

# THE RALEIGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

**1109-08**

## **CANINE UNITS**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this directive is to establish procedures governing the responsibilities and deployment of the Canine Unit.

### **VALUES REFLECTED**

This directive reflects our values of *Service and Integrity*. We are committed to protecting the lives and well-being of our citizens by using the most efficient and effective tools available to us

### **UNITS AFFECTED**

All Divisions/Sworn Personnel

### **REFERENCES/FORMS**

DOI 1109-03 "Response to Urgent and High Risk Calls"  
DOI 1109-07 "General Response to Bomb Threats"  
DOI 1109-15 "Initial Response to Missing Persons"  
DOI 1110-03 "Sexual Assault"

May be Released to Public

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Effective Date: 06-27-2024  
Prepared By: Estella D. Patterson  
Chief of Police

Supersedes: 01-04-2022  
Approved By: M. Adams-David  
City Manager

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

When properly utilized, the police canine can be a valuable asset in criminal apprehension; the detection of explosives, evidence and contraband; locating wanted and missing persons; conducting building and area searches; in public relations activities; and may assist in tactical operations. The use of the canine requires adherence to procedures that properly control their "use of force" potential and direct their specialized capabilities into legally acceptable crime prevention and control activities.

While canines can provide invaluable assistance, the use of police dogs in law enforcement attracts public scrutiny. Canines shall not be used to control civil disorders, disturbances, or public demonstrations.

## **DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and definitions shall apply throughout this policy:

- Tracking- Use of a trained canine to detect, recognize and follow a scent to locate an individual or evidence.
- Article Search- Use of a trained canine to locate a specific item within a given area or along the path taken by a suspect.
- Narcotic Detection- Use of a trained canine to detect the presence of illegal narcotics.
- Explosive Detection- Use of a trained canine to detect the presence of explosive materials.
- Building Search- Use of a trained canine to locate and potentially apprehend an individual who is contained within a building or structure.
- Area Search- Use of a trained canine to locate an individual who is contained within an outdoor area.
- Apprehension- The act of biting or otherwise physically seizing a suspect by a trained police canine.
- Directed Apprehension- The act of directing a trained police canine to bite or otherwise physically seize a suspect.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF CANINE HANDLERS**

Police canine handlers are assigned to the Special Operations Division and primarily serve as a support unit for the Field Operations Division. Each canine handler is uniquely specialized by virtue of having received extensive canine handler training. It is the unique responsibility of the handler to know the capabilities of their assigned canine and to read and understand changes in the canine's behavior. For these reasons, the decision to utilize a canine in a particular situation will be solely that of the handler.

It is the responsibility of the canine handler to always maintain and ensure safe control of their canine while on-duty or off-duty. This includes, but is not limited to, a handler's assigned canine being equipped with necessary issued equipment to ensure control and communication reinforcement should it be necessary.

### Housing and Food

Equipment, food, and medical costs shall be the responsibility of the department. The feeding of canines and cleaning of kennels will be the sole responsibility of the handler. Dispensing required

medication and ensuring all required vaccines are up to date for the canine(s), will be the responsibility of the handler

Canines must be housed and maintained at the handler's residence. The handler must reside in a single-family dwelling (not an apartment) with sufficient area for an outdoor kennel to house the canine(s) and a fenced in area to maintain their assigned canine(s) for the duration of their assignment to the Canine Unit. The canine handler must notify the Canine Unit Supervisor prior to any change of residency and each residence must be inspected and in compliance with the Canine Unit Selection Process housing requirements. If suitable housing is not available due to unforeseen temporary circumstances, the Canine Unit Supervisor is responsible for ensuring the canine is temporarily housed. After a change in residency, if the handler cannot meet the canine housing requirements, handler and canine reassignment will be considered.

#### Injury, Illness, or Escape of Canines

Canine handlers shall report all injuries and illnesses suffered by their canine(s) to the Canine Unit Supervisor, detailing the nature of the injury or illness and any medical attention required or received. The escape of a canine shall be immediately reported to the Canine Unit Supervisor.

#### Bites or Injuries Caused by Canines

When necessary, immediate first aid will be provided to any citizen, employee or handler bitten by a canine. Injuries should also be assessed by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) if deemed necessary by the handler. If EMS determines that additional medical attention is required, the individual shall be transported to a medical facility for treatment with the individual's consent.

Handlers shall notify the on-duty Watch Commander and the Canine Unit Supervisor as soon as reasonably possible if a canine bites or injures any person, regardless of whether such incident occurred on-duty or off-duty and regardless of the location of the incident. If the Canine Unit Supervisor is not available, the Canine Unit Trainer should be contacted and will respond and assist if needed.

