

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE	NUMBER
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<b>Canine Unit</b>		



## I. Introduction

The Division of Police Canine Unit is comprised of dual-trained canine teams used to supplement the patrol and investigative functions. Each canine team has been trained in criminal apprehension, tracking, evidence location, handler protection, and controlled substance detection.

## II. Policy Statements

- A. In situations where the services of a canine team have been requested, the Canine Unit officer **shall** be responsible for determining if the circumstances justify deployment and, if so, the proper tactical response. Recognizing the training, experience, and specialized knowledge of the handler, a police supervisor **shall** not order the deployment of the canine unless the handler concurs.
- B. The use of canines for crowd control or **as a** deterrent effect at the scene of a peaceful demonstration **is prohibited**. Canine Unit **personnel** shall not demonstrate the attack feature of the canine at any public demonstration.
- C. Should a Division employee find **him or herself** in jeopardy with a police canine, **he or she** should immediately stand motionless and shout “RED” several times. Upon hearing that universal warning, the Canine Unit officer shall order the canine into a controlled position.
- D. Division canines have been trained to protect their handlers with their lives. For officer safety, Division employees shall not do any of the following:
  1. Engage in horseplay in the presence of a canine.
  2. Strike a canine handler.
  3. Strike or attempt to discipline a canine.
  4. Tease or agitate a canine.
  5. Attempt to give a canine any command.
  6. Feed the canine without the handler’s permission.
  7. Play with the canine without the handler’s permission.
  8. Enter or approach the Canine Unit vehicle without the canine handler’s knowledge and presence.
  9. Remove the canine from the Canine Unit vehicle or other area of confinement without the canine handler’s knowledge and presence.

### III. Procedures

#### A. Personnel requesting on-duty Canine Unit services:

1. **Advise Communications Bureau personnel to contact the Canine Unit Sergeant or a Canine Unit officer when an immediate response is desired.**
2. **Establish a perimeter around the area to be searched if requesting a building search or tracking.**

#### B. Division supervisor requesting off-duty Canine Unit services:

**Instruct Communications Bureau personnel to contact the Canine Unit Sergeant or his or her designee, who will make arrangements for a Canine Unit officer to respond.**

#### C. Canine use of force investigations

1. Involved Canine Unit handler
  - a. Should a canine use of force occur, immediately notify the Canine Unit Sergeant or, in his or her absence, the **Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)** Lieutenant, who will respond and initiate an investigation.
  - b. If the Canine Unit Sergeant **and SWAT** Lieutenant are off-duty or there will be an **excessive** delay in their response, notify any on-duty supervisor.

#### D. Injury to Canine Unit officer

1. In **the event** a canine handler becomes injured and is unable to control the canine, whether on or off duty, contact **another handler** immediately through the **Communications Bureau**.
2. If the canine is in close proximity to the handler and has taken an aggressive posture, e.g., growling or barking, **do** not attempt to approach the injured officer.
3. **Utilize** destruction of the canine only as the last resort and only in life threatening situations.