

# City of Johns Creek Police Department

<i>Subject:</i> Canine (K-9) Units		<i>Number:</i> 02-30
<i>Reference:</i> See “Use of Force” and “Search and Seizure”		<i>Amends:</i>
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## PURPOSE:

Establish the Department's K-9 unit and provide guidelines for its administration.

## POLICY: (02-30)

The Canine Unit shall be an integral component of the uniform patrol division, shall perform regular patrol duties or as assigned, and shall provide such other departmental support as needed. All canine handlers and dogs shall be appropriately trained and each separate dog and handler shall be referred to as a Canine (K-9) Team. All dogs will be controlled at all times to minimize injuries, both to persons and to the dogs. The use of canines shall be governed by the Department's “Use of Force” policy, and shall complete the appropriate documentation when the dogs are utilized in an overt, assertive action toward any person. However, it shall not constitute the use of deadly force when police dogs are properly trained and used in accordance with proper procedures for conducting searches.

## PROCEDURES:

### Establishment of K-9 Unit (02-30-01)

The K-9 Unit is part of the Uniform Patrol Division under the command of the Chief of Police or his/her designee. Each canine team shall perform the duties as described in the police officer's job description and this manual, and is directed by an assigned shift commander and supervisor. The duty functions of the dogs shall be that of a “patrol dog” with other duties performed as secondary functions of that “job description”.

## **Canine Unit Commander/Supervisor Responsibilities (02-30-02)**

### **A. Canine Unit Commander**

The Canine Commander is responsible for the administration of the Unit, including:

1. Developing divisional goals and objectives which facilitate the goals of the department;
2. Developing and implementing general and special programs within the division;
3. Preparing and executing the unit's budget;
4. Ensuring division personnel comply with established policies and procedures that govern the division and the department; and
5. Reporting monthly to the Division Major on the activities, arrests, seizures, health and status of agency canines.

### **B. Canine Unit Supervisor**

The Canine Unit Supervisor is responsible for the day to day operations of the unit, including:

1. Establishing and maintaining the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) license (Renewal is due annually by December 31<sup>st</sup>)
2. Establishing and maintaining the Georgia Pharmaceutical license (Renewal is due by June 30<sup>th</sup> on **EVEN** years);
3. Facilitating monthly K-9 Unit training;
4. Ensuring all records of training and deployments are completed by the end of each month;
5. Report monthly to the Canine Unit Commander on the activities, arrests, seizures, and training statistics; and
6. Ensuring National Certification is attained for each department canine annually.

## **Selection of Canine Handlers (02-30-03)**

The selection of candidates for canine handlers shall follow the Department's standard specialized assignment selection process. Prospective handlers should be physically fit, even tempered, and have a good deal of patience. If the candidate has no previous experience as a handler, he/she should have the ability to handle or learn to handle dogs.

In order to facilitate movement within the unit and opportunities within the department, once a canine officer is promoted and the handler's assigned canine has completed its years of service to the department, the officer will no longer be eligible to receive a new canine. Assignment of new canines will occur at the discretion of the Chief of Police, based on the needs of the department.

## **Training, Records and Statistics (02-30-04)**

### **A. Pre-service Training**

1. All dogs and handlers shall attend a full-time canine school approved by the Chief of Police. Only canine teams trained in patrol functions will be allowed to work assigned duties specific to the canine functions. Additional training shall be provided in the areas of drug detection, tracking, searches, apprehensions, etc.
2. All canine teams shall achieve their certification through a nationally recognized and/or approved canine training school, and shall maintain any achieved certifications and all yearly re-certifications.

### **B. In-Service Training**

Monthly in-service training will be conducted to maintain and/or improve the dogs and handlers proficiency at their assigned duties. In the event the canine is ill, the officer will report to the department to work his/her scheduled or assigned shift. Canine officers are also required to meet departmental and state continuing education and training requirements to maintain proficiencies and retain law enforcement certifications. *Training shall only be excused for normal exceptions such as vacations, attending schools or illness in the dog or the handler.* Missed training shall be made up as soon as possible, upon return from absence. Failure to meet the training requirements prescribed in this policy and applicable regulations, will result in the canine's removal from service, until such requirements are met.

