



## Policy and Procedure

Policy Number

11.22

Chapter

Law Enforcement Operations

Article

Canine (K-9)

Authorized By:

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### PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the Department's K-9 unit functions and use of police canines in law enforcement operations.

### POLICY

It is the policy of the department to utilize K-9 teams as a means of enhancing law enforcement operations and service to the community. Because of the canines superior sense of smell, hearing, and defensive capabilities, the trained law enforcement canine is a valuable supplement to law enforcement resources.

### DEFINITIONS

A **Canine Utilization Report (CUR)** is a specialized report from a K-9 officer that may be used as a primary or supplemental offense report or to document specific K-9 Team activity.

A **K-9 Team** is comprised of a trained and certified handler and their trained and certified assigned police canine.

A **K-9 Sergeant** is the Unit sergeant who directly supervises members of the K-9 unit.

The **K-9 Trainer** is the unit member who coordinates and administers K-9 unit training.

A **K-9 Handler** is an officer who has received specialized training and certification who is assigned a police canine.

A **K-9 Decoy** is a person who has received specialized training who assists with the training of K-9 teams.

### K-9 UNIT MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the K-9 unit is to assist Officers and save lives through the use of the canine's advanced abilities and skills.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

The use of the K-9 teams provides officers with a tactical advantage when searching for narcotics, explosives, and criminal suspect(s). This advantage is an invaluable tool in the rapid detection of hazardous items, criminal suspect(s), and protection of officers, all to the end of assuring the safety of the community. Therefore, a primary function of the deployment of a canine is to locate suspect(s), although depending upon the circumstances, application of the canine for protection and safety purposes may be required. Within this primary function as a locating tool, the advanced olfactory abilities of canines augment the officers and handlers abilities to quickly and accurately locate evidence, explosives, and other contraband items. As with any deployment, use of a canine is viewed from the standard of objective reasonableness in view of the totality of the circumstances. Use of a certified search and rescue (SAR) K-9 team aids greatly in the successful locating of lost or missing person(s) within the community.





### Assignment

K-9 teams are assigned to Special Operations as a resource to all Department employees in K-9 related activities.

### Supervision

All K-9 teams will be under the administrative and operational control of the Special Operations Lieutenant. All K-9 handlers will be directly supervised by the K-9 Unit sergeant.

### Deployments & Utilizations for Patrol Dual Purpose Teams

K-9 handlers are responsible for determining whether a situation justifies the use of a canine and the appropriate tactical measures which should be utilized. Determination will be based on department policy, including use of force policy when applicable, law, accepted standards, and training.

When a K-9 team is involved in an incident, cover officers will follow the directions of the K-9 handler related to searching/clearing techniques, movements, and arrest procedures. Except in emergencies or with prior approval of the handler, canines will not be handled or given commands by anyone other than the assigned handler. Handlers will take appropriate practical measures to prevent anyone to walk or stand between a suspect and a canine or interfere during the utilization unless instructed to do so by the handler.

Prior to releasing the canine into a patrol search area, the handler will attempt to ascertain the presence of anyone within the search area. Before commencing the patrol search the handler will make at least two warning announcements or direct other officers to make the announcements. The handler will wait a reasonable amount of time to allow for anyone to respond. Any person in the search area providing a response will be directed to an appropriate location. The requirement for announcements does not apply for incidents where the handler has specific and articulable facts to indicate that making a canine announcement would put the officers or the public in additional and unnecessary danger.

Patrol certified canines will only be utilized to search for suspects who have committed a crime, believed to have committed a crime, or poses a risk to officer(s)/community. Patrol trained canines shall not be utilized in any form of search and rescue operations.

### Deployments & Utilizations for EDC/SAR <CALEA 46.2.5>

In order to increase the safety for the citizens of Loveland the K-9 Unit will retain a certified Explosive Detection Canine (EDC) and Search and Rescue (SAR) certified K-9 Team. The use of the EDC K-9 will be specific to explosive sweeps, bomb threats, and the detecting of explosives, firearms, and other improvised explosive devices. The use of the SAR capacity, will encompass tracking, area search and wind scenting for missing person(s).

EDC/SAR K-9 handlers are responsible for determining whether a situation justifies the use of a canine and the appropriate measures which should be utilized. Determination will be based on department policy, law, accepted standards, and training.

When a K-9 team is involved in an incident, cover officers will follow the directions of the K-9 handler related to searching techniques, movements, tracking, and overall SAR or EDC operations. Except in emergencies or with prior approval of the handler, canines will not be handled or given commands by anyone other than the assigned handler. Handlers will take appropriate practical measures to prevent anyone to interfere during the utilization unless instructed to do so by the handler.