The handler will ensure that photographs are taken of all injuries resulting from a canine bite after medical treatment has been administered. The handler will also complete a Use of Force Report as per departmental policy.

#### Canine Documentation

Handlers shall be responsible for completing and maintaining all reports, deployment records, training records, certifications, health records, and any other pertinent documentation regarding their assigned canine(s). All deployment records, training records and supplements shall be completed by the end of each calendar week.

Training records shall be entered into the canine reporting software and document the time, activity, location, and outcome of all training. The Canine Unit Supervisor will regularly review canine training records of each handler to ensure proper documentation.

Deployment records shall be entered into the canine reporting software every time a canine is utilized in any official capacity. This entry should include but is not limited to, the time, location, activity, and results of the canine deployment.

### **TRAINING & CERTIFICATION:**

Canines shall be trained in accordance with United States Police Canine Association standards. Each canine team will attend a yearly certification trial for each respective discipline the canine is trained for. These include the following disciplines: obedience, evidence search, agility, suspect search, apprehension, detection, and tracking.

#### Training

The Canine Unit Supervisor will designate a Canine Trainer for the unit. The Canine Trainer and/or the Canine Unit Supervisor will be responsible for training all handlers and their canines. The canines will be selected by the Canine Trainer and/or the Canine Unit Supervisor. The Canine Trainer and Canine Unit Supervisor will then assign the canine to a handler. The Canine Trainer and/or Canine Unit Supervisor will conduct a minimum fifteen-week training course. Upon the completion of the training course, each new canine team must successfully pass an end of course evaluation conducted by the Canine Unit Supervisor and Canine Unit Trainer prior to being released from training.

When a canine team is demonstrating deficiencies in weekly training or performance of their duties, the Canine Unit Supervisor can assign the canine team to conduct remedial training with the Canine Unit Trainer. A remedial training plan will be established and documented. At the completion of the remedial training, the team will be tested by the Canine Unit Supervisor to ensure a satisfactory level has been attained. If performance deficiencies cannot be resolved, either the handler will be transferred out of the Canine Unit or the canine will be replaced.

#### Certification

Following initial certification, canine handlers are required to be recertified annually. Recertification will be conducted through a certifying organization which has been approved by the Canine Unit's chain of command. All police canine teams will certify through the same certifying organization. If a canine team fails to certify, they will attend remedial training in the areas they failed. This training will be documented in the handler's training records and reviewed by the Canine Unit Supervisor. If the canine handler repeatedly fails recertification with consecutive attempts, the Canine Unit Supervisor will review the performance of the canine and handler and determine whether the canine needs to be replaced or the handler needs to be reassigned.

#### In-Service Training

The Canine Unit will conduct unit training for a minimum of 20 hours per month. The Canine Unit Trainer and/or the Canine Unit Supervisor will conduct this training. This training will be focused on maintaining and enhancing the capabilities of each canine team. Training records shall be maintained of each training session by the canine handler and include details of the training time, location, activity, outcome and duration. A training memo will be sent to the Raleigh Police Academy for each unit training session, for inclusion in the handler's training records.

## **USE OF CANINES**

Canines are used to assist in trailing or tracking missing and wanted persons, to detect the presence of illegal drugs and explosive devices, locate evidence, conduct building or area searches, to protect their handler, and for directed apprehension of a violent suspect.

### **Trailing/Tracking Missing Persons or Criminal Suspects**

Properly trained police canines are trained to track missing persons or criminal suspects by the location of last disturbance. Scent articles are not required, but to be effective, an uncontaminated search area is preferred. Therefore, it is important that officers make certain that no one, including other officers, enters the tracking area prior to the deployment of a police canine. It is also important to locate the exact spot where the missing person or criminal suspect was last seen.

### **Tracking Criminal Suspects**

When tracking a criminal suspect, the handler will be provided at least one (1) check-in officer prior to initiating the track. The handler or the check-in officer shall provide verbal warnings to the suspect to surrender. These warnings shall be made continuously throughout the track and must be made in a manner likely to be heard by the suspect and with sufficient time for the suspect to identify themselves and surrender. The warning should direct the suspect to identify themselves and that a trained Police Canine is being used and failure to identify could result in injury. If the suspect is wanted for a violent felony, is believed to be in possession of a weapon, or has indicated by his or her behavior that they pose a serious risk of injury to officers, verbal warnings will be given if it is safe for the search team and they can be done without exposing the responding officers to unnecessary risk of harm from the suspect(s).

It shall be the role of the check-in officer(s) to provide cover for the canine handler and to advise other units of the direction and progress of the canine track.

In the event that a canine locates and apprehends a suspect during a track, the canine officer shall either verbally or physically ensure the canine releases as soon as possible unless there is an obvious and immediate threat posed by the apprehended suspect.