### **C. Training Records and Statistics**

1. The canine handler shall keep accurate records regarding all phases of his/her K-9 team's training and experiences in service. These records shall document the fact that each unit is being constantly trained and monitored. All records shall be available as any other public records.
2. Training records for the dogs shall be the property of the Johns Creek Police Department and shall be maintained in the K9 records management system. K9 handlers shall submit all training documentation within five (5) days of the last day of the month.
3. Additionally, the K9 Commander or his/her designee will establish and maintain a file on canine activity with designated software.

### **Canine Care (02-30-05)**

Canine handlers will provide 24 hour care and maintenance for their assigned dogs. Each handler will maintain a clean environment for the dog both at home and at work. Fresh water will be available to dogs at all times, and the handlers will feed their dogs daily; handler will determine canine feeding schedule. The handler will purchase dog food from a Department approved supplier.

The dogs shall not be abused and shall only be trained utilizing techniques approved by canine commander. Dogs will be groomed on a regular basis and bathed when dictated by a soiled coat or the presence of parasites. In the event that a dog must be boarded, the K-9 Kennel Facility or other facility approved by the department will be utilized (see section 02-30-17).

Canine handlers will be responsible for maintaining the health of their dogs. All health problems shall be immediately reported. Handlers will provide, or make sure their dog obtains standard, emergency, and preventive maintenance, health care through the Department's designated Veterinarian.

### **Ownership and Retirement (02-30-06)**

The City shall purchase or obtain and shall maintain ownership of all Canines. Any dogs "donated" to the Department must have a verifiable medical background or receive a physical by the Department Veterinarian, including hips that are certifiable (OFA or A stamp). The dog will be tested for temperament and working drives prior to acceptance for Police Canine work. Donated dogs without nationally recognized breed registration papers signed by the owner must have a letter of donation signed by the donor. Every effort will be made to obtain complete Medical Records and any other pertinent records pertaining to the donated dog. Donated dogs will become the sole property of the Johns Creek Police Department until ownership is transferred to the handler or other recipient authorized by the Department.

Department dogs may be retired between the ages of seven (7) years and ten (10) years old. Any other retirement will be based on performance and/or medical problems. If there is a question about a dog's performance or suitability for work, the Chief of Police will determine how to proceed. If a dog is still performing satisfactorily past retirement age, the age limit may be extended by the Chief of Police.

Upon retirement of the Canine, the handler may have first right of refusal to purchase the

Canine from the City. The recipient of a retired canine will sign a binding legal agreement accepting responsibility for the dog's actions. The recipient must also agree to refrain from using the dog in any police capacity. The Johns Creek Police Department shall reserve the right to remove the dog from the recipient if the stipulation(s) of any agreements are not met.

Any Canine that has a pre-existing medical condition requiring continuing care at retirement, due to a work related injury will be maintained and funded by the Johns Creek Police Department or through the Johns Creek Public Safety Foundation, at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

### **Responsibility to Assist Department Personnel (02-30-07)**

The Canine Unit is a resource and tool of the Patrol division. In order for this unit to be successful it must arrive at crime scenes as soon as possible, before the area becomes polluted by any people or vehicles, etc., not related to the crime. In order to facilitate the rapid deployment of these units, canine officers will, upon direction of the shift commander, respond, as **backup or support units**, to any and all situations where they believe they may be able to provide assistance. Whenever possible, the canine unit should be assigned to a designated shift as a city wide car.

