

Canines

Index Code: 1609

Effective Date: 09/15/2005 (Revised 2-28-22)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish the role of the canine team, and provide guidelines for the safe and proper deployment of canines.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff to employ selected deputies as canine handlers, and to utilize specially trained canines for support as outlined in this directive.

III. Definitions

For purposes of this directive the following terms have the associated meanings.

A. Police Canine (K9)

A police canine is a trained canine (working dog) recognized for its ability to serve the law enforcement community and aid deputies in their law enforcement duties.

B. Canine Handler

A canine handler is a deputy charged with the responsibility of using a canine in the performance of his/her duties and attending to that canine at all times. Canine handlers are supervised by their regular patrol supervisors as well as the canine unit coordinator.

C. Canine Coordinator

A canine coordinator is a deputy (generally a supervisor) designated by the Sheriff or designee and assigned to oversee the administration and operations of the canine teams.

D. Assistant Canine Coordinator

A The Sheriff or designee may designate an Assistant Canine Coordinator who shall assist the Canine Coordinator with administrative and operational canine duties and will act as the Canine Coordinator if designated or in the absence of the Canine Coordinator.

E. Canine Team

A canine team is comprised of one canine and one canine handler.

F. Cross-Trained Canine

A cross-trained canine is a canine trained to perform multiple functions such as tracking and/or the detection of explosives or drugs.

G. Dog Bite

A dog bite is 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.).

H. Off Lead

Off lead is the condition when there is no physical attachment or connection between the canine and the canine handler.

I. On Lead

On lead is 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 purposes of control and restraint.

J. Alert (Positive Alert)

An alert is when the canine exhibits a change in behavior indicating it recognizes a trained odor such as an explosive or drug.

K. No Alert (Negative Alert)

A no alert is when the canine does not exhibit behavior indicating that it recognizes a trained odor.

IV. Selection Process

A. Canine Handler

The Operations Commander, and/or their designee, will conduct the selection process with input from the canine coordinator. Deputies considered for the position of canine handler must retain the following characteristics:

1. Maturity.
2. Good physical and mental health.
3. An affection and enthusiasm for dogs.
4. A lifestyle suited to caring for a dog.
5. Good communication skills, both verbal and written.
6. The willingness to care for and house the canine at the deputy's residence, with a secure outdoor area for the canine that conforms to agency requirements.
7. The willingness to undertake additional training for effective use of the canine.
8. The willingness to maintain a canine vehicle and additional equipment required for handling and maintaining a canine.
9. Have a history of positive Performance Evaluations.
10. Not have a propensity to engage in improper use of force.
11. The ability and lifestyle that permits being called back to duty at any time on any given day.
12. The ability to complete accurate reports in a timely manner.
13. Available and interested in promoting positive public relations through education and demonstrations.
14. Applicants shall have at minimum 2 years of operational experience.
15. Must have general knowledge of canine legalities and operational procedures

B. Canine Handler Testing

The testing procedure will consist of four phases, each of which must be passed to move on to the next one:

1. Written test
2. Oral interview
3. Performance evaluation and review by the Sheriff or his designee
4. Physical agility test

V. Canine Health and Care

A. Canine handlers are responsible for the health, care, and wellbeing of their assigned canine.

B. Each canine handler will ensure that their canine is kept clean, and in the best possible health through routine bathing and proper maintenance of the canine vehicle and the canine's home environment. If the canine coordinator observes any problems with the canine that raise any concerns about the home environment, the canine coordinator will inspect any areas of the canine handler's home that are normally accessible to the canine.

C. Each canine handler is responsible for maintaining the health of the canine through regular visits to the veterinarian. Only veterinarians approved for use by the canine coordinator may be used for checkups and routine medical shots. The canine coordinator must approve routine veterinarian visits and, if required by the veterinarian, obtain a purchase order in advance. In an emergency, where the canine's health is at risk, the need to secure a purchase order in advance may be waived upon receiving verbal approval from the canine coordinator, or a commander if the canine coordinator is unavailable. The Chief Deputy and Operations Commander must be informed of any emergency veterinarian visits as soon as possible through the chain of command.

