

CITY OF OAK POINT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY POLICE OPERATIONAL POLICIES and PROCEDURES

POLICY: 7.18 K9 OPERATIONS

REVISED DATE: 11.05.13

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures and regulations governing the, training, use and administration of police service dog teams employed by the City of Oak Point Department of Public Safety. These teams will be referred to throughout this manual as "K9" teams. This Standard Operating Procedure shall define the authority and responsibility for their use.

II. POLICY

A. Utilization of properly trained police service dogs represent a highly cost effective and reliable asset to law enforcement personnel by utilizing the canine's acute olfactory and hearing senses. The police service dog also provides a psychological deterrent by their presence at the scene of potentially conflict or disturbance.

B. Areas of potential deployment for K9 teams may include, but are not limited to:

- Building Searches
- Open Area Searches
- Evidence Searches / Article Recovery
- Tracking or Trailing
- Narcotics / Controlled Substances Detection
- Back-Up for Violent / Potentially Violent Calls
- Back-Up for Felony Arrest
- Crowd Control and Disbursement
- Pursuit / Apprehension at Vehicle and Foot Pursuits
- Protection of Law Enforcement Personnel

III. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

A. The Director is responsible for the general supervision of those K9 teams assigned to patrol functions within the Department.

B. All K9 teams shall assume the responsibility of supervising and administering the day-to-day operations of their K9 Unit. They will then report to the Director.

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C. The Director shall be responsible for the following.

General supervision of the K9 teams when on-duty and available

Review and inspection, bi-annually, monthly of all K9 team training records and deployment records

Random inspection of all issued K9 equipment

Ordering of all food rations, canine specific equipment and medical care as needed

Coordinating all community relations demonstrations

Approval and coordination with other Law Enforcement Agency's their requests for assistance using this agency's K9 Teams

D. In the absence of an on-duty supervisor, and when not assigned to a specific detail, K9 teams shall operate as Patrol units for the city.

E. K9 with an "Aggressive", "Non-Passive" or "Pawing" alert must utilize protective boots for the K9 in search situations. These will be provided by the department, and will have a soft rubber or like sole. These must be utilized if the K9 is deployed in a manner which could reasonably cause damage to the property of another. This is not optional.

F. The individual K9 handler may authorize the use of their assigned canine for the apprehension of a suspect(s) if the K9 is approved for such use. It shall be the responsibility of each handler to ensure that practical safety precautions are taken at the time of deployment including a briefing to other law enforcement personnel, explaining the canine's abilities and limitation.

G. In circumstances occurring in the Departments jurisdiction, where the use of a K9 team is being considered, the final decision to deploy a K9 shall rest with the individual K9 handler, as only the handler truly knows the abilities and limitations of their canine and their ability to safely and legally perform the task at hand. In circumstances occurring outside the Departments jurisdiction, where the use of a K9 team is being considered, the final decision to deploy a K9 shall rest with the Director of Public Safety with information from the individual K9 handler.

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H. Once the decision has been made to deploy the K9; the K9 handler shall assume the responsibility for the control and operational management of the scene until they are properly relieved by a supervisor. The perimeter and back up officers will redeploy to new positions according to directions from the K9 handler during a K9 deployment.

IV. LAW ENFORCEMENT K9 TEAM DEPLOYMENT

A. Building and Area Searches

Canines can be effectively used to search areas and buildings for hidden suspects that might be detected by scent or sound. Canines can also be utilized to search open areas for suspects or evidence /articles that a suspect may have discarded.

When a suspect has fled the scene of a crime and a canine is enroute, members should not pursue unless a reasonable chance of success exists. If the pursuing personnel lose sight of the offender and he cannot be quickly located, and a perimeter can be secured and held for the K9 team's arrival the pursuit should be immediately terminated. Personnel involved in the initial pursuit should note the last direction of travel, obstacles or hiding places and other potential hazards so that they may brief the K9 team upon arrival.

The initial responding unit involved in the foot pursuit, the on-scene supervisor or senior officer present should determine if the crime is significant enough to warrant a K9 team call-out or response. It shall be the responsibility of this individual to initiate the call-out/response in a timely manner and ensure that appropriate perimeter control is established and maintained if possible.

Prior to starting any search of a building by a K9 team, a series of verbal warning and commands shall be made by the handler, if practical and safe to do so. A suggested warning is as follows:

"This is the Oak Point Police Canine Unit. Anyone inside the building, announce yourself now and surrender or a police dog will be used to find you." Police will be used in place of Public Safety to avoid any confusion.