- A. Respond to all in progress crimes/disturbances, i.e., alarms, prowlers, open doors, etc., where the unique ability of the canine to locate, pursue and detain suspects may be useful.
- B. Answer calls when no other units are available. However, Canine Teams should refrain from getting involved in lengthy investigations in order to facilitate their ability to provide backup and/or support as quickly as possible.
- C. Attempt to locate victims, missing persons, and/or evidence left by these people.
- D. Apprehension of Suspects Resisting Arrest. Resisting arrest includes anyone endangering officers, police canine(s), innocent people or attempts to escape.
- E. All canine teams are subject to call for any event or incident where the unique talents of the team may facilitate a person or suspect location, apprehension, searches of cars and buildings, etc. All call outs shall be only upon the approval of the duty supervisor or commanders.
- F. The teams may also respond to requests for assistance of other jurisdictions.

Upon arrival at any scene, the canine team will notify the officer in charge of their presence. The officer in charge at the scene will determine whether or not to utilize the canine team's assistance. When the canine team's assistance is requested, the canine handler will assess the situation and determine if and how the team can assist. The on scene supervisor will maintain

command of the scene, while the canine handler will determine and coordinate the deployment of the K-9 within the scene. The canine handler has the final and ultimate authority in deciding to deploy the canine.

### **Control of Canines and Use of Force (02-30-08)**

Use of specially trained police canines for law enforcement constitutes real or implied use of force. In this, as in other cases, officers may only use that degree of force reasonable and necessary to apprehend or secure a suspect. (See also “Use of Force”)

K-9 handlers shall maintain control over his/her dog ***at all times***. Citizen contact with Department dogs shall be limited to situations the handlers feel are advisable and safe for the citizen and dogs.

- A. Handlers shall exercise due diligence and care when dogs are out of the car.
- B. All dogs will always be under control of the handler (off leash or on leash).
- C. Dogs left unattended in a vehicle will be unable to be reached by the public.
- D. The dog's whereabouts will be monitored and controlled at the handler's home. The dog will not be allowed to run loose unmonitored.

Officers are required to keep abreast of court decisions involving laws of arrest and use of force regarding canine apprehensions.

Handlers will attempt to minimize grips by training K-9's to recall or call-off when a suspect surrenders or discontinues his/her attempt to flee or fight. The K-9 is trained to release its grip on command of the handler. In any event in which a canine, whether on or off duty, grips (bites) a person or apprehends a suspect by force; the handler will:

- A. Summon a Supervisory Officer and EMS to the scene.
- B. Have EMS examine the affected area to determine the seriousness of the injury and if the suspect will need transport to a medical facility for further care.
- C. Take color photographs of the affected area if possible prior to and following medical treatment.
- D. Due to the potential of AIDS or other types of communicable diseases, a canine will be taken out of service for four (4) hours after biting any individual.

A Canine Activity Report will be completed in the form of a miscellaneous or incident report, within 24 hours of the occurrence. Grips will also be documented on the Use of Force form and shall include information regarding treatment of grips to include treatment rendered, dates, times, names of attending doctors and medical facilities. The Use of Force form shall be routed, as specified in the Use of Force Investigations SOP 04-17. In all cases where the canine grips a person, copies of the incident report will be forwarded through the proper channels to Fulton County Animal Control.

### **Responsibilities of Backup Officer (02-30-09)**

Should the canine unit respond to any scene and deployed for an apprehension or search, an officer should be assigned to back up the handler. The duties of the backup officer include:

- A. Stay close behind and protect the K-9 handler, who in most cases will be preoccupied with observing his/her dog.
- B. During an apprehension, the backup officer will wait on the K-9 team to order the suspect into a prone position and request assistance before moving to the suspect.
- C. Upon apprehending a suspect, the dog handler and dog will contain the suspect while the backup officer searches the suspect and, if necessary, takes him/her into custody.
- D. The backup officer will at no time place him/her self between the dog and suspect.**
- E. In the event the Dog Handler is injured or unable to handle the dog; the backup officer will follow the following procedures, in the order presented.
  - 1. Contact another K-9 Handler;
  - 2. Contact Animal Control;
  - 3. Attempt to handle and or restrain the dog personally.

