



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 1

CANINE PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE

Police canines possess unique capabilities that can be utilized as an effective tool for law enforcement purposes in patrol operations or peer support services. The primary goal of the canine program is to enhance safety or support services with the use of specially trained canines utilizing their unique abilities. Police canines will be assigned a handler to serve as a team, and will be provided proper training, management, and care to be deployed in direct support of the public safety mission.

II. TERMINOLOGY

- Canine Handler – An officer who is trained, certified, and assigned as a handler to work with an assigned canine.
- Canine Team – A canine handler and an assigned canine.

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF CANINE TEAMS

The following outlines general provisions for authorization, conditions, limitations, and use of canine teams. **<41.1.5a>**

A. Patrol Operations – Explosives Detection

1. Patrol canine teams can provide proactive patrol and backup to officers on calls for service and may be dispatched as a primary officer, as needed, to supplement patrol operations.
2. Patrol canine teams will assist whenever possible in arrest situations but will not take physical custody or transport detainees.
3. When a canine team is requested, the requesting officer shall be responsible for:
 - a. Ensuring the request is made in a timely manner.
 - b. Determining incident details, i.e., the exact location, what was observed, any time lapse, etc.



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 2

CANINE PROGRAM

- c. Notifying the handler of any dangers that may be present, both environmental as well as any items or evidence that may be related to an incident.
 - d. Ensuring the scene is preserved. Any evidence located by the canine team will become the responsibility of the primary officer.
 - e. Coordinating assistance with the canine team by remaining onsite to relay information and assist as cover, if requested.
 - f. Completing the incident report, including the request for a canine team, and assuming responsibility of any evidence located by the canine team.
4. The canine handler shall have exclusive control over the use of their canine and will make the final determination as to whether to deploy the canine based upon their assessment of the situation, knowledge of the capabilities of the canine, and in consideration of departmental policies and laws governing their use.
 5. Patrol canine teams should not be dispatched to animal-related complaints and shall not be used for crowd control purposes.
- B. Support Services – Facility Support
1. Support canines assist in peer support activities and wellness initiatives that contribute to reducing workplace stress, anxiety, or trauma reactions.
 2. Support canines work in complement with the department’s peer support program and contribute to the employee wellness mission.
- C. Demonstrations, Shows, Competitions
1. Canine handlers shall not participate in any demonstrations, shows, competitions or other activities where the handler and/or the canine are representing the police department, without prior approval from the canine supervisor.



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 3

CANINE PROGRAM

2. All requests to participate in such exhibitions will be directed to the canine supervisor, who will determine and/or approve the canine team's attendance at an event that represents the department.

IV. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF THE EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINE

The explosive detection canine is specifically trained to identify certain explosive materials by scent. The following outlines specific provisions for authorization, conditions, limitations, and use of the explosive detection canine team. **<41.1.5a>**

- A. The explosive detection canine may be called upon to:
 1. Conduct scans for explosives in buildings, around or in vehicles, and any other object or location deemed appropriate by a supervisor, after consultation with the canine handler.
 2. Conduct preventative searches at locations such as special events, VIP visits, official buildings, and other restricted areas. Because a canine sniff may be considered a search, such searches of individuals should remain minimally intrusive and shall be strictly limited to the purpose of detecting explosives.
- B. The explosive detection canine shall NOT be used to:
 1. Confirm or rule out the presence of explosives when a package has been deemed suspicious. If a package is deemed suspicious, the Fairfax County EOD should be called.
 2. Render a suspected device safe or clear.
 3. Search any area or premises where there is no lawful access.
- C. Requesting the explosive detection canine team:
 1. Officers may request the canine team during their normal tour of duty. Upon request, the officer shall subsequently notify their immediate supervisor.
 2. Off-duty requests for the canine team must be authorized by a supervisor.



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 4

CANINE PROGRAM

3. Requests from outside law enforcement agencies will be handled pursuant to mutual aid protocol.

V. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF THE FACILITY SUPPORT CANINE

The facility support canine is specifically trained to provide emotional comfort to department members and others to assist with stress, trauma, or anxiety. The following outlines specific provisions for authorization, conditions, limitations, and use of the facility support canine. <41.1.5a>

- A. The facility support canine will primarily be utilized as a companion animal to provide preemptive stress relief for department members or others to augment the employee wellness mission and access peer support program services.
- B. The facility support canine will have open access to interact with department members and may be routinely assigned to a specific location during working hours. The facility support canine will be available at the facility on the same schedule as the handler(s), unless otherwise directed.
- C. The facility support canine may be called upon for critical support needs outside of scheduled hours. Immediate response to the department will be determined by the handler, in consideration of the nature of the incident, the time, and other care factors.

VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following outlines general responsibilities of the handler and the canine supervisor in support of the canine program.

A. Responsibilities of the Canine Handler

1. The canine handler position is a specialized position and the qualifications, selection process, term of the assignment, and other criteria is outlined in the "Special Allocation of Personnel" general order. <41.1.5c>
2. Each handler has the sole responsibility for the control, care, health, maintenance, and well-being of their assigned canine. While on and off-duty,



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 5

CANINE PROGRAM

the canine handler shall always maintain control of their assigned canine. Consideration should be given to permitted interactions and activities.

3. Handlers shall report any accidents, injuries, or damage occurring on or off-duty, caused by the canine or to the canine, to the canine supervisor.
4. The handler has the individual responsibility for ensuring their canine's fitness for its certification and overall health. If the handler notices any work or behavior from the canine that is unacceptable, the handler shall notify the canine supervisor.
5. The handler is required to keep the canine's living area at home clean and sanitary. The canine shall be protected from inclement or extreme weather conditions.
6. The handler will ensure that their assigned canine is not left in a vehicle for extended periods of time. If unusual conditions require that the canine remain in the vehicle, the handler will make periodic checks on the well-being of their canine, especially during periods of warm weather. If a police canine is required to be left in a vehicle, handlers should ensure that the vehicle is left within public view, or in visible areas, in case safety alarms are activated.
7. Each handler will ensure that their canine is secured properly in the police vehicle when the canine is left unattended.
8. The handler will keep the assigned police vehicle clean, sanitary, and ensure that it is in proper mechanical condition.
9. The handler shall only use department-issued equipment that is required for the canine's assignment, which includes, but not limited to, leashes, collars, vests, and other applicable authorized equipment. **<41.1.5h>**
10. Handlers are entitled to one hour per shift to be utilized for the care and maintenance of the assigned canine.



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 6

CANINE PROGRAM

B. Responsibilities of the Canine Supervisor:

1. The canine supervisor will be involved in the selection and evaluation of canines for the department, to include: **<41.1.5b>**
 - a. Working with an approved vendor to select and evaluate the canine for suitability based on the department's needs.
 - b. Facilitating a canine participation agreement with the vendor, if applicable.
 - c. Ensuring the selected canine receives a comprehensive health exam prior to training.
 - d. Ensuring any pre-service training requirements are met, as applicable to the canine.
2. The canine supervisor shall ensure oversight of the department's canine program. The canine supervisor does not replace direct supervision, but gives functional oversight to the canine program, including:
 - a. Assisting in the selection process for the canine and handler.
 - b. Ensuring the primary mission of the program and the canine team is being performed.
 - c. Approving or coordinating events or other activities where the canine team participates and represents the department. All requests for demonstrations, shows, or competitions will be directed to the canine supervisor, who will determine whether to attend the specific event and/or approve the event to represent the police department.
 - d. Reviewing any accidents or injuries caused by or to the canine or handler.
 - e. Reviewing any unacceptable work or behavior of the canine that poses a risk to the canine, the handler, or the public and initiating an administrative review. The canine supervisor shall forward a report to the Chief of Police outlining concerns, findings, and recommendations.



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 7

CANINE PROGRAM

- f. Monitoring the budget for the program and maintaining equipment, training, and health needs for the canines.
 - g. Ensuring home care is conscientious and medical care and kenneling are provided at department-approved vendors.
 - h. Ensuring routine or emergency medical care is provided for the canine and approved in advance.
3. The canine supervisor shall monitor and approve the training requirements and activities of the canine program to ensure that ongoing training and certification of canine teams are accomplished. The canine supervisor should periodically observe canine training sessions to stay abreast of current tactics utilized and review the team's performance.
 4. The canine supervisor shall provide an annual report of the activities of the canine program, outlining deployment data and incident activity, use of force incidents, (if any), training conducted, certifications achieved, problems or successes of the program, and recommendations for proposed changes to the program. **<41.1.5i>**

VII. REPORTING PROCEDURES

A. Required Reports

1. Supplemental reports will be written on all activities conducted by the explosive detection canine team to support the primary officer's incident report.
2. Supplements will be submitted whenever articles or evidence are located. Canines will be restricted in handling any articles that need to be processed and the handler will turn over such items to the primary officer at the scene.
3. Incident reports will be submitted whenever the canine is utilized for another agency's request.

