

	PARADISE VALLEY POLICE GENERAL ORDER Service Dog Unit (SDU)	Order Number
		41.27 Date 04-01-14

41.27 Service Dog Unit (SDU)

This policy establishes guidelines for the use of service dog/s to apprehend suspected criminal offenders, investigate possible crimes, execute warrants, and/or defend a peace officer or another person ([ARS § 11-1025](#)). The Service Dog Unit is trained and utilized to assist in *searches* (for people and of places and things, including contraband and explosives) and for tracking, apprehension of violent felons, and other duties as assigned. *Officers* assigned as part of an active-duty handler-dog team (one *officer*, one dog) are required to meet the certification criteria of the National Police Canine Association (NPCA) for Patrol, Explosive, or Narcotic Certification before undertaking any duties, and *will* certify with NPCA annually.

41.27.1 Care of the Service Dog

Each assigned SDU *officer* is responsible for the complete care of the assigned canine (including feeding, grooming, veterinary care, and control of the home environment) and for the maintenance of any required equipment (electronic collar, harness, muzzle, and leash). All approved food, equipment and veterinary needs *will* be provided by or paid for by the *Department*.

One hour of each scheduled workday will be dedicated to the maintenance of the canine and will be scheduled into the canine officer's work schedule. Canine officers shall request and receive supervisor approval for any time in excess of four hours per week for maintenance of the canine.

41.27.2 Deployment of a Service Dog

- A. Service dogs are trained to track, *search* both open areas and structures, and apprehend and restrain persons and to protect their handler. Some service dogs are also trained to detect drugs or explosives.
- B. Any police *officer may* request the use of a service dog when it appears appropriate; an *off duty* handler *will* be called out only with the approval of a *supervisor*. Pending the arrival of the service dog and handler, *officers should* limit access to the area to be *searched*, to avoid contamination of the area with additional scents that *may* affect the dog's ability to successfully locate the person or item being sought.
- C. When a handler arrives on scene, the handler *will* be responsible for determining whether or not the service dog *will* be used, what additional information the



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handler needs (known chemicals or poisons within a facility, for example), whether a back-up *officer* is necessary and the role of that back-up *officer*, and whether the dog *will* be on or off lead. The handler has the authority to refuse any specific use of a service dog. The recommendation of a handler regarding the use of a dog *may* be countermanded only by the *on duty* or on-call Sergeant.

- D. All *officers must* recognize that the use of a service dog to make an *arrest* constitutes the use of force or the implied threat of the use of force and *must* therefore be justified under the 4TH Amendment. The use of the dog to effect an *arrest* or prevent an escape *must* be reasonably necessary under the circumstances and *should* generally be limited to situations in which the:

1. safety of *officer* or others is immediately threatened, or
2. nature or type of resistance indicates that the use of lesser force would be ineffective, or
3. the crime in question is of a serious nature.

Service dogs *may* be used to help locate a suspect in a lesser crime, but *should* not be allowed to effect an *arrest* unless justified under the circumstances.

- E. When there is a risk of a suspect being bitten and it is practical to do so, handlers *shall* issue a verbal warning that the dog is being used. Before any *search* using a canine, the handler *shall*, if practicable, notify all known police *personnel* of the pending deployment of the dog.
- F. Service Dog units *will* not normally be used in crowd control near the main body of the crowd.

41.27.3 Police Dog

- A. Police dog is defined in [A.R.S 36-2201.28](#) and includes service dogs.
- B. This definition was added along with [A.R.S 36-2230](#), which requires an ambulance to transport a police dog injured in the line of duty. [A.R.S 36-2230](#) has several exceptions to the requirement to transport a police dog, including when transport in a police emergency vehicle is safer and more expeditious.