SAR certified canines will only be utilized to search for missing person(s) who has not committed a crime, believed to have not committed a crime, or who does not pose a risk to officer(s)/community. SAR trained canines shall not be utilized in any form of suspect tracking, area searching, or any additional attempt to locate criminal suspect(s).

### **Call-Outs**

When the use of a K-9 team is required, the on-duty supervisor will request the response of a Loveland K-9 handler first, whether they are on or off duty. If none are available, a K-9 team from another agency may be requested. The only exception to requesting a Loveland K-9 team initially, is for a duration narcotic sniff and a Loveland K-9 team is not on duty. All other K-9 requests will be made to the Loveland K-9 Unit without exception. All requests for use of the EDC/SAR should be forwarded to the K9 Sergeant for approval. In the absence of the K9 Sgt the K9 Lt or EOD Sgt maybe consulted. Requests related to the use of the EDC for sweeps or bomb threats will be approved through the K9 Sergeant and a consultation will be completed with a representative of the Northern Colorado Bomb Squad (NCBS).

### **Guidelines for Assisting Other Agencies for Patrol Dual Purpose Teams**

All inter-jurisdictional requests for a Department K-9 team to conduct any law enforcement-related activity will be approved through the on-duty shift supervisor or K-9 sergeant. K-9 handlers are governed by Department policies while assisting other agencies.

### **Guidelines for Assisting Other Agencies for EDC/SAR**

All inter-jurisdictional requests for a Department K-9 team to conduct any law enforcement-related activity specific to the use of the ED/SAR canine will be approved through the K-9 sergeant or designee in their absence. K-9 handlers are governed by Department policies while assisting other agencies.

### **Injuries**

Whenever a canine injures anyone, or there is a complaint of injury, whether or not in the line of duty, the handler shall:

- Obtain medical treatment for the injured person(s)
- Request the response of a patrol supervisor
- Notify the K-9 sergeant as soon as practical
- Examine the affected area to determine the extent of injury and the handler or designee will photograph the affected area and submit the photographs into the department's digital storage system
- Complete a Use of Force Report
- In incidents specific to a canine bite, the K-9 handler will take the canine to a veterinarian within five (5) business days (excluding legal holidays) for a routine health checkup

### **K-9 Demonstrations**

Public demonstrations are an effective way of building relationships within the community and will be conducted with prior approval of the K-9 sergeant. K-9 handlers participating in a demonstration will be dressed in department-approved K-9 demonstration attire, or as approved by the K-9 sergeant. Only trained members of the department will be allowed to actively participate in demonstrations. The safety of the





audience will always be the first priority. All K-9 demonstrations will be documented on a Canine Utilization Report.

### **Canine Utilization Reports** <CALEA 41.1.5 (i)>

Anytime a K-9 team is utilized, the handler will complete a Canine Utilization Report detailing the K-9 team's involvement. Separate utilizations are completed for the same case when for example: Any time there are multiple vehicles that were sniffed or multiple suspects were apprehended. The report will include the following activity descriptors.

- **Apprehension physical** – Physical contact with subject in any way
- **Apprehension Non-physical** – Subject(s) behavior was altered by the presence of canine
- **Area search** – All senses used within a given area to locate subject(s)
- **Area/building check** Exterior of building, completed within extra patrol, alarm response or business check(s)
- **Assist perimeter** – Containing area with canine who is deployable
- **Building search** – Interior search of building
- **Currency present** Any amount of currency known to a handler that is within a search area – *used for narcotics activity reporting*
- **Demo** – Public demo of LPD K9 program
- **Evidence/property AKA- Article Search** – all senses used within a given area to locate item(s)
- **Crowd control** – K-9 team used as force multiplier to control people
- **High risk stop** – Vehicle contact where canine is utilized in any manner
- **Track** – Using ground and/or human odor to follow the path of a subject
- **Explosive Sniff**- Use olfactory ability to detect explosive odor(s) and/or firearms
- **Search and Rescue (SAR) Operations**- all senses used to locate a missing person(s)

### **K-9 CARE & MAINTANENCE** <CALEA 41.1.5 (g)>

#### **Veterinarians and Animal Hospital**

The K-9 handler will use the authorized department veterinarians and animal hospitals for treatment of department owned canines. The names and locations of these veterinarians and animal hospitals are available from the K-9 sergeant. In extreme medical emergencies, the canine will be taken to the closest veterinarian for treatment.

Notification to the K-9 sergeant is required whenever the canine is either hospitalized or taken to the veterinarian for an emergency. This notification should be made as soon as practical. Department approved veterinarians will maintain all health care records.