D. At no time will any canines owned by the Office of the Sheriff be bred. If it is found that a canine handler purposefully bred their assigned canine, the handler will immediately be removed from the canine program and an internal complaint shall be initiated.

E. In the event of a serious sickness or injury, the canine will be taken to an approved veterinarian, whether on or off duty, and the canine coordinator notified as soon as practical as well as the Chief Deputy and Operations Commander through the chain of command. If the canine is injured on duty, a Canine Deployment Report will be completed.

F. In the event a canine is sick or injured to the degree that it cannot perform its assigned duties, the canine handler will notify the canine coordinator as soon as possible.

G. All receipts and documentation related to veterinarian visits will be forwarded to the canine coordinator. Invoices must be provided to the Quartermaster or Chief Deputy without delay.

H. During all forms of absence, whether short or long term, when the canine handler cannot maintain their assigned canine, the canine will be housed only at specified kennels approved by the canine coordinator or temporarily housed with another canine handler.

I. If the canine handler is suspended from duty for any punitive or administrative reason, the Operations Commander or designee will determine, with input from the canine coordinator, the appropriate continuing care for the canine.

J. Canine food and supplies will be purchased as needed through businesses approved by the canine coordinator. Prior to any purchase of food or supplies a purchase order must be obtained.

K. Canine handlers will not excessively use force in the handling, training, or working of any assigned canine.

VI. Canine Safety

A. Canine handlers must be in control of their canines at all times and are responsible for the actions of their canines both on duty and off duty.

B. Canines are to be used only for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

C. When in public, canine handlers must be mindful of pedestrian traffic, and be particularly alert for unpredictable actions from the public such as attempting to pet or agitate the canine.

D. While at the canine handler's residence, canines must be properly isolated from friends, guests, relatives and the general public. Contact with the canine should be limited to the canine handler and family/household members. Doors used to isolate a canine will be equipped with a locking bolt, or a sliding type bolt, high enough or complicated enough to prevent children from opening the door.

E. At no time will a canine be left outside unsupervised, unless on the handler's property and in a secured facility.

F. The canine handler's property and or the canine kennel must be marked with a sign such as, "CAUTION POLICE CANINE DO NOT ENTER."

G. The Agency issued canine will not be taken out of Maryland while off-duty unless approved by the canine coordinator, Operations Commander or Chief Deputy.

VII. Arrest and Apprehension Procedures

A. 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 offense, and if any of the following conditions exist:

1. 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.
2. The individual is resisting arrest and the use of the canine is necessary to overcome the resistance when other means have failed or are less viable.
3. 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.

B. Without the presence of one or more of the above listed conditions, mere flight from a pursuing law enforcement officer does not serve as good cause for the use of a canine to apprehend an individual.

C. The canine handler will carefully evaluate each situation, and 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:

1. The individual's estimated age.
2. The nature and severity of the offense.

3. The potential danger to the public and/or other law enforcement officers.
 4. The potential danger to the canine or the canine handler.
 5. The degree of resistance shown by the offender.
 6. The potential for escape if a canine is not used.
 7. The potential for injury to the public and/or other law enforcement officers if a canine is not used.
- D. The canine handler has the final authority in deciding when to or not to deploy a canine.
- E. Once a canine is deployed, the canine handler will be in charge of the search area and direct other personnel to aid him/her in the search.
- F. In the event a canine handler makes an arrest and the suspect is injured, the handler will notify an on duty supervisor and the canine coordinator or designee as soon as possible. If available, the canine coordinator or designee and an on-duty supervisor will respond to all agency canine bites.
- G. Except in exigent circumstances, or where there is an imminent danger of death or serious injury, the canine handler must make every attempt to keep the canine in visual contact.
- H. When apprehending a suspect, the canine will be commanded to disengage as soon as the suspect is subdued or readily complies with the handler's directions.
- I. The canine will be leashed upon the arrest of a suspect and at the conclusion of a building search.
- J. A canine team will not be used to apprehend an individual suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or a person believed to be suffering from a psychological condition if no crime has been committed.
- K. A canine will not be deployed until a proper announcement has been given three times in a loud and clear manner. Example: "Sheriff's Office K9, speak to me now or the dog will be released." A public address system in a building or from a patrol vehicle should be used when available. The warning should be repeated at each level of a multi-level structure. An exception to this warning is allowed in those circumstances when such warning would increase the risk of injury to the canine handler or other law enforcement officers. A reasonable amount of time will be given after the announcement to allow the suspect to surrender and innocent persons to exit the area. When there is a reasonable belief that the suspect speaks a language other than English, an individual fluent in that language should be used if available and the situation permits their use. The occurrence and verbiage of each warning will be documented in every Canine Incident Report that involves the deployment of a canine.