### **Area Search Deployment (02-30-10)**

Area searches will only be used when tracking a suspect is impossible or undesirable due to conditions. Area searches will be employed to locate suspect(s) who were observed, or are believed to be in a certain definable area. Area search will be used instead of tracking when it is not known where the suspect(s) entered the area and or a track can not be located for the dog to follow to the suspect. The procedures for conducting an area search will be as follows:

- A. Before searching, the handler or other appropriate personnel will loudly announce:
  - 1. This is the Johns Creek Police Department Canine Unit
  - 2. You are under Arrest.

3. Surrender yourself now, or a trained police canine will be sent to apprehend you. Surrender yourself now, or a trained police canine will be sent to apprehend you.
  4. The third time, the canine officer will announce, Surrender yourself now, or a trained police canine will be sent to apprehend you. "THIS DOG WILL BITE YOU". A total of three (3) verbal warnings will be given.
- B. A perimeter will be established and the search warning given. Officers will be assigned to maintain the perimeter of the search area. These officers will:
1. Move as directed by canine handler and coordinating supervisor.
  2. Avoid contaminating the search area with their scent. Stay in the vehicle when possible. Keep quiet, do not smoke, and do not walk, stand, or drive in the search area. Do not enter the search area unless requested by the dog handler, or an emergency occurs.
  3. Cover as many sides, entry and exit points as possible.
- C. The handler will start the search down wind of the contained area. The area search will be more successful if there is significant wind to move the scent.
- D. The search will be done in a systematic grid pattern. The handler will adjust the grid pattern and the distance between legs of the grid.
- E. The handler will determine whether or not to work the dog on-leash, off-leash, or both. He/she will use his/her experience with the dog and the specific information available at the scene to determine the best methods and equipment to use in each individual case. Special care will be taken in situations where innocent individuals may be encountered during the search.
- F. The objective of the grid search is to locate either a track or human scent the dog can follow. After locating a scent to follow, the conditions and actions of the suspect will determine which method(s) the canine team uses during the pursuit. The handler will rely on his/her experience with the dog to determine when to abandon the grid search pattern and follow the dog.
- G. The perimeter may be altered during a pursuit. The handler will relay his/her request for a change in the perimeter to the officer in charge at the scene through the backup officer.
- H. The K-9 team will handle a suspect they have located in the manner described in the "Control of the Canine" section above.

### **Tracking (02-30-11)**

The canine team may initiate a track from the point where the suspect was last observed or



suspected of hiding.

- A. The perimeter should be set.
- B. Tracking will be conducted on lead (fifteen to thirty-foot on harness or collar, when necessary.)
- C. Care should be taken to protect the safety of unrelated persons in the area.
- D. Perimeter should shift as directed by the canine handler.

### **Building Searches for Suspects in Hiding (02-30-12)**

A primary duty of Department canines is locating suspects in hiding. The unique abilities and senses of the dog may be used to reduce risk to officers and increase the chances of apprehending suspect(s). Prior to conducting a building search, the perimeter, including all exits of the building, should be secured. Before searching, the handler or other appropriate personnel will loudly announce:

- A. This is the Johns Creek Police Department Canine Unit
- B. You are under Arrest.
- C. Surrender yourself now, or a trained police canine will be sent to apprehend you.  
Surrender yourself now, or a trained police canine will be sent to apprehend you.
- D. The third time, the canine officer will announce, Surrender yourself now, or a trained police canine will be sent to apprehend you. "THIS DOG WILL BITE YOU". A total of three (3) verbal warnings will be given.

A reasonable amount of time shall be allowed for the suspect to respond. The command should then be repeated before the canine enters into the building or area to be searched. A third and final warning should be announced before deployment.

Building searches should be conducted as follows:

- A. The handler will determine whether the safety of the dog, any officer(s), and any innocent person in the area is best served by conducting the search on-leash, off leash or a combination of on and off-leash.
- B. Upon locating a suspect, the dog will respond appropriately to the actions of the suspects. The dog will hold its grip until the handler commands the canine to release. In the event that the suspect attempts to resist arrest; the dog will only release its grip by the command of the handler or when resistance stops. The backup officer has the responsibility of taking the suspect into custody leaving the K-9 handler free to handle the dog.