This warning may be modified to suit the situation by the handler and only, serves as a sample of an appropriate warning. The handler may choose to have this or other warnings issued via public address systems or by other officers as necessary or practical.

If, after a reasonable amount of time passes and no response is heard or no person(s) surrender themselves, the handler may release the canine into the building to begin the

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search, the handler for all practical purposes must conduct the search on-lead unless deemed inappropriate to the situation by a supervisor.

Prior to starting any search of a building or open area, the handler will determine if additional personnel are to enter the area with the K9 team. Whenever possible other K9 Unit personnel should be used to back up and assist in the search, if this is not practical any law enforcement officer may be used provided that the handler brief the personnel in the procedures of K9 searches and apprehension.

The primary duty of personnel supporting the K9 team in a search shall be the protection of handler and to take custody of any person located by tile canine, at the direction of the handler.

B. Tracking / Trailing of Criminal Suspects and Lost Persons

Ground scent tracking and wind scent trailing can be useful for following fleeing suspects or lost individuals when the presence of other persons, vehicles or extreme weather conditions do not impair the scent. Personnel requesting the assistance of a K9 team to assist in this type, of search should secure an appropriate perimeter to avoid contamination of the scent trail.

C. Crowd Control and Civil Disturbances

In the case of civil disturbances, or other types of non-routine crowd control, the K9 Unit will not be deployed unless specifically authorized by the Director. "Routine" crowd control situations such as large fights and similar situations shall be individually assessed by the handler as to the appropriateness of using the canine. At no time does the handler have the permission to release the K-9 into a crowd or where one is present.

When practical, while deploying the canine in a large crowd control situation, the handler shall wear appropriate tactical/safety equipment, to include but not be limited to a tactical vest, Kevlar helmet and gloves.

D. Pursuit and Apprehension

Foot pursuit and apprehension of fleeing suspects makes use of the canine's speed and maneuverability to affect a capture without the use of deadly force. K9 pursuits and apprehensions shall be conducted at the handler's discretion. Assisting personnel shall

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allow the K9 team's primary access to the area and path of flight, prior to conducting any search if practical.

E. General Search Guidelines

Searches may be conducted on leash or if impractical at the discretion of the handler. The handler must be able to maintain control of their assigned canine for the duration of the search.

IV. NARCOTICS DETECTION

A. Types of Controlled Substances

Handler's equipped with certified narcotics canines are prepared to assist in the detection of the following controlled substances:

Cocaine HCl and Cocaine Base (Powered and "Crack" Cocaine)

Hashish

Heroin

Marijuana

Methamphetamine

Other controlled substance containing derivatives of the above

B. Areas of Deployment

Narcotics detector canines may deployed in the following situations:

Searches during vehicle stops

To build probable cause for a Search Warrants

Drug interdiction in public areas

Searches relative to Search Warrant executions

Community relations demonstrations

Assistance of other, law, enforcement agencies in any of the above with the permission of the Director.

C. Possessing Controlled Substance for Training.

It shall be the policy of this department that no officer shall possess controlled substances for training purposes.

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Any handler may possess and use pseudo narcotics.

VI. General Operational Procedures

A department issued vest clearly identifying the animal as a Police K9 must be utilized during all types of deployment. This shall be the sole responsibility of the individual handler.

On duty K9 teams shall respond to in progress crimes within the department's jurisdiction without specific dispatch and shall assist officers in any potentially violent situation where the use of a canine may be of service.

As a general rule, when dispatch request a K9 may be used (foot pursuit, robbery, narcotics, lost children etc.) outside this departments jurisdiction the officer shall fill out the K-9 Request Form and then contact the Director for approval,

As a general rule, K9 teams shall not respond as a primary unit outside this department's jurisdiction or to address non-priority calls for service. K9 teams should advise the Director if they are dispatched inappropriately after refusing the call out.

K9 teams must advise Dispatch when they are initially in-service and available for calls.

K9 teams may assist any law enforcement agency operating within the eastern portion of Denton County with canine services at the request of the other agency. It is required to obtain the authorization of the Director to assist these agency's when the K9 team is on duty and available for calls. Under no circumstances shall a K-9 team leave the city on an agency assist if they are the only officer on-duty.

K9 teams may be called to respond to the area of any foot or terminated vehicle pursuits of this department to assist in apprehension search or other deployment.

VII. DOG BITE PROCEDURES

A. If an apprehension involves a dog bite the following procedure shall be followed:

The injured person shall be afforded medical care as soon as possible. The Director shall be notified. A copy of the report documenting the bite shall be complete by the end of the

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following day and forwarded to staff review. Copies of the report shall be immediately forwarded to the following personnel:

The director and sergeant

The canine involved in the bite shall be taken to the normal veterinarian for an examination within 3 days of the bite. A copy of the medical certificate cleaning the dog shall be forwarded to the DPS Department, the original shall be placed in the dog's file.