VIII. Building Searches

- A. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, a canine should not be released until a second deputy is available to assist the canine team with a building search.
- B. Whenever possible, the building owner should be contacted to determine whether there may be tenants or other occupants in the building and to ascertain the building's layout.
- C. In preparation for a search all tenants and other occupants of the building should be evacuated, and all air conditioning, heating, or other air-blowing systems should be shut off to prevent interference with the canine's scent.
- D. Upon entrance into a building, all exits should be secured unless manpower dictates otherwise, and communications limited to those of a tactical nature.

E. No one, including other law enforcement officers, owners, or residents, will be permitted in a building with the canine team while the search is being conducted, unless the handler determines that their presence is necessary for the safe and expeditious conclusion of the search.

F. Two or more canine teams may be committed to a building search when it is determined that the area to be searched would necessitate more than one canine team due to the size of the area, number of floors, etc. When searching large buildings, canines must be kept separated.

G. 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. Under such circumstances the on-scene supervisor will contact the S.W.A.T. Team and a negotiator. An exception to this rule may be made to save the life of a law enforcement officer or an innocent person.

IX. Tracking & Searching Wooded Areas

A. A patrol certified (apprehension) canine will only be used to track lost or missing persons in life threatening situations, when all other means have failed, and with the approval of the canine coordinator his/her supervisor/commander.

1. For lost and/or missing persons, a trained bloodhound or non-apprehension canine will be used.

B. When a canine is available for tracking, it may be used to track criminal suspects or locate evidence that has been abandoned or hidden in a specified area. Such searches are subject to the following conditions and limitations:

1. The canine handler will conduct the track with the canine 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.

2. The canine handler will determine which personnel will have access to the area being searched or will accompany the canine team on trails.

3. Upon locating a suspect, the handler will give a verbal warning in order to afford the suspect an opportunity to surrender without further action that may require the use of the canine in the apprehension.

4. Allied agencies may be utilized in the absence of agency trained tracking canines and/or any other specific needed detections.

X. Bloodhound Deployment

A. The Office of the Sheriff may have the ability to deploy a bloodhound, if one is available, for trailing missing persons including juveniles and the elderly. If the agency has a bloodhound, it can also be used to trail criminal suspects when a patrol tracking canine is not able to due to scene contamination.

B. Allied agencies may be utilized in the absence of agency trained tracking canines and/or any other specific needed detections.

XI. Crowd Control

A. A canine team may respond as backup for crowd control but will not deploy the canine at a peaceful demonstration.

B. A canine team may be used upon approval of the on-scene supervisor to protect life or property during a riot or other major unlawful assembly after an order to disperse has been made and disregarded. In these situations, the following conditions will prevail:

1. The canine will be kept on a short lead in order to protect individuals from serious injury.
2. The canine handler will not initiate any offensive action unless necessary to guard against imminent loss of life, serious bodily injury, or substantial property damage.