### **Search for Articles and/or Evidence (02-30-13)**

All K-9's are taught to indicate articles (such as; weapons, tools, expended cartridges, stolen property, articles of clothing, etc.) left by the suspect or victims of a crime. The K-9 may indicate these items while tracking or following human scent, although tracking provides the best opportunity. The procedures for article search depend locating by tracking, air scenting for human scent on the article, or air scenting for the scent of the article. The procedures will be the same as for tracking or area searches.

### **Search for Victims and/or Missing Persons (02-30-14)**

All K-9's are trained to locate innocent persons as well as criminal suspects. All of the scenting methods used to locate criminal suspects can also be used to locate members of the general public. K-9 teams practice friendly and aggressive responses at the end of tracks so the dogs do not assume a person found at the end of a scent trail will always be an aggressor.

### **Public Demonstrations (02-30-15)**

Good relations with the general public will be a high priority for all K-9 teams. Emphasis will be placed on demonstrating the dogs are very friendly with people and still willing and capable of defending against an aggressor. Handlers shall take every reasonable precaution to ensure all dogs are under control and the public is not endangered by any of the activities. Citizen contact with dogs will be closely monitored and controlled by K-9 handlers. All information and material presented during a demonstration will be reviewed and approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee prior to the demonstration.

### **Use and Storage of Narcotic Training Aids (02-30-16)**

A procedure shall be established to secure, store, authorize use and establish a retention period for real narcotics to be used as training aids for drug detection canines. To ensure proper training is received by the canine teams, it is necessary to expose both the handlers and canines to actual narcotic identification. While maintaining these narcotics, strict handling procedures and guidelines are necessary and shall be adhered to. The Controlled Substances Act of 1970 authorizes this Department, with a current Controlled Substances Registration Certificate indicating a Drug Enforcement Administration Registration Number, to possess, and use narcotics for **training purposes only**.

The procedures for storage, use, accounting, and retention are:

- A. Only controlled substances that have been seized, adjudicated, and professionally tested to certify the substance identity, or those authorized and issued by the DEA can be used for the purpose of canine training.
- B. The Canine Unit Commander or his/her designee is responsible for maintaining the Controlled Substances Registration Certificate to possess narcotics. The canine handler must sign the log each time the training drugs are dispersed or returned. Members of the Canine Unit which handle drug detection canines shall be allowed to possess various types of narcotics for the sole purpose of training. All narcotics shall be returned to the canine drug safe within 24 hours of the approved training/work day. Exceptions to this timeframe must be approved and documented by the Canine Unit Commander.
- C. Secure storage of the narcotic training aids is essential and strict guidelines shall be adhered to as follows:
  - 1. When the narcotic training aids are not in use, they shall be secured and locked in a dedicated and locked safe. The designated safe shall be located in a secure area with only authorized personnel having access. Additionally, only the evidence technician and the canine handlers will have access to open the canine narcotics safe.
  - 2. Every time the canine handler wishes to implement narcotic training aids in their training, the narcotic must be weighed, and documented “weight out” and logged into the “Storage Log”; documenting the date, time, and narcotic used. During training, the individual narcotic aids are to be placed in a canvas bag, PVC tube or sealed by other means which prevent the narcotics from raw exposure, total or partial loss and accidental ingestion.
  - 3. At the end of the training and/or work day, the narcotic training aid shall be logged into the “Storage Log” indicating the “weight in” and returned to the storage safe. While transporting the narcotics the canine handler will secure the narcotics in a locked safe located in the truck of their assigned vehicle.
  - 4. The canine handler shall be responsible for conducting the “weigh in” and “weigh out” and logging the results in the Storage Log. The storage log will be kept with the training narcotics.
  - 5. If the “weight out” and “weight in” entries vary by more than one (1) gram, or other discrepancies are found with the substances, the Canine Commander and Chief of Police shall be notified, in writing, immediately. An incident report must also be completed.
- D. To ensure accuracy and accountability of the narcotic training aids, the Evidence

Custodian shall audit the aids for accuracy in quantity, storage, and use on a monthly basis and a notation indicating this audit shall be placed in the "Storage Log" and included in the Canine Unit's monthly report. Any discrepancy shall be brought to the attention of the Evidence Supervisor, Canine Commander and Chief of Police immediately.

