



Maryland-National Capital Park Police
Prince George's County Division



DIVISION DIRECTIVE

TITLE CANINE OPERATIONS		PROCEDURE NUMBER PG490.0	
SECTION Operational Procedures	DISTRIBUTION A	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/19	REVIEW DATE 05/01/21
REPLACES PG490.0 "Canine Operations", issued 05/01/17			
RELATED DIRECTIVES PG400.0	REFERENCES CALEA 41	AUTHORITY <i>S.R. Johnson</i> Chief Stanley R. Johnson	

I. PURPOSE

This directive provides the Division with a set of guidelines for the use of police service canines. This policy is not intended to provide the standard of care for any civil or other external proceedings, and the determination of compliances with this policy are expressly reserved internal proceedings within this Division. This directive establishes policy and procedures for Division canine operations.

II. POLICY

The Division's policy is to deploy canine teams primarily to detect and deter violations of the most serious of criminal laws of the State of Maryland, and to apprehend persons suspected of violating those laws. The canine teams will maintain canines which are capable of conducting searches for evidence, narcotics and people, to include the tracking/trailing of criminal offenders, lost, missing or endangered persons and the apprehension of fleeing suspects. When not engaged in canine operations, the canine officers will perform all duties required by a patrol officer of the Division.

III. DEPLOYMENT OF PERSONNEL

- A. Deployment of personnel will be the responsibility of the Canine Duty Officer, under the guidance of the Assistant Chief, Field Operations. The Canine Duty Officer will assign and deploy personnel to meet the needs of the Division and the community.
- B. The canine teams will be responsible for providing narcotic detection when requested by any unit of this Division and reasonable to do so and consistent with the established

capabilities of the particular canine team.

- C. Whenever possible, the canine teams will honor requests from other law enforcement agencies for assistance. The Canine Supervisor or the Operations Duty Officer must approve this assistance prior to canine deployment.

IV. CRITERIA FOR DEPLOYING CANINE RESOURCES

- A. In determining whether or not to deploy a canine, the handler must have information relevant to the facts and circumstance of the incident, which leads him/her to believe, as a reasonable and prudent police officer, that the suspect(s) have committed a crime, or the use of a canine is warranted and appropriate in particular non-criminal incidents. The decision to use a canine in accordance with this policy, shall be deemed an act of discretion and shall be reviewed in the light of information reasonably available to the officer at the time decision is made.
- B. Canine teams may be used to search for persons suspected of committing a crime, lost, missing or endangered persons. Outdoor searches and tracks conducted by Patrol Dogs will be performed on lead except in the case of dangerous felony searches. In those instances, a handler may choose to do off-lead area seeks or tracks after making a reasonable attempt to ensure the safety of innocent citizens. Canine handlers will afford suspects a reasonable opportunity to surrender. This shall not be construed as to require handlers to expose themselves or their canine partners to unnecessary risk as a result of their warning.
- C. When deploying for misdemeanor offenses, i.e., traffic violations and misdemeanor property crimes, the handler will take precaution to avoid accidental bites. If the person suspected of committing a misdemeanor offense indicates a refusal to surrender, the utilization of the canine to extract the suspect may be allowed, only when the criteria for the use of non-deadly force has been met. (PG400.V.B.2).
 - 1. When deploying the canine for a missing person or welfare tracks, under no circumstances will the track be performed off the lead, nor will the canine be utilized to extract the person from a hiding place.
- D. When a handler is preparing to deploy their canine for the purpose of apprehension, five factors must be considered:
 - 1. The severity of the crime;
 - 2. Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of officers or others;
 - 3. Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight or concealment;
 - 4. Age of the suspect (if known);
 - 5. Whether non-involved citizens or officers would be put at risk by the use of the canine.

- E. Once a canine is released or commanded to apprehend a suspect, it is the duty of the handler to call the dog off at the earliest opportunity in order to minimize the possibility of injury to the suspect. Specifically, this is when the officer is able to see the suspect's hand and/or when it can be determined that he or she is no longer a threat.
- F. Canine teams shall not be used for crowd control at peaceful demonstrations.
- G. Canine teams may be used for crowd control upon Command approval to protect property during a riot or other major unauthorized gathering that cannot be controlled by other means. In these situations, canines shall:
 - 1. Be short leashed at all times unless no other means are available to protect an individual from serious injury.
 - 2. Not initiate any protective action, unless to guard against imminent loss of life or serious bodily injury.
- H. All canine demonstrations require prior approval of the canine officer's supervisor.
- I. Should the canine handler become injured or incapacitated, care should be given to maintain control of the canine, while facilitating assistance for the officer. When possible, a canine handler from this agency, or from another, should be summoned to gain control of the incapacitated officer's canine. Should this be impossible, the supervisor of the canine unit should be notified to respond.