### **Tracking Missing Persons**

During a track for a missing person, canine handlers shall continuously provide verbal warnings while conducting the track. Canine handlers shall utilize the shortest effective lead possible during the track for a missing person and shall utilize all available light. Canine handlers shall make every reasonable effort to prevent a canine from apprehending an individual during a missing person track. In the event that the canine does apprehend an individual during a missing person track, the handler shall immediately ensure either verbally or physically the canine releases. It is the sole discretion of the canine handler to deploy his/her assigned canine for a track of a missing person.

### **Article Searches**

Canines can be utilized in the search for evidence or missing property. As with tracking, an uncontaminated area is best suited for a canine evidence search, but not required. Officers are advised to remain outside of the area that the canine is requested to search to avoid possible

contamination. If the area to be searched contains locations where an individual may be concealed, the handler shall give a verbal warning prior to initiating the search of such areas. After giving a warning, the handler shall wait a sufficient amount of time for any persons so concealed to identify themselves.

### Narcotic Detection

Canines may be utilized in the search for controlled substances which may be concealed in vehicles, buildings, residences, packages, parcels, luggage, and other locations. Such searches shall be performed in accordance with laws applicable to the use of trained narcotic detection canines.

### Explosive Detection

Specially trained canines may be used in the search for explosives. These canines may work in conjunction with the Hazardous Devices Unit and assist as needed to locate both primary and secondary devices in bomb related calls and pre-event protective sweeps. They may also assist in dignitary protection sweeps.

### Building Searches

The canine handler will notify the Watch Commander any time a canine is deployed for a building search.

The deployment of a police canine to locate suspects hiding in buildings will be at the sole discretion of the handler. When feasible, the handler will be responsible for ensuring that a pre-recorded (Spanish and English) warning over the loudspeaker of a patrol vehicle is given. An audio recording of this announcement is available on RPDnet.

A warning will be given twice before a police canine is deployed. The warning shall include the following:

- 1). Identification as the Police.
- 2). Notification the suspect(s) is under arrest.
- 3). Notification of the opportunity to safely surrender.
- 4). Notification of the use of a police canine.
- 5). Notification that failure to comply could result in a bite.

Officers will allow a reasonable amount of time for a suspect to surrender prior to beginning the search. All officers assisting with the search should use extreme caution and adhere to all commands given by the handler. These searches may be conducted on or off-lead at the discretion of the handler.

In determining whether to conduct a search on-lead or off-lead, the handler shall consider the seriousness of the crime the suspect has committed, the danger posed to officers by the suspect and the size, layout and make-up of the building to be searched. Off lead searches should be reserved for situations where the suspect is accused of a violent crime, is believed to be in possession of a

weapon, or is believed to be dangerous based on his or her actions. Off lead searches may also be used when the building to be searched is laid out in such a manner that having an officer go into the building is not feasible, logistics make it difficult to safely conduct an on-lead search or an on-lead search would pose an undue threat to the safety of the officer(s).

### Area Searches

The deployment of a police canine to conduct area searches off-lead, for hiding suspects, will be at the sole discretion of the handler. When feasible and when safe to do so, the handler will be responsible for ensuring that verbal canine warnings are given.. The warning will be given twice before a police canine is deployed. Officers will allow a reasonable amount of time for a suspect to surrender prior to beginning the search. Area searches are best conducted when the scene has already been contaminated or where it would be safer for the handler and other officers to allow the canine to search off-lead. All officers assisting with the search should use extreme caution and adhere to all commands given by the handler.

### Handler Protection

A police canine is trained to defend the handler if assaulted. The handler, if able, should warn suspects that the canine is trained to and will defend its handler if assaulted.

### Directed Apprehension

A police canine is trained to apprehend a suspect when given the command by the handler. Deployment of a police canine for directed apprehension of a suspect is a use of force that must be consistent with department policy, all applicable laws, and the United States Constitution. A police canine may be directed to apprehend a suspect who has committed a serious crime of violence, or who poses an imminent threat of serious physical injury to the officer or third parties unless apprehended without delay.

The deployment of a police canine for a directed apprehension will be at the sole discretion of the handler. The handler will take into account the information provided at the time of the incident and the totality of the circumstances. The handler will evaluate each situation and use sound judgment when deploying a police canine. Before deploying a police canine for a directed apprehension, the handler must evaluate the following factors, taking into consideration the safety of civilians, officers, and the suspect;

1. The severity of the crime.
2. Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of law enforcement officers or others.
3. Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight.

The canine must be either verbally or physically removed from the suspect as quickly and safely as possible once the suspect no longer poses a threat to officers or anyone else on the scene.

The handler must warn suspects prior to deploying a canine for directed apprehension unless under the circumstances it is not safe to do so. The warning must give notice that the handler will release

a police canine and that the canine will bite the suspect. A warning may not be possible in dynamic and rapidly evolving situations.

