



ELGIN POLICE DEPARTMENT

151 Douglas Avenue Elgin, Illinois 60120



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STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

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Chief of Police:

Community Service Dog Program, 112.1

Cross Reference:

SOP 41.6 Take Home Vehicle
SOP 102.1 Police Service Dog Operations

Policy Sections:

112.1.1 Supervision
112.1.2 Selection of the Primary Handler
112.1.3 Selection of Community Service Dog
112.1.4 Ownership, Care, Veterinary Service & Kenneling
112.1.5 Equipment
112.1.6 Team Assignments
112.1.7 Training
112.1.8 Handler Commitment and Compensation

PURPOSE

To establish procedures and guidelines for the Police Community Service Dog Program.

POLICY

It is the policy of the department to utilize a police community service dog to provide emotional support to those who have experienced emotional trauma and for citizens and witnesses who may benefit from the support and reassurance provided by the community service dog. This program is also utilized to cultivate relationships with citizens through attendance at community events.

This policy does not pertain to dogs utilized as a police service dog, who are used for the purpose of detection, protection and apprehension. Refer to Standard Operating Procedure 102.1 Police Service Dog Operations for information on detection and utility dogs.

DEFINITIONS

Alternate Handler: Detectives and mental health professionals assigned to the Collaborative Crisis Services Unit who have received training by the department's authorized training facility to utilize the community service dog. Serves as the dog's handler at authorized department events.

Community Service Dog (CSD): A dog trained to provide comfort those who may be in need of emotional support. When utilized for community outreach, use of the dog contributes to the building of trust and positive relationships between the police department and the community.

Community Service Dog Team: Consists of a dog certified in accordance with industry standards approved by the chief of police and a Collaborative Crisis Services Unit detective who is qualified and trained to handle the dog.

Primary Handler: Collaborative Crisis Services Unit detective who is trained and certified in accordance with industry standards approved by the chief of police. Maintains immediate control of the dog and is predominately responsible for the overall management of the dog and serves as the dog's advocate.

PROCEDURES

112.1.1 SUPERVISION

- A. The chief of police designates a commander to oversee the Community Service Dog Program.
- B. The Community Engagement lieutenant and Collaborative Crisis Services Unit (CCSU) sergeant are responsible for overseeing the Community Service Dog Program and shall report to the commander designated by the chief of police as it pertains to functions of the program.

- C. The CCSU sergeant is directly responsible for the following:
 - 1. Team assignments and duties.
 - 2. Review of monthly reports to keep informed on the team's activity and accountability measures.
 - 3. Team training, to include certifications.
 - 4. Program purchases.
 - 5. Demonstrations for community outreach and education.
 - 6. Participation in the selection process of the handler.
- D. The primary handler and alternate handlers report to the CCSU sergeant and when the sergeant is unavailable, the Community Engagement lieutenant through the chain of command to the commander designated by the chief of police who oversees the program.
- E. Community groups and organizations are encouraged to contact the police department to schedule a visit with the community service dog. These requests shall be forwarded to the primary handler who shall seek approval through the CCSU sergeant.

112.1.2 SELECTION OF THE PRIMARY HANDLER

- A. The primary handler shall possess a minimum of at least three years of police officer experience, to include outside agency experience and off probationary status.
- B. Successful completion of the certification process as established by therapy dog industry standards with final approval by the chief of police.
- C. Reside within a reasonable distance, as determined by the chief of police, from the city of Elgin corporate limits.
- D. Successfully complete training requirements. Refer to Section 112.1.7 for more information.
- E. Appointment of the primary handler shall be made by the chief of police upon a recommendation from the commander designated by the chief of police.

112.1.3 SELECTION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE DOGS

- A. Dogs utilized for the program shall be selected based on the following criteria:
 - 1. Temperament.
 - 2. Medical history.
 - 3. Breed type.
 - 4. Age.
 - 5. Background.
 - 6. Any other factor that is deemed suitable to the dog's specialized use.
- B. Dogs may be acquired from a department authorized breeder, shelter, or other reputable resource.

