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Canine Unit		



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Patrol SOP: 2.02

I. Introduction

The Division of Police Canine Unit is comprised of dual-**purpose** canine teams used to supplement the patrol and investigative functions. Each canine team has been trained in criminal apprehension, tracking, evidence location, **and** handler protection. **Canine teams also have specialized training in the detection of controlled substances including marijuana, controlled substances not including marijuana, or explosives.**

II. Policy Statements

A. In situations where the services of a canine team have been requested, the **canine handler** shall be responsible for determining if the circumstances justify deployment and, if so, the proper tactical **or legal** 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. Vehicle or Package Canine Sniffs

1. **Requesting personnel shall establish reasonable suspicion that a vehicle or package contains illegal narcotics prior to requesting the Canine Unit to respond and conduct an exterior sniff (for example, through personal observations, conversations, and/or criminal indicators).**
2. **After an exterior sniff is conducted with the canine handler, requesting personnel shall consider the totality of the circumstances when determining the appropriate course of action.**

C. The use of canines for crowd control or as a deterrent effect at the scene of a peaceful demonstration is prohibited. **The canine handler** shall not demonstrate the **apprehension** feature of the canine at any public demonstration.

D. The only time a canine may be deployed during a public demonstration is in response to a suspicious package or suspected explosive device. This deployment shall require the approval of a lieutenant or higher.

E. 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 handler** shall order the canine into a controlled position.

F. Canine Unit canines have been trained to protect their handlers with their lives. For officer safety, Division **personnel** 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 handler's** vehicle without the canine handler's knowledge and presence
9. Remove the canine from the **canine handler's** 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 **handler** when an immediate response is desired.
2. Establish a perimeter around the area to be searched if requesting a building search or tracking **of a suspect or individual**.

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 **handler** 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) **Section** Lieutenant, who will respond and initiate an investigation.

- b. If the Canine Unit Sergeant and SWAT **Section** Lieutenant are off-duty or there will be an excessive delay in their response, notify any on-duty supervisor.

D. Injury to Canine Unit **Handler**

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 (**for example**, 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.