XII. Bite/Scratch Procedures

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:

- A. Offer medical attention by qualified medical personnel.
- B. If the subject refuses medical attention, document such refusal in the incident report and attempt to obtain their signature on a Medical Treatment Refusal Report.
- C. If possible, obtain color photographs of the affected area before and after medical treatment. The photographs will be uploaded into the RMS. If the subject alleges that the injury is not visible, the location of the alleged injury will be photographed in the same manner as if an actual injury was sustained.
- D. Notify an on-duty supervisor and the canine coordinator as soon as possible who are then responsible for immediately reporting the incident up the chain of command to the Sheriff.
- E. Provide the subject with a Spleen Risk Notification Form and a copy of the canine's Rabies Vaccination Certification.
- F. Complete and document post-bite interviews. (This function shall be completed by a supervisor if directed to do so by the Canine Coordinator, the Duty Officer or a member of the agency Command Staff.) Amongst those that may be interviewed include:
 1. Suspects
 2. Witnesses
 3. EMS personnel
 4. Hospital personnel
 5. Detection Center personnel
 6. Other law enforcement officers
- G. Complete all required reports prior to the end of the shift unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.
- H. A canine involved in a bite will be taken to an approved veterinarian within 10 days of the incident for a medical clearance.

XIII. Drug Detection

- A. Canines trained in drug detection may be used to:
 1. Search or scan buildings, vehicles, and other areas or items.
 2. Provide probable cause in obtaining a search warrant.
 3. Assist in the search for controlled dangerous substances during the execution of a search warrant.
 4. Assist in drug education programs and demonstrations.
- B. Canines trained in drug detection will not be used to search a person for controlled dangerous substances. The canine may only scan personal possessions after being removed from the person. If a canine alert causes the handler to believe that a person may be in possession of CDS, the deputy in charge will determine how to proceed with the investigation.

- C. The decision to use a canine for drug detection rests solely with the handler. The handler is responsible for deployment of the canine as a method of investigation.
- D. On duty canine teams will be available for use by local and allied law enforcement agencies.
- E. If there is no canine team on duty, one may only be called out with the approval of the duty officer.

XIV. Public Demonstrations

- A. The canine coordinator or his/her supervisor/commander must approve all requests for public demonstrations by canine teams in advance.
 - 1. The completed canine demonstration request form should be received for all demonstration requests at least 14 days prior to the event.
- B. Canine handlers will not demonstrate “apprehension” work to the public unless authorized to do so by the canine coordinator.

XV. Canine Training and Certification Standards

A. Initial Training

Initial training for a canine team, or new training as an explosive or drug detection team, will be conducted through an outside agency or a vendor approved by the canine coordinator with concurrence from his/her chain of command up to and including the Sheriff.

B. Maintenance Training

- 1. After receiving initial training and certification, each canine team will receive annual maintenance training by an agency trainer, outside agency trainer or vendor approved by the canine coordinator. When available, the maintenance training will be conducted by a certified police canine instructor.
- 2. To ensure consistency in training, no handler, trainer, or outside vendor will train to a standard that is contrary to the policies or written directives of the Queen Anne’s County Office of the Sheriff.
- 3. All participants in any training activities will be on duty and approved by the canine coordinator through the use of a Training Request Form.
- 4. Canine training and/or deployment deficiencies will be documented and corrected through maintenance training.
- 5. A canine team that has been unable to become certified due to a documented problem, will be placed out of service until the issue is resolved, the team certified, or other administrative actions are taken.
- 6. Each canine team will complete a minimum of sixteen (16) hours of maintenance training each month. The Operations Commander, Canine Coordinator or designee may modify maintenance hours of canine teams to promote group training and team maintenance proficiencies.

C. Certification

- 1. Certification will be conducted once per calendar year, or within Working Dog Association standards, per canine team, by a master certified trainer approved by the Canine Coordinator and/or Operations Commander.
- 2. Upon completion of these certifications, updated records will be provided to the State’s Attorney’s Office, the Canine Coordinator, and placed in each handlers training records.
 - a. Narcotic Detection
 - Testing will be conducted in four areas, with each odor hidden per area. Each canine team is allowed one miss overall. A miss is an incorrect response by the canine team.
 - a) Vehicles – There will be a minimum of six vehicles used for testing.