#### **K-9 Maintenance**

K-9 handlers are responsible for the daily care and feeding of their assigned canine, to include:

- Maintenance and cleaning of the kennel and yard where the canine is housed. Kennels will be supplied by the department and constructed at the handler's residence.
- Provision of food, water, and general diet maintenance as prescribed by the department approved veterinarian.
- Grooming on a daily basis or more often as required by weather, working conditions or other factors.





- Daily exercise (canines are not permitted to run at large without direct handler control).
- General medical attention.
- Canines will not be used for breeding.
- When the handler is unable to perform these and other related duties due to illness, injury, or leave, another K-9 handler may be assigned to temporarily care for the canine.
- The K-9 sergeant, or designee, may conduct unannounced inspections of the canine's accommodations to insure the canine is receiving adequate care and that facilities are properly maintained.

### **K-9 Handler Compensation Augmentation**

K-9 handlers have a contract with the City for extra compensation for their specialized position. The augmentation of salary is described in the Department's compensation policy.

### **Canine Retirement**

When it becomes necessary to retire a canine from active duty, the Department will give preference of placement to the primary handler. The transfer of ownership will relieve the City of Loveland and the Department from any legal obligations and responsibilities of the canine after retirement from active duty.

### **K-9 UNIT SELECTION, TRAINING, & CERTIFICATION** <CALEA 41.1.5 (b, c)>

#### **K-9 Handler Selection Requirements**

Anticipated openings in the K-9 team(s) will be announced in writing throughout the agency. All handlers must meet the requirements of the Loveland Police Department to hold a specialized assignment. In addition, the Department prefers that prospective handlers have a minimum of two (2) years' experience as a K-9 decoy with the Department's K-9 unit. Prospective handlers must live in a single family dwelling that is suitable to house a canine. Suitable housing is determined by the height of the fence (5 foot minimum for Patrol Dual Purpose Canines, SAR/EDC requires perimeter fence capable of safely securing a canine), other household animals and their compatibility with a canine and space available for the canine to run (yard). Inspection of the residence is required by the K-9 sergeant or K-9 trainer prior to appointment as a handler.

#### **Canine Selection Requirements**

The K-9 unit strives to develop and maintain highly-trained and well-disciplined K-9 teams capable of maximum operational utilization. In keeping with the highest standards, all potential canine candidates shall be tested and vetted by the department trainer to ensure they meet the requirements for the basic training program. Potential canine candidates shall be selected and tested at a reputable vendor chosen by the K-9 sergeant and approved by the Department. The selected handler shall assist and decoy during the testing process. The department veterinarian shall accompany the department trainer on the selection trip to ensure the medical health of the canine candidate through an in-field medical exam.

#### **K-9 Decoy Selection Requirements**

All K-9 decoys must meet the requirements of the Department to hold a collateral assignment. K-9 decoys must complete a forty-hour orientation and hands-on training with the K-9 trainer prior to participating as a K-9 decoy. K-9 decoys are selected and assigned to the K-9 unit for a minimum of two (2) years.

#### **Initial / Academy training** <CALEA 41.1.5 (b, d)>







K-9 teams will be trained using proven techniques and methodologies established through the standards set forth by PSP-Police Patrol Dog Examination, Utah Peace Officer Standards and Training Service Dog Program for narcotics-detector dogs, explosive-detector, search and rescue and patrol dogs. A minimum of one certified Utah POST instructor/judge shall be present to ensure the quality and consistency of the training program. Other training methods or techniques may also be used at the discretion of the instructor/judge to help facilitate more well-rounded K-9 teams, as approved by the K-9 Sergeant.

### **Record Maintenance**

Health, training and utilization records, must be accurately maintained and will be regularly reviewed by the K-9 sergeant. Documentation of canine training and performance shall be maintained by the Unit according to the Department's Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.

### **Certification of K-9 Teams** <CALEA 33.6.1 (a)> <CALEA 41.1.5 (e)>

K-9 teams shall be certified annually in the basic training fields which consist of narcotic detection, explosive-detector, search and rescue, and patrol functions. Explosive detection, search and rescue, narcotic and patrol instructors/judges shall recertify as required by the various certification organizations. Each K-9 team shall be recertified by a certifying official for explosive detection, search and rescue, narcotics and patrol functions.

Upon successfully completing a basic K-9 academy, proof of certification will be placed in the K-9 handler's training file. The certificate will be forwarded to the K-9 sergeant for review. Only certified K-9 teams may be utilized for law enforcement operations.