112.1.4 OWNERSHIP, CARE, VETERINARY SERVICE AND KENNELING

- A. The community service dog is the property of the department and will not be used for any purpose other than official duties.
- B. Proper care and maintenance are the responsibility of the primary handler. Prior to utilization, the community service dog shall be vaccinated against rabies. Annually, the community service dog shall undergo a medical examination by an authorized, licensed veterinarian care facility.
 - 1. Only approved veterinarian services will be used for the community service dog and services shall be approved by the designated commander or designee.
 - 2. In cases of an emergency, the closest veterinarian service will be used to medically stabilize the community service dog. The designated commander or designee shall be contacted and consulted prior to additional treatment. Additional treatment is at the discretion of the handler.
- C. The community service dog shall not be given any food or substances that have not been authorized.
- D. The community service dog shall reside with the primary handler. However, during periods of short absences, the community service dog can reside with a trusted family member of the primary handler when the handler receives approval from the CCSU sergeant. Kenneling services are authorized in the event primary handler and alternate handlers are unavailable. Only department authorized kenneling locations may be utilized.

112.1.5 EQUIPMENT

- A. The primary handler will be issued the necessary equipment to perform their duties. Equipment will include, but not be limited to food/water bowls, leads, collar(s), protective equipment, or any other training materials deemed necessary by the designated commander. The department will ensure alternate handlers have the necessary items needed to perform the functions of the primary handler, when needed.
- B. Police vehicles used to transport the community service dog on a regular basis are equipped with a heat sensor monitoring device which:
 - 1. Monitors the internal temperature.
 - 2. Provides an audible and visual notification when the interior temperature reaches 85 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - 3. Activates the vehicle's windows to open in the event the vehicle reaches the temperature stated above.
- C. Upon assignment, the primary handler will be assigned a department take home vehicle. The take home vehicle shall be maintained in accordance with Standard Operating Procedure 41.6 Take Home Vehicle.

112.1.6 TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Assignments may consist of the following, but not limited to:
 - 1. Public events/community outreach.
 - 2. Major incident decompression.
 - 3. School demonstrations.

4. Assist in traumatic incidents.
 5. Assist in interviews of victims/witnesses.
 6. Grief for loss of loved ones.
 7. Fires, floods, natural disasters.
 8. Home visits (on a case-by-case basis).
 9. Hospitals (following major incidents for families, distressed staff members, death notifications, ICU waiting rooms).
 10. Schools (student, staff or parent deaths or traumatic incident affecting students).
 11. Assist mental health professionals (crisis intervention).
 12. Courtrooms, but only at the discretion of the presiding judge.
 13. Other duties as assigned or may be deemed appropriate.
- B. While the team's work is primarily conducted within the City of Elgin, the team may attend to witnesses, victims, or other persons located outside of the city limits with supervisory approval.
- C. Efforts shall be made to ensure people who are allergic to dogs are not negatively affected by the community service dog's presence, this also includes situations where an individual has a fear of dogs.
- D. Whenever possible, locations where the environmental conditions have the propensity to cause the community service dog to contract harmful bacteria or viruses shall be avoided.

112.1.7 TRAINING

- A. All handlers are required to complete obedience and control training prior to being officially recognized as a handler.
- B. Training shall be consistent with industry standards and proportionate to the functions of the community service dog.
- C. Community Service Dog Teams will be evaluated annually by the designated commander. The purpose of the evaluation is to conduct a review of the previous year's activity, determine if changes to the program are recommended and make recommendations for the upcoming year.
- D. All handlers will routinely practice obedience and control related exercises with the community service dog.
- E. All handlers will be responsible for educating department personnel about the rules and correct behavior to be practiced while in proximity of the community service dog.
- F. All handlers shall be trained to obtain permission prior to approaching individuals to ensure the safety of all persons and the community service dog.
- G. Training completed by the Community Service Dog Teams will be forwarded to the Training Division for inclusion in the handler's personnel file; this shall be completed by the handler. The sergeant assigned to the department's Police Service Dog Program is responsible for familiarizing themselves with the training associated with being a handler and shall collaborate with handlers to ensure the required training is completed on a timely basis.

112.1.8 HANDLER COMMITMENT AND COMPENSATION

- A. Assignment to the Community Service Dog Program requires a three-year commitment. Exceptions are at the discretion of the designated commander with approval by the chief of police.
- B. Assignment to the program requires the primary handler to care for the assigned dog continuously. The primary handler is required to work 7.0 hours per shift and is paid for an extra 1.0 hours per shift, for maintenance of the dog. This one-hour compensation shall be completed at the department or at the primary handler's residence during their shift.
- C. When the primary handler resides outside the Elgin city limits, they shall obtain permission from their supervisor to perform maintenance duties at their residence.
- D. If for any reason the primary handler is unable to take the extra 1.0 hour during their shift, the primary handler has the option to be compensated by submitting the extra 1.0 hour of compensatory time or overtime.