#### Riot Control/Crowd Control

Police canines will not be used for riots or general, non-emergent crowd control solely with their presence in a crowd situation. Canines shall remain in patrol vehicles or other secure locations and, whenever reasonably possible, out of the view of the crowd. Canines may be deployed in limited crowd circumstances related to bomb detection, location of suspects in buildings, or other exigent circumstances and only with the explicit authorization of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

### **SCHEDULE OF CANINE HANDLERS**

The Canine Unit Supervisor will be responsible for designing and implementing a schedule that will provide the City of Raleigh with the most coverage. Each handler will be given one hour per day (28 hours per cycle) to attend to the grooming, maintenance and feeding of their assigned police canine(s). The time given each day will be included in the handler's duty time, so that it will not be necessary to provide the handler with overtime for the care of the canine. The Canine Unit Supervisor will be responsible for locating and providing a canine team in the event that a canine is needed, and one is not on-duty.

### **CALLS FOR CANINE ASSISTANCE**

The Police Canine is available for assistance on a 24-hour basis. If a canine team is on-duty, that unit should be contacted first, and additional units notified as needed. The Watch Commander should take into consideration the circumstances involved in a particular situation prior to calling out a canine team and determine which is most suitable for a specific situation.

#### Supervision

When a canine handler arrives on the scene, the handler should consult with the Watch Commander or the ranking supervisor on the scene for the purpose of evaluating the situation. Handlers will, at their sole discretion, determine how and if the dog will be utilized.

### **UNIT RECORDS**

Unit records will be maintained by the Canine Unit Supervisor and will include training records, bite reports, seizure, and arrest statistics, etc. It is the responsibility of the handler to ensure training records and deployment records are completed in a timely manner and kept up to date.

#### Body Worn Cameras

Handlers shall adhere to the body worn camera policy of the department. In addition, as soon as the handler arrives on scene and takes the police canine out of the vehicle, the handler shall ensure the body worn camera is activated.

## **RETIREMENT AND DEATH OF POLICE CANINES**

### **Retirement of a Police Canine**

When it becomes necessary to retire a police canine from active duty due to health reasons, age, etc., the City of Raleigh may transfer ownership of the canine to the last handler. For this transfer to take place, the Raleigh Police Department must ask the City Council to approve the transfer. Once the transfer is approved by the City Council, a contract releasing the City of Raleigh from all liability will be signed by the City Manager or the City Manager's designee and the handler receiving the retired canine.

Should the handler decline to accept the canine, the Canine Unit Supervisor will attempt to locate a suitable home for the canine.

### **Death of a Police Canine**

In the event of the death of a police canine, the handler will immediately contact the Canine Unit Supervisor, who will notify the Watch Commander and Special Operations Division Commander. The Canine Unit Supervisor, or designee, will conduct an investigation of the incident. If the Canine Unit Supervisor determines a necropsy is necessary, it will be conducted by a qualified veterinarian chosen by the department. If the death is a result of criminal activity, an investigation will be conducted. The Special Operations Division Commander will authorize cremation or burial arrangements.

## **EQUIPMENT**

Officers assigned to the Canine Unit will wear the issued canine uniform. This uniform will be approved by the Special Operations Division Commander and will be worn uniformly by all canine unit personnel.

Canine handlers are issued specialized equipment in handling police canines to assist in daily operations (Attachment A). The Canine Unit Supervisor will regularly inspect this equipment to ensure serviceability and functionality. Canine handlers are responsible for the care and maintenance of their issued equipment, patrol vehicle and home kennel(s) and shall immediately report any issues of concern due to safety, serviceability and/or functionality to the Canine Unit Supervisor.

# CANINE EQUIPMENT INSPECTION LIST:

EQUIPMENT:	ISSUED DATE:	SERIAL #:	CONDITION:
WAIST LEAD			
TRACKING LEAD			
TRACKING HARNESS			
REWARD TOYS			
ECOLLAR & REMOTE			
FLAT COLLAR			
CHOKE CHAIN			
PINCH COLLAR			
DETECTION LEAD			
BITE SLEEVE			
GUANTLET			
MUZZLE			
K9 EAR PROTECTION			
K9 EYE PROTECTION			
DOG VEST			
K9 FIRST AID KIT			
HOME KENNEL			
HOME CRATE			
POP DOOR REMOTE			
ACE K9 HEAT ALARM			

**CONDITIONS:**  
 OK - SERVICEABLE  
 NO - NEEDS REPLACEMENT  
 N/A - NOT APPLICABLE

**HANDLER & CODE #:**

**DATE OF INSPECTION:**

**INSPECTED BY:**