- E. In the event that the narcotic training aids become damaged an incident report will be completed and if necessary, the narcotic will be returned to the Evidence Technician for destruction. This process may also apply if the narcotic is no longer useful as a training aid due to its age.

### **K-9 Kennel Facility (02-30-17)**

The JCPD K-9 Unit kennels will serve as the primary temporary boarding facility for the K-9 Unit. The following procedures apply for use of the K-9 kennel facility:

- A. The canines may be housed at the kennels when handlers are attending training or on approved leave. Should officers have court appearances outside the city the canines should be housed at the kennels for safety unless otherwise approved by the K-9 Unit Commander.
- B. Prior to boarding a canine, the entire unit must be notified to ensure there will be proper supervision/handler coverage during the duration of the canine's stay.
- C. Handlers will ensure their canine has adequate food/medication for the duration of their stay. At the conclusion of the canine's stay, the handler will thoroughly clean the kennel interior and exterior.
- D. The primary caretakers should be current or previous handlers. Other officers may substitute when needed. All officers must have prior approval of the K-9 Unit Commander and K-9 Unit Supervisor prior to being allowed in the kennels. All handlers and care takers must be properly trained in the cleaning and operations of the kennels prior to taking care of any canines.
- E. A list of approved personnel will be maintained by the K-9 Unit Commander and K-9 Unit Supervisor.
- F. Canines will be monitored at minimum once every four (4) hours via live video feed and at minimum three times a day in person to ensure proper temperatures, cleanliness, feeding and overall canine wellbeing.
- G. There will be zero tolerance for any harassing, teasing or improper treatment of any canine being boarded at the kennel. This includes approaching the fence or kennel to agitate or unnecessarily excite the canines, giving any unauthorized food/treats, or spraying the canine with the hose on site for cleaning. No K-9 commands will be given to the dogs without authorization by the handler.

- H. In the event there is a canine-related emergency or illness, the K-9 Unit Commander will be notified and transportation to the Jones Bridge Animal Hospital (11450 Jones Bridge Road) will be initiated.
- I. A list of emergency veterinarian offices will be maintained inside the kennel, as well as a list of K-9 Unit personnel contact information will be maintained in the kennel.
- J. Canines will be locked inside the kennel during extreme temperatures (hot or cold) to avoid any discomfort to the canine. The air conditioner inside the kennel can be utilized to provide cool air during the summer months.
- K. No unauthorized personnel will be allowed to enter the facility for any reason, unless there is an emergency or a K-9 handler is present.
- L. No pet dogs will be boarded at the facility unless prior authorization is approved by the K-9 Unit Commander.
- M. Apprehension trained canines will have first priority of housing in the kennels. Should there not be enough space at the kennels then non-apprehension dogs will be boarded at the city approved Vet.
- N. Retired canines will be allowed to board as well, but active canines have first priority.
- O. If any officer or city employee observes any persons inside the kennel or approaching the kennel from the outside, they will immediately notify the on-shift supervisor and make them aware of the situation. The kennels and fenced area are JCPD property, and no trespassing will be allowed or tolerated. Officers are encouraged to politely and kindly educate citizens that may approach the kennel area, as to prevent any unwanted situations for the canines or the citizens.
- P. The K-9 Unit Commander (or boarded canine's handler) will be notified immediately if there are any noticeable issues or concerns with the kennel or canines. If contact cannot be made with any persons on the K-9 Unit, the current shift supervisor or commander will be notified.