Photographs shall be taken if possible, of the bite by the sergeant. All photographs shall be taken following cleaning of the wound area so that the photographs accurately reflect the extent of injury in a non-prejudicial manner. Copies of the photos shall be held in evidence.

VIII. TRAINING AND MONTHLY REPORTS

A. All K9 Unit personnel shall be required to certify his or her K9 by a certified K9 trainer before it is authorized to be deployed for active duty. The K9 trainer may limit the scope under which a dog will be deployed.

B. All K9 Unit personnel shall perform weekly maintenance training with their assigned canine.

C. All K9 handlers shall maintain training files on their dogs use preapproved training forms. These files shall be submitted on a monthly and bi-annual basis for inclusion in the dog's permanent file and for audit and review purposes.

D. Monthly K9 activity reports shall submitted to the director.

E. K9 Unit training reports, field deployment and narcotics reports will not be removed from the permanent files without the specific permission. These records are the property of the department and not the individual officer.

IX. GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. Any certified officer meeting or exceeding the posted requirement may apply for a position vacancy in the K9 Unit. The Director, or his designee, shall post the requirements for the position as per established procedure. The testing process for K9 Unit applicants shall minimally include a oral interview and physical agility test.

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B. The handler(s) assigned to the K9 Unit shall obtain dog food and other contracted supplies from the department designated vendor only.

C. The handler is responsible for ensuring that their canine is maintained in a healthy environment. This includes proper feeding and routine physical inspections.

The handler is responsible for ensuring that their canine receives prompt medical care from either the contract veterinarian or contract emergency veterinarian services. The handler is responsible for filing all medical records and receipts in their canine's medical records file.

D. The handler will ensure that no unauthorized people tease or otherwise harass their canine or other department canines, unless specifically directed to do so in a training environment.

E. The handler will ensure than nobody pets or attempts to pet a department canine without the specific permission of the dog's handlers.

F. Unauthorized exhibitions of the dog's apprehension and engagement abilities are forbidden.

G. Handler's will ensure that law enforcement personnel working in the immediate proximity of the police service canine shall heed all directions given by the handler and that their actions will not compromise the safety of the handler or the deployment mission. The handler may stop and cancel the deployment at anytime if they notice a significant safety or tactical violation. These cancellations and the causes shall be immediately reported to a supervisor.

X. UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT

A. All members of the K9 Unit shall be permitted to wear the optional uniform as described below:

Only issued Black Uniform type shirt and pants may be worn. The shirt shall be marked with arm patches as issued by the Department. No specialty patches e.g. SWAT, FTO etc., shall be worn with the exception of the approved K9 Unit patch.

The shirt will be tucked into the pants at all times. The bottoms of the pants must be either cleanly pressed during normal activity or bloused as per event for officer safety.

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The sleeves of the uniform shirt may be either long or short sleeved: long sleeves may be rolled up using a military style 3 inch cutoff, as long as the cuff does not obstruct the shoulder patch.

Headgear. The following headgear is approved for wear by the members of the K9 unit:

Department standard black baseball cap;

Call out Uniform. A handler may elect to wear a department approved "Raid Jacket" or similar jacket or windbreaker when called out to a deployment during off-duty hours. The exception to this are call- outs for search warrant deployments where the issued uniform shall be worn.

Leather Gear. The handler may at their expense elect to wear a nylon type duty belt and associated gear in lieu of the regulation leather gear.

Each K9 handler will be issued the following equipment and will be responsible for the care and maintenance of this equipment:

Traffic Lead, Leather
Patrol Lead, Leather or Nylon
Tracking Lead, Leather or Nylon
Agitation Muzzle, Leather German Basket Style
Stainless Steel Prong Collar
Feed Pan
Water Pan or Bowl
Water Bucket
Dog Brush
Fur Rake

All K9 Unit equipment shall be returned when the handler leaves the service of the K9 Unit.

Load Bearing Equipment. A military style bearing harness and belt assembly may be worn by handlers to provide for additional storage of equipment and availability of drinking water on extended deployments

Inclement Weather Clothing. It shall be the responsibility of the individual K9 handler to dress appropriately for climatic conditions. This includes the maintenance, and use of cold

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weather clothing. The following types of cold weather clothing are approved for use by the K9 teams:

Insulated boots
Insulated gloves

Approved: *M. Shackelford*
M. Shackelford

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