### **In-service Training** <CALEA 33.6.1 (b)> <CALEA 41.1.5 (d, f)>

In order for K-9 teams to maintain proficiency, continuous, rigorous training is required. It is the responsibility of the individual K-9 handler to maintain the proficiency of the canine's skills and physical fitness by attending weekly in-service and advanced trainings. K-9 handlers are required to complete a minimum of thirty minutes of training with their canine during each assigned shift. Any problems a K-9 handler has with their canine will be brought to the attention of the K-9 sergeant. In-service training will encompass the various areas of training including but not limited to: obedience, scent work, criminal apprehension, and agility. K-9 teams will not attend any outside training without the prior approval of the K-9 Sergeant, this includes on or off duty. No unapproved training methodologies will be used on department canines. All training must be approved by the K-9 Sergeant.

The K-9 handler will submit complete training documentation to the K-9 sergeant upon request. All K-9 handlers are responsible for attending 450 of 480 training hours per year, under the supervision of the department K-9 sergeant. K-9 handlers must obtain supervisory approval, in advance, to be excused from training. All K-9 decoys are responsible for attending 210 of 240 training hours per year, under the supervision of the department K-9 sergeant.

### **Continuing education training** <CALEA 33.6.1 (b)>

The K-9 unit strives to develop and maintain highly trained and well-disciplined K-9 teams capable of maximum operational utilization. In order for K-9 teams to advance in proficiency and ability, additional specialized training is required. All K-9 teams must attend one continuing education type seminar, school or other training course, per year. These advanced courses provide information on current industry best





practices, evolving case law and new training techniques. These are the essential skills, tactics and techniques necessary for a progressive K-9 unit and help reduce civil liability for the department.

### **Decertification/Deficient performance**

In the event that a K-9 team fails to certify during the required initial/annual certification(s), remedial training will be completed. Following the remedial training, the K-9 unit sergeant shall provide documentation and recommendations for continued appointment or separation of the K-9 team.

### **Canine**

If the canine is to be removed from the unit, procedures in the above Canine Retirement section will be followed or the canine may be returned to the vendor based on applicable work ability or health warranties, if still available.

### **Handler**

In the event a K-9 handler is experiencing performance-related problems rendering him/her unable to complete essential job requirements as a K-9 handler, a review of the K-9 handler's performance will be conducted by the K-9 sergeant. The review will include a formal recommendation to be sent through the chain of command to the Special Operations Lieutenant.

### **Decoy**

In the event a K-9 decoy is experiencing performance-related problems rendering him/her unable to complete essential job requirements as a K-9 decoy, a review of the K-9 decoy's performance will be conducted by the K-9 sergeant. The review will include a formal recommendation to be sent through the chain of command to the Special Operations Lieutenant.

## **K-9 UNIT EQUIPMENT & INVENTORY**

### **Training Aid Security** <CALEA 84.1.4>

Specific narcotics and explosives will be obtained and appropriately employed to train the narcotics and explosives detection canines. These explosives and narcotics may be obtained from another agency or from the Loveland Police Department property and evidence section. All narcotic training aids will be stored in a locked safe behind an alarmed locked door. All explosive training aids will be stored in a secure explosive magazine when not in use. Access to the narcotic training aids will be limited to K-9 handlers with a current DEA license as outlined in the DEA protocol. Access to the explosive training aids will be limited to the EDC Handler, K9 Sergeant and NCBS Team Leader.

A copy of the training aid log sheet will be kept in the safe with the training aids. Each time the K-9 handler checks out and returns the training aids the K-9 handler will complete the training aid log sheet. The completed sheet will be forwarded to the K-9 sergeant for storage. When a controlled substance or explosive training aid is used for training purposes, it will be under the direct supervision of the licensed K-9 handler / trainer or designee.

The K-9 trainer will conduct quarterly inventories and inspections of controlled substances and explosive training aids. A written report will be completed and forwarded to the K-9 sergeant. The inspection report will indicate the status and weight(s) of the training aids.





If the controlled substance training aid becomes degraded (e.g., becomes damaged, wet, aged, etc.) and is no longer viable for training purposes, the item will be submitted with a case number to Property and Evidence for destruction. If an explosive training aid becomes degraded and is no longer viable for training purposes, the item(s) will be turned over to the NCBS for disposal.

If the controlled substance or explosive training aid is spilled, lost or stolen, a blue team report will be completed. The K-9 sergeant will be notified as soon as possible. A case report will be completed documenting the circumstances surrounding the incident. The recovered quantity will be weighed and the inventory will be adjusted.