- b) Buildings – Minimum of six rooms for testing.
- c) Lockers/Luggage - Minimum of 25 Lockers or 15 pieces of luggage.
- d) Open area – Minimum of 200 x 200 ft area to be used.

b. Tracking/Trailing

The testing track will be a minimum of five hundred yards in length and the test will last at least 30 minutes. There will be a minimum of three surface changes and one fresh cross track. The trail will have at least two turns with a maximum of four turns. The trail layer will be always hidden from the canine team. A scent article may be left at the start of the trail.

c. Bite dog certifications and proficiencies

Testing will be conducted in accordance with proficiencies required by the master certified trainer.

3. The Canine Coordinator, his/her supervisor, Operations Commander or the Sheriff will make the final determination on whether a canine team is placed in or out of service, based on certification, performances, veterinarian advise, and/or recommendation by the Sheriff or his designee.

XVI. CDS Canine Training Aids

A. CDS training aids will only be used for the training of drug detection canine teams.

B. The canine coordinator will be responsible for the following:

1. Obtaining CDS training aids for use by the canine teams.
2. Maintaining a current list of training aids possessed by the Queen Anne's County Office of the Sheriff, providing a copy to the Operations Commander.
3. Maintaining current certifications for the CDS Training Aids through the State of Maryland and the Drug Enforcement Administration.
4. Storing the training aids in a secure location within the Queen Anne's County Office of the Sheriff's Headquarters building. Only the canine coordinator, the Operations Commander, and designated canine handlers will have access to the storage location.
5. Ensuring that CDS training aids are stored in waterproof type boxes to prevent scent-contamination. Each box will only contain one type of CDS. Inside of each box will also be a current list of CDS training aids contained within the box.

XVII. Use of CDS Training Aids

A. The following procedures are designed to maintain the integrity of the CDS training aids:

1. CDS training aids will not be removed from storage for any reason other than training, demonstration or inventory without the approval of the canine coordinator or the Operations Commander.
2. Any authorized person removing a CDS training aid will complete the Canine Training Aid/Inventory Log.
3. After a CDS training aid box is removed from storage but before the training aids are used for training or demonstration, the CDS training aids in the box will be inventoried.

4. The deputy removing CDS training aids from storage is solely and personally responsible for their legal and proper use during the training or demonstration and for their safe return. At no time will a person other than the canine handler, canine coordinator, Operations Commander or designee have possession of a CDS training aid.
5. If a CDS training aid is lost or stolen, the incident will be appropriately documented, and the canine coordinator and Operations Commander notified as soon as possible.
6. In the event a CDS training aid needs to be destroyed, the canine coordinator will be notified and the current procedures for the destruction of CDS followed.
7. The canine coordinator, will conduct random quarterly inventory checks of the CDS training aids, and document the inventory on the Canine Training Aid/Inventory Log as well as a quarterly report submitted to the Operations Commander and Chief Deputy.

XVIII. Handler Compensation

Handlers will be compensated for the “at home care” of their canines (time spent in the care, feeding, grooming and other needs of the canine) in a manner consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act. If possible, canine handlers will include 30 minutes of canine handling time per on duty shift and 30 minutes at their overtime rate for off duty days.

XIX. Call-Out Procedures

1. All canine teams are subject to being called out during off-duty hours except when on vacation or sick leave.
2. The on-duty supervisor will determine if a canine team will be called out for in-county requests. For out-of-county requests, the canine coordinator or a commander will make the determination.
3. A canine handler will be compensated for a call-out at their overtime rate or credited with comp time for the actual hours worked or three hours, whichever is greater. If the canine use is on an extension of a regular shift, the handler will receive compensation at their overtime rate or credited with comp time for actual hours worked.

XX. Canine Equipment

A. Issued Equipment.

Each canine handler will be issued specialized items necessary for the proper training and use of their canine as needed. All equipment shall be requested on an official supply request form and forwarded through the proper chain of command.

B. Equipment Maintenance

1. Each canine handler is responsible for maintaining his or her equipment in good working condition. These items will be included and inspected on a quarterly basis on the Vehicle/Personnel Inspection Report
2. Any equipment that is lost, stolen, or becomes defective, must be appropriately documented, and reported to the canine coordinator as soon as possible. The canine coordinator will then request replacement through the Quartermaster.

