILEAP OPR.01.09(b)]

K. Training Records :

1. The canine handler shall submit written verification of any and all training conducted.
2. The canine handler shall forward the written verification to the Patrol Division Commander.
3. The Patrol Commander will review the training record and maintain a training file for all such records; and will also ensure that the minimum sixteen hours of training is being performed each month.
4. If a canine handler or canine is unable to perform the required monthly training due to injury or illness, this will be recorded in the training records.
5. In January of each year, the canine officer will provide the Chief of Police with an annual report of the canine program from the previous calendar year. Canine training, program costs, activity, resulting arrests, significant cases, and other pertinent information shall be included in the report.

L. Training Aids: It is necessary for the canine to train with actual narcotics and controlled substances. These training aids will be accounted for in the following manner:

1. Training aids will come from one of the following sources:
 - a. Ordered directly from the DEA; or
 - b. Upon receiving permission from the Patrol Division Commander, confiscated narcotics recovered by the department may be used as training aids in the following situations:
 - When the narcotics have already been accounted for in temporary or permanent evidence under the department's property record system; AND
 - When the narcotics are not part of a criminal investigation and are not needed for any future court proceedings; OR
 - When the narcotics have been part of a criminal investigation and were retained for court purposes, but the criminal case has been disposed of in court AND the State's Attorney's office has approved of the disposal and/or training aid use of the narcotics.
2. Training aids will be recorded in the following manner:
 - a. All training aids retained by a canine handler will be documented by the canine handler and the documentation retained by the Patrol Commander. Records relating to actual training with the training aids will be retained with the canine's training records.
 - b. If the training aid is an item previously documented in the department's evidence storage system, the PR records will indicate release from evidence to the canine handler.
 - c. Upon training with a training aid, such use will be documented by the canine handler on the training documentation sheet.
 - d. All training aid use and storage is subject to inventory and inspection by a Division Commander and/or the Chief at any time.
 - e. The canine handler is directly responsible for the proper storage, use, and handling of any training aid. Any training aid that becomes unaccounted for will be the responsibility of the canine handler. The canine handler will immediately report to the shift supervisor any training aid that is lost or destroyed.
 - f. A training aid that is no longer to be used for training purposes will be entered into evidence under the property record system and will be retained until such time that any court cases relating to the canine are disposed of in court, at which point the training aid will be disposed of by department's designated evidence handler.

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3. Training aids will be stored in the following manner:
 - a. When not in use, the training aids will always be stored in a lockable container that has access only by the canine handler and the Patrol Commander.
 - b. The lockable training aid container will be stored either in temporary evidence, the department armory, or in the canine handler's police vehicle in a compartment that is securely attached to the vehicle.

Policy originally issued 8-21-03; this revision becomes effective on 1-1-19 by authority of the Chief of Police.

NOTE: This policy and procedure summarizes the department's position on this specific matter. This policy is for general direction and guidance primarily designed for use by the department's members. This policy is for internal use only and does not create or enlarge an officer's liability in any way. This policy shall not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of an internal departmental complaint and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.