V. TACTICAL USE OF CANINE

- A. Narcotic Detection
 - 1. Canine officers and their assigned canines that meet the minimum requirements of narcotic training may be used in narcotics detection.
 - 2. Canine officers will adhere to the prescribed search and training methods as taught in the narcotic detection training classes.
 - 3. Any request for the use of the Division canines for narcotic detection outside the Division's jurisdiction will first be approved by the Operations Duty Officer or Shift Supervisor, should the ODO be unavailable.
 - 4. Canine officers will complete a Narcotic Detection Report whenever the canine is used to locate CDS and CDS related monies or for establishing probable cause for a search warrant.

B. Explosive Detection

1. Canine officers and their assigned canines that meet the minimum requirements of explosive training may be used in explosive detection.
2. Canine officers will adhere to the prescribed search and training methods as taught in the explosive detection training classes.
3. Any request for the use of the Division canines for explosive detection outside the Division's jurisdiction will first be approved by the Operations Duty Officer or Shift Supervisor, should the ODO be unavailable.
4. Canine officers will complete an Explosive Detection Report whenever the canine is used to locate explosives.

C. Building/Area Searches (Criminal Offenders)

1. Canine officers and their assigned canines that meet the minimum requirements for patrol dog training may be used in building/area searches for criminal offenders.
2. Only law enforcement personnel may be taken into a building while a canine search is being conducted.
3. It is the canine officer's decision whether or not another officer accompanies him/her into a building during a canine search.
4. Area searches for felony suspects may be conducted off lead if there is a secure perimeter maintained by police personnel. Reasonable precautions will be taken to ensure that no innocent persons are endangered.
5. The prescribed Canine Warning will be issued, three times, along with instructions as to how to surrender and prevent canine deployment, prior to releasing the canine for building search duties. The warning does not need to be issued, if in the handler's opinion it may compromise officer safety.
 - a. Prior to releasing the canine on a search for a criminal offender or to apprehend a fleeing suspect, the canine officer will issue a verbal warning. The warning will be issued three times. The warning will include the following:
 1. Identification as a police officer.
 2. Exactly what action the suspect(s) should take immediately.
 3. What will occur if the suspect(s) does not comply with the instructions.

D. Building/Area Searches (Lost, Missing or Endangered Persons)

1. Use of patrol trained canines in search and rescue incidents must be pre-approved by an officer of supervisory or command rank, and the facts of the case must indicate exigent circumstances.
2. Canine officers who handle patrol trained canines are prohibited from conducting off-lead building/area searches for lost, missing or endangered persons and will exercise due care in the performance of these duties.
3. The use and deployment of the canine at routine lost/missing person incidents will be managed and coordinated by the canine handler and the on-scene supervisor.

E. Tracks/Trails

Tracks/Trails will be attempted upon request even if the canine officer knows that the area has been contaminated. The canine officer may explain this to the officer making the request.

F. Evidence/Article Searches

Evidence/Article searches will be conducted off lead only if conditions warrant. Evidence/Article searches are to be conducted without endangering innocent persons.

G. Warrant Service

1. Canine officers and their assigned canines that have been certified in the patrol dog training may be used for stand-by at warrant services.
2. Canines utilized to assist in warrant services will do so under the following circumstances:
 - a. When the warrant is for a felony and/or the wanted subject may pose a significant threat to the serving officers.
 - b. Canine teams will not be used to make the initial approach on a warrant service. Canines will only enter the area after the suspect has made an overt attempt to hide, elude, or evade.

H. Fleeing Suspects

1. Canine officers and their assigned canines that have successfully completed patrol dog training may be used to apprehend fleeing felony suspects. This would include stolen autos or vehicles that show strong evidence of having been stolen, though not yet reported.
2. In situations where a criminal has not been verified, but the canine officer is ordered to commit the canine by an officer of supervisory rank, the canine officer will notify that

officer that such a commitment is in violation of canine procedures. If the canine officer is still ordered to commit the canine, the canine officer will document these facts in a Memo to the relevant Operations Duty Officer and the Assistant Chief of Field Operations, whether an apprehension is made or not.

I. Prisoner Transport

Under no circumstances will any prisoner be transported or held in a canine vehicle when the dog is in the vehicle.