VIII. TRAINING <41.1.5d>

- A. Each canine team must successfully complete required training, approved by the department, prior to assuming duty as a working team.



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 8

CANINE PROGRAM

- B. Handlers attending canine training will adhere to all rules of conduct and training as set forth by the host school or agency.
 - C. The amount of training needed to complete the basic requirements of the canine's certification shall be left at the discretion of the training program, which can vary based on the experience and performance of the canine handler and the canine.
 - D. Once deployed as a certified working team, the canine and its handler shall engage in monthly training sessions. Such training will consist of those activities or exercises that support the applicable certification. All handlers are also expected and encouraged to participate in periodic unscheduled or informal training during their shifts, contingent upon calls for service or other routine responsibilities.
 - E. Only inert training aids, which have no special storage requirements, will be utilized for canines trained for scent.
 - F. Certifications
All training and certification for the canines shall be documented and submitted for review by the canine supervisor, with a copy provided to the Personnel and Training Section for filing. **Canine teams shall be certified annually with appropriate documentation.** If the canine team fails to certify in any of the required areas, appropriate training will be sought. <41.1.5e,f>
- IX. CANINE CARE <41.1.5g>
- A. The department will be responsible for food, equipment, boarding, and veterinary services for the canines. The department will additionally ensure that the canine is spayed/neutered prior to service.
 - B. Unless otherwise directed, all boarding of the department's canines will take place at a kennel pre-approved by the department.
 - C. Department canines will have a health exam annually, notwithstanding office visits for specific issues. Each handler is to ensure appropriate vaccinations and heart worm prevention medication is administered to the assigned canine as prescribed. Blood tests for heart worm and a fecal specimen examination for parasites will be conducted annually.



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 9

CANINE PROGRAM

- D. Except in an emergency, only those animal hospitals/veterinarians approved by the department will be used for the treatment of the canines.
- E. Each handler will notify the canine supervisor of all veterinarian visits, both non-emergency and emergency, for their assigned canine prior to the appointment.
- F. Any handler who obtains health care services and/or products from an authorized animal hospital/veterinarian will request an itemized receipt for the services. The receipt will list all services rendered and the cost associated with each. The handler is to sign this receipt and identify the canine receiving such services. The handler will forward this receipt to the canine supervisor in a timely manner.
- G. A handler who purchases health care services and/or products from any other unauthorized provider will NOT be reimbursed for these services (this does NOT apply to those emergency situations in which the life of a department-owned canine is in jeopardy).
- H. In circumstances where a department canine requires the services of a veterinarian for the purpose of euthanasia, the department shall assume responsibility for this expense. The handler shall obtain these services from an authorized provider and provide an itemized receipt for such services.

III. SEPARATION/RETIREMENT

- A. The canine supervisor will recommend to the Chief of Police when a canine should be transferred, retired, or removed from service, based on the following:
 - 1. Input received from the handler, veterinarian, or trainers regarding the canine's fitness for duty.
 - 2. Handler's separation from the department or from the canine program.
 - 3. Unanticipated illness or death of the canine.
- B. All issued equipment shall be returned to the department in proper working order upon the transfer, separation, or retirement of the canine.
- C. The Chief of Police will determine the final disposition of a department canine. The



Herndon Police Department GENERAL ORDERS

Operations Section

311

Effective Date: March 25, 2022

Page 10

CANINE PROGRAM

handler may submit a written recommendation regarding the suggested disposition of the canine.

- D. Transfers of canine ownership are authorized under Virginia Code 2.2-1124(8). Upon approval of the Chief of Police, the ownership of a police canine may be transferred from the department to an individual or an agency with a written agreement. Upon transfer, separation, or retirement, all expenses will become the responsibility of the owner.