



CANINES

Directive 13-115

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Amends/Cancel: N/A

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to provide guidelines for the use and deployment of specially trained canine teams that enhance patrol and investigative functions. The objective of the Canine Unit is to provide line support to divisions within the Department with a highly mobile, specially trained police dog. The police canine has particular attributes in searching for items or people that can quickly facilitate their location. In this regard, the required resources can be properly utilized with additional safety for the police officer.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Department of General Services, Maryland Capitol Police (MCP) that canine teams provide line support to the department with specially-trained police dogs and handlers. The decision to deploy a canine team will be consistent with the goals and mission of the department.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. CANINE (K-9) – A specially-trained police dog.
- B. CANINE (K-9) HANDLER – A law enforcement officer trained in the use of a canine.
- C. CANINE (K-9) TEAM - composed of one canine and one handler.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. PARAMETERS FOR USE OF CANINE TEAM

1. Canine teams are engaged in active overt police operations, requiring the canines' special attributes. Canine teams may be used:
 - a. To protect fellow officers and members of the general public;
 - b. To detect and locate criminal activity and offenders, as well as evidence;

- c. To provide a psychological deterrent for the criminal element;
 - d. To locate weapons, articles and bombs depending on the training of the K-9.
2. The decision to deploy the K-9 rests with the Handler or K-9 Supervisor based on the circumstances of the situation, safety and the training limits of the K-9. The actions of the K-9 officer with respect to the commands he gives to his dog can be justified only by the facts which are known to the K-9 officer at the time they participate in those actions.
 3. The Canine Teams will not routinely be utilized to respond to calls for service or police functions that negate their primary function.
 4. Canine Teams will work shifts and times designated by the K-9 Supervisor that provide the best operational support and use of the K-9's attributes.
 5. All request for special assignments, i.e., demonstrations, etc., will be made through the K-9 Supervisor and the Operations Commander.

B. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

1. All arrests, apprehensions, or unusual circumstances involving K-9 personnel, shall be documented (in detail) on proper report forms, which shall be completed and submitted at the end of the member's tour of duty.
2. K-9 is a reactive type unit. When it responds to assist a patrol officer, the K-9 team often is able to locate and facilitate the apprehension of the violator. The apprehended suspect will be turned over to the patrol officer, who will complete all the necessary reports.
3. When a K-9 officer observes a routine criminal violation or traffic violation and initiates the arrest, the K-9 officer will complete all necessary reports.
4. When not engaged in a canine activity, the canine officer shall direct his efforts toward patrol of high crime areas to deter, identify, and apprehend persons responsible.
5. Building/Area Searches:
 - a. On routine building/area searches, the individual K-9 handler will be in charge of the search area. The on duty supervisor will continue to be in charge of the overall operation in which the search is being conducted. The on duty supervisor shall deploy and/or direct other personnel to aid in the search.
 - b. Whenever possible, officers will not enter an area to be searched either prior to the search or during the search, unless they are a member of the K-9 search team. If the search area has been entered by another officer, they will notify the K-9 officer prior to the K-9 dog search.

- c. Canines should be deployed on-lead for scent detection unless working off lead is necessary due to the working environment (rough terrain, underbrush, rooms crowded with furniture, etc.). K-9 handlers should remain attentive to safety concerns affecting the canine while working around traffic or in areas where the canine may be exposed harmful substances.

6. Call-Out's for Other Agencies:

- a. Upon approval, K-9 team(s) will respond and assist other jurisdictions when requested.
- b. It will be K-9 Supervisor's decision to approve a response. This decision will be based on:
 - (1) The K-9 workload at the time;
 - (2) The priority needs of MCP;
 - (3) The request being consistent with the Canine Teams certifications and this policy;
 - (4) The distance of the requesting jurisdiction from the handler's assignment.
- c. Call-outs for other jurisdictions while off-duty require approval of the K-9 Supervisor or the Operations Commander.
- d. All requests from other jurisdictions will immediately be reported through the chain of command to the Chief of Police or his designee.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Handler's Responsibilities:

- a. Canines will be used only for functions which the canine and handler are trained and certified.
- b. K-9 handlers will deploy their canines in a manner consistent with current case law governing canine usage. It is the K-9 handler's responsibility to maintain a working knowledge and understanding of current case law.
- c. Safety must be the primary concern of the canine handler. A handler must be in complete control of the canine at all times, as the handler is solely responsible for the actions of the canine.
- d. Whenever a canine is released off-lead, the handler must announce his intentions when feasible. Exceptional care and judgment must be used to insure against injury to innocent persons, i.e., crowded areas. In addition, extremely close attention should be given to the potential for injury of the canine by vehicular traffic on streets and highways.