If the controlled substance training aid(s) inventory requires replenishment, controlled substances from cases that were completely adjudicated, including all appeals, may be used. A copy of the written approval from the support services division commander will be forwarded to Property and Evidence for release of controlled substances for training use.

### **Specialized Unit Equipment**

Each K-9 handler will be issued specific departmental equipment for K-9 functions. All equipment issued will be handled and maintained to assure it is in good working condition at all times. Worn or damaged equipment should be replaced or repaired. The K-9 sergeant will maintain an inventory of equipment issued to each officer. All K-9 team(s) will be issued the necessary item(s) for care, training and deployment listed in the K-9 inventory.

## **K-9 UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **K-9 Sergeant Responsibilities**

The K-9 sergeant is responsible for the overall line supervision and operation of the K-9 teams. To include:

- Directing the purchase of qualified canines
- Directing the selection process for new K-9 handler(s)
- Directing the selection process for new K-9 decoy(s)
- Processing and authorizing expenses for veterinarian fees, medication, training and other related items
- Conducting an ongoing evaluation of the program, individual handlers and individual canines
- Ensuring goals, objectives and operational procedures for the K-9 teams are relevant, up to date, and those objectives are being accomplished
- Supervise daily operations as necessary to assure safe, efficient and orderly operation of the K-9 unit
- Maintain accurate statistical reports and data on each K-9 team's activities, i.e., demonstrations, physical and nonphysical apprehensions, general patrol assists, training, etc...
- Supervise training and certification for each K-9 team. Ensure K-9 handlers attend mandatory in-service and required continuing education training
- Process all K-9 related use of force reports
- Attend mandatory in-service K-9 training (450 of 480 training hours per year)

### **K-9 Trainer Responsibilities**

The K-9 trainer is responsible for ensuring that K-9 teams are performing at unit standards and addressing any sub-standard performance with remedial training. To include:





- Remain current with all manner of police K-9 related training to include legal issues and K-9 training techniques
- Identify training needs and prepare lesson plans
- Oversee all aspects of training new canines, K-9 handlers and K-9 decoys
- Attend training seminars with outside agencies with the goal of remaining current in the field of K-9 training and the legal aspects of canines as a use of force
- Assist with the selection of new canines, K-9 handlers and K-9 decoys
- Maintain a current DEA Controlled Substance Registration Certificate / License

**K-9 Handler (Patrol Dual Purpose) Responsibilities**

The K-9 handler is responsible for the deployment and training of their assigned canine. To include:

- Maintenance and health of an assigned canine and insuring veterinary care is provided
- Maintain required standards of proficiency for the assigned canine through required training and certification
- Respond to K-9 requests, call-outs and tactical deployments in a timely manner
- Perform public K-9 demonstrations as assigned by the K-9 sergeant
- Shall keep the K-9 sergeant apprised of the animal's physical condition and any logistical or administrative needs
- Maintain control of their assigned canine at all times while on duty. While off-duty, all canine handlers shall keep their canines secure and under control
- Maintain comprehensive training records for their assigned canine
- Shall use discretion in emergency driving situations to ensure that the canine is not injured
- Complete canine utilization reports as required
- Attend mandatory in-service (450 of 480 training hours) and required continuing education training

**K-9 Handler (EDC/SAR) Responsibilities**

The K-9 handler is responsible for the deployment and training of their assigned canine. To include:

- Maintenance and health of an assigned canine and insuring veterinary care is provided
- Maintain required standards of proficiency for the assigned canine through required training and certification
- Respond to K-9 requests, and call-outs in a timely manner
- Perform public K-9 demonstrations as assigned by the K-9 sergeant
- Shall keep the K-9 sergeant apprised of the animal's physical condition and any logistical or administrative needs
- Maintain control of their assigned canine at all times while on duty. While off-duty, all canine handlers shall keep their canines secure and under control
- Maintain comprehensive training records for their assigned canine
- Shall use discretion in any driving situations to ensure that the canine is not injured
- Complete canine utilization reports as required
- Attend mandatory in-service (450 of 480 training hours) and required continuing education training
- Work in partnership and complete designated trainings with the Northern Colorado Bomb Squad
- Perform other special duties at the direction of the Canine Unit Supervisor





### K-9 Decoy Responsibilities

The K-9 decoy is responsible for assisting with all forms of K-9 training. To include:

- Work closely with K-9 trainer to enhance K-9 team(s) performance in all functions
- Maintain control of the canine during bite work to assure the canine is not injured during training
- Maintain good working order of all training equipment
- Safe handling and assisting with narcotic and explosive training aids
- Attend mandatory in-service (210 of 240 training hours) per year