C. Vehicle Maintenance and Operation

1. Each canine patrol vehicle will be equipped with a functioning heat alarm system.
2. When the canine handler is away from the vehicle with the canine inside and the engine idling, the rear windows will be left open a minimum of six inches regardless of weather conditions to ensure adequate ventilation.
3. If a detainee or person requires transportation in an agency vehicle, the canine handler can transport a detainee in the front seat of the canine handler's vehicle. A transport unit will be summoned to the scene if the canine handler determines it necessary.
4. Each canine handler is responsible for thoroughly cleaning the canine transport insert at least once per week. This includes wiping down all panels and top of insert.
5. Whenever a canine unit checks in at the beginning of a tour of duty, it will be assumed that the canine is inside the vehicle and available unless the handler notifies dispatch differently.

D. Authorized Uniforms

1. A canine handler shall wear during deployment and training an issued uniform that includes prominently displayed badge and Office of the Sheriff insignias identifying them as Sheriff unless exigent circumstances exist with approval from the Operations Commander or his designee. Body worn cameras shall be worn and activated for all enforcement related deployments.
2. All Canine handlers are authorized to wear a designated uniform consisting of grey utility pants, black BDU style shirts, a load bearing vest cover for issued ballistic vest, and issued nylon web gear.
3. Canine handlers attending court and working assignments without their canine partners, will wear a regular class "B" uniform, in accordance with proper dress and attire

XXI. Canine Coordinator Duties

- A. In addition to the duties described above, the canine coordinator will maintain accurate and complete records for each canine team used by the Queen Anne's County Office of the Sheriff.
- B. In the event a canine handler makes an arrest, and the suspect is injured by the dog, the canine coordinator will ensure that the following are completed (if applicable):
 1. Incident Report
 2. Use of Force Report
 3. Spleen Risk Notification Form
 4. Medical Treatment Refusal Report
 5. Photographs of canine related injuries and/or any areas alleged to have been bitten, scratched and/or injured.
- C. The canine coordinator will include any applicable comments regarding the deployment and, if necessary, address any issues that should be immediately corrected or handled through future maintenance training.
- D. The canine coordinator will ensure that each canine team completes the required maintenance training and maintain accurate and complete records of all training.

E. The canine coordinator will attend monthly maintenance training whenever possible. At least quarterly, the canine coordinator will communicate with the trainer to conduct an assessment/evaluation of each canine team.

F. The canine coordinator will ensure that all proper documentation regarding the canine teams, reporting, certifications and medical reports are uploaded into the canine data tracking system/digital record keeping program.

XXII. Canine Retirement

- A. When the Queen Anne’s County Office of the Sheriff retires an agency canine from active duty, the agency will ask the canine handler if he/she wishes to retain custody of that canine as a personal pet per Senate Bill 156, Article 3-523. If the canine handler responds in the affirmative, the agency shall reimburse the handler for usual and customary veterinary treatment (that is not attributable to abuse or neglect) in an amount not to exceed \$2,500 per year and \$10,000 over the life of the canine. The agency may accept donations, with the Sheriff’s or designee’s approval, which will be maintained in a separate Office of the Sheriff fund. Donated monies may also be forwarded to the K-9 Compassionate Care Fund as administered by the Maryland State Police.
- B. If the canine handler is removed from the canine program either by the agency or by the canine handler’s self-removal, the agency canine will remain the property of the agency for reassignment to another canine handler or another agency. If the agency offers the canine to the former canine handler as a pet and the employee elects to accept custody of the canine, the employee may forfeit the benefit of veterinary treatment reimbursement for the life of the canine.
- C. The K-9 Care Adoption Agreement shall be utilized for the transfer of ownership of any agency canines to employees.

XXIII. CALEA References: 41.1.4a, 41.1.4b,

41.1.4c & 41.1.4d

XXII. Proponent Unit: Field Operations

XXIII. Cancellation: Index Code 1609 dated 5/1/18

Sheriff Gary Hofmann