VI. SELECTION OF NEW CANINE OFFICERS

Selection of new canine officers will be consistent with established procedures. Requirements are:

- A. Experience: Applicants will be police employees of the rank of at least Police Officer III.
- B. Satisfactory completion of Division required canine training programs. These programs may be conducted by an outside agency and will consist of a comprehensive police patrol canine training program to be conducted by a certified police canine trainer. This training shall consist of police patrol canine operations, and/or any proscribed specialty training, i.e., narcotic detection or explosive detection.
- C. Prior to selection as a handler, and applicant must either own a residence or if renting, provide proof that the property owner will allow a police canine on the premises.
 - 1. The residence of a canine officer will preferably be a detached, single-family dwelling.
 - 2. Prior to selection, the residence will be inspected by the canine program supervisor.
- D. An applicant's performance evaluation will be reviewed with attention given to the following:
 - 1. Attendance record.
 - 2. Dependability.
 - 3. Overall work performance.
 - 4. Demonstrated ability to work with minimal supervisor.
 - 5. Demonstrated history of sound judgment and decision making.
 - 6. Recommendation from the applicant's immediate supervisor.
 - 7. Oral interview.

VII. REPORTING REQUIREMENT

- A. Canine officers will complete a Daily Activity Report, which will be entered into the K9 Activity Tracking System (KATS) or other division approved tracking system at the beginning of the officer's next tour of duty to the supervisor in charge of canine operations.
- B. Canine Apprehension and Canine Narcotic Reports will be turned in to KATS no later than the beginning of the officer's next tour of duty. (EXCEPTION – Apprehension reports will be turned in to KATS before the officer's scheduled days off.)
- C. All other reports will be made as directed by the canine officer's supervisor. Incidents in which a canine officer completes a standard police report in accordance with the Division's report writing directive may be supplemented by K-9 unit exclusive reports and entered into KATS.
- D. All Canine Daily Activity Reports, Apprehension Reports, Bite Reports, Narcotic Recovery Reports, and Property Reports will be entered into KATS and maintained throughout the life of the canine by the supervisor in charge of canine operations. Upon the canine's retirement from active service, all reports and/or medical records pertaining to the retired dog will be packaged and archived for storage.

An Annual Report of Effectiveness will be produced by the K-9 Manager for submission to the Division Chief.

VIII. REQUIREMENTS- DOG BITES

- A. In all instances where a person is bitten by a canine, it is the responsibility of the handler to complete the proper Bite Report, Apprehension Report, and Use of Force Report, prior to the end of their tour of duty. The reports will be submitted to the canine officer's supervisor with a copy submitted to the supervisor in charge of canine operations for the creation of a canine case file.
- B. In all instances where a person is bitten by a canine, the Canine Supervisor and Shift Supervisor will be notified immediately.
- C. The canine handler will determine if the person who was bitten wants or needs medical attention and will then take the following action:
 - 1. If treatment is refused by the person, a Treatment Refusal Form will be completed by the handler with the person's signature (write refused if the person declines to sign the form). The canine officer's supervisor will retain the form, with a copy submitted to the supervisor in charge of canine operations for inclusion in the canine case file.
 - 2. If the person receives medical treatment, a copy of the emergency room report or ambulance report will be obtained by the handler and forwarded to the canine officer's

supervisor with a copy submitted to the supervisor in charge of canine operations for inclusion in the case file.

3. If a juvenile is injured, the canine handler will seek medical attention. Juveniles can be treated under the Child in Need of Services provisions in Maryland State Law when a juvenile requires treatment but refuses.
 4. Anytime a person is accidentally injured by a canine; it will be the handler's responsibility to seek medical attention. The handler will immediately notify the on-duty watch commander and shift supervisor. If the victim refuses medical treatment, a treatment refusal form will be completed and submitted as above. When practical, a written statement will be taken from the victim and any witnesses. If the victim and or witness refuse to give a statement, this will be noted in the appropriate bite report to be completed by the canine officer, prior to the end of their tour of duty.
- D. When possible, dog bites will be photographed, and the pictures will be retained by the canine officer's supervisor for inclusion in the case file.
- E. The canine officer's supervisor will be responsible for forwarding, through the chain of command, all completed Use of Force and Bite Reports. All Canine Bite Reports and Use of Force reports originating with the Canine Unit will be forwarded to the Office of the Division Chief. The supervisor in charge of canine operations will be responsible for creation and housing of all Bite Report case files for management of the canine program.

IX. CARE AND TREATMENT

Canine officers will ensure that the physical well being of the canine is maintained through proper feeding and veterinary care. The canine will be groomed and inspected daily by the handler, provided with an adequate, clean living area and fresh drinking water.

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