- e. Handlers are responsible for the health, care and well-being of the canine.
- f. Handlers are responsible for proper use and care of all equipment and property assigned to the unit.
- g. On routine building searches, area/woods searches and trails, the canine handler will be in charge of the search area and shall deploy and/or direct other personnel to aid in the search.
- h. All arrests, apprehensions or unusual circumstances involving canine personnel shall be documented in detail on proper report forms, which shall be completed and submitted at the end of the member's tour of duty.
- i. Canine team deployment implies the use of force, therefore, the procedure for reporting such injuries is the same as that outlined in Directive 8-100. All Cases?
 - (1) Whenever a person receives or complains of an injury, as a result of an encounter with a canine team, the handler will notify the on-duty supervisor or the K-9 supervisor immediately.
 - (2) It is the handler's responsibility to have that person transported to the nearest hospital for treatment. At no time will a K-9 handler transport the injured person.
- j. Accidental Canine Bites - Any time a bystander is injured by a canine, it is the handler's responsibility to have that person transported to the nearest hospital for treatment. At no time will a K-9 handler transport the injured person. The injured person shall be transported preferably by ambulance.
 - (1) The handler will immediately notify the on duty supervisor, the K-9 Supervisor and submit an Incident Report and appropriate K-9 reports.
- k. Canine bites occurring in other jurisdictions will be reported to respective police agencies. A copy of all other jurisdiction dog bite reports will be submitted with an incident report to the K-9 supervisor.

2. Canine Supervisor's Responsibilities:

The supervisor of the canine unit is responsible for the following:

- a. The supervision, training, and retraining of handlers;
- b. The proper selection, training and care of the canines;
- c. Proper maintenance of all canine equipment and facilities; and
- d. Scheduling of K-9 personnel.

D. SAFETY

1. Handlers must be mindful that safety and control must be practiced at home as well as on duty.
2. Unless involved in police duties, K-9 dogs will not be taken into any public or private facility.
3. K-9 dogs are not to be routinely taken into police facilities, unless on official business.
4. "Showing-off" with the K-9 is strictly forbidden.
5. K-9 dogs should not be fed or petted by anyone but the handler and his/her household members.
6. While in public, K-9 handlers must be mindful of pedestrian traffic and be particularly alert for unpredictable actions from the public.
7. Safety at the Handler's Residence:
 - a. When at home, contact with the K-9 dog must be limited to the handler and household/family members. The K-9 dog will be properly and safely isolated whenever friends, guests, relatives, etc. are visiting the handler's homes.
 - b. In the absence of the handler, care of the K-9 dog will be limited to mature and responsible members of his/her household who have demonstrated the ability to control the K-9 dog.
 - c. K-9 dogs must not be taken from the handlers' property by household members.
 - d. At no time will the K-9 dog be left outside unsupervised, unless on handlers' confined property.
 - e. Gates to confined property must be locked or secured to such an extent that a child cannot open said gate
 - f. The home and property must be posted with warning signs.
 - g. When handlers are away from home for extended periods of time, housing will be provided at a boarding kennel approved by the K-9 Supervisor.
8. If a K-9 handler is injured and cannot control his dog, the following procedures should be followed:
 - a. The on duty supervisor will notify the K-9 Supervisor for disposition of the K-9.
 - b. The K-9 Supervisor will determine if:

- (1) Another K-9 handler is available to take control of the K-9;
- (2) A responsible family member who has demonstrated the ability to control the K-9 can respond; or
- (3) A K-9 handler from another jurisdiction may be called to take control of the K-9.

E. CARE OF THE CANINE

1. Canine handlers are responsible for the health, care and well-being of their canine. Each handler will ensure that his canine is kept in the best possible health and cleanliness.
2. Routine bathing and dipping of canines shall be done at the location selected by the K-9 Supervisor. Bathing and/or dipping will be done at least once a month or more if the K-9 Supervisor or veterinarian determines it necessary.
3. The K-9 Supervisor will inspect and ensure these responsibilities are fulfilled; this information will be entered on a log and kept up to date.
4. In the event of serious sickness or injury, whether occurring on duty or off-duty, canines will be taken to the assigned veterinarian. Also, the K-9 Supervisor shall be notified.
5. Routine treatment by the assigned veterinarian must first be approved by the K-9 Supervisor. The only exception will be emergencies that must be treated immediately.
6. Canines will be fed only the diet prescribed by the veterinarian or K-9 Supervisor.
7. In the event a canine is sick or injured to the degree that the canine cannot perform his duties, that member shall immediately contact the K-9 Supervisor.
8. Handlers will not use excessive force in the handling, training, or working of any police canine.

F. SELECTION

1. Canine Handlers will be selected based on training, qualifications, and suitability as determined by the Chief of Police or his designee.
2. The number of Canine Handlers will be determined by the Chief of Police or his designee based on the needs of the department.
3. Selected Handlers will be required to remain in the unit for 3 years and must have suitable living arrangements to allow for the safe care and maintenance of the K-9 seven days a week.

E. TRAINING

1. Canine Handlers will be required to attend an appropriate Canine Handlers Course offered by a qualified agency or vendor. The K-9 Team will be required to meet the requirements for certification of the selected training.
2. After initial training, the K-9 Team will be required to attend monthly in-service and annual recertification.
3. The K-9 Team will be required to achieve a national certification with one (1) year of completing their initial certification. These certifications can include any one of the following:
 - a. United State Police Canine Association (USPCA);
 - b. International Police Work Dog Association (IPWDA); or
 - c. The Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, and Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

F. UNIFORM AND VEHICLE

1. Handlers will be assigned a take home vehicle specially equipped to transport the K-9.
 - a. The vehicle will not be used off-duty or for personal use.
 - b. The vehicle will not be used to transport prisoner or passengers.
2. K-9 Handlers will be issued an appropriate utility uniform suitable to the nature of their duties for daily use.
3. K-9 handlers will have ready for use all other classes of dress uniform and will wear the uniform of the day for all none K-9 related activities and court appearances.