



General Order 41.5 K-9 Unit

PURPOSE: Establish guidelines regarding the use of canines by the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office.

Consistent with the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office's mission, canine program participants will strive to achieve the following goals:

- A. To support the mission of the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office and other law enforcement agencies in detecting and identifying controlled substances.
- B. To assist in the prosecution of criminal cases in which canine units are utilized to detect evidence of crimes.
- C. To aid in locating lost or missing persons in an emergency situation.
- D. To familiarize law enforcement personnel with the capabilities and limitations of Sheriff canines.
- E. To promote public relations and awareness through educational programs.
- F. To protect the deputies and utilize them in building searches.

The Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office, whenever possible and practicable, shall deploy and utilize specially trained Sheriff canines to aid deputies and other law enforcement agencies in the performance of their duties.

DATE OF APPROVAL: 9/14/23

DATE OF ISSUE: 9/14/23

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/14/23

REVIEW DATE: Annual

AMENDS: 45.1.1, 45.1.2, 45.1.5, 45.1.9, 45.1.10

THIS ORDER CANCELS: 11/30/09, 3/27/17

ISSUED BY: Sheriff Jeffrey T. Easter

REVIEWED BY: Standard Review Committee

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41.5.1 ASSIGNMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Assignment to the K-9 Unit.

1. Canine handlers will be selected from deputies within the Law Enforcement Bureau.
2. Canine handlers' activities will be coordinated by the unit coordinator.
3. The K-9 Unit coordinator will be selected from sergeants assigned to the Law Enforcement Bureau.
4. The sergeant will report to the Patrol Administrative Lieutenant.
5. Please refer to [Detention Policy 105.14](#) in regard to the Detention K-9 Unit.

B. Handler Responsibilities.

1. The handler shall have responsibility for providing primary care and maintenance of the canine, including, but not limited to, the following responsibilities.
 - a. Housing, care, grooming and safety of the canine.
 1. A handler's residence shall be capable of accommodating an agency owned canine and provided outdoor kennel for housing the canine.
 - b. Obtaining all routine and emergency veterinary care for the canine, including ensuring availability of all canine medical records.
 1. Handlers will be allotted up to one hour per day in working status for the care of their dog.
 2. 1.5 hours of compensation will be allotted for regular days off and vacation unless the canine will be cared for by other handlers.
 3. Any time a handler is unable to perform these and related duties due to illness, injury, leave or other unavailability, another canine

handler may be temporarily assigned to care for the dog; or a canine may be housed in an approved kennel.

2. Handlers shall ensure that all training requirements are met.
 - a. Any certification requirement for both the handler and canine shall be kept current.
 - b. Logs, diaries and other related training records shall be maintained for required court appearances and inspections. All canine training shall be appropriately documented.
 - c. Handlers may devote 4 - 8 hours per week, as determined by the unit coordinator, for training of their canine.
 - d. Failure to meet training standards or inferior performance shall be reported to the unit coordinator. A canine not meeting the unit standards will not be used for duty until the standards have been met.
 - e. Canines shall not be used for training purposes outside of Patrol unless otherwise approved by the unit coordinator.
 - f. The handler shall ensure that when not in use, all training aids are stored in a matter which ensures their integrity and security.
 - g. Handlers shall have their canines with them at all times when on duty unless otherwise authorized by their immediate supervisor. Exceptions include instances when the canine is unable to perform or is unsuited for duty.
 - h. Handlers shall be responsible for the care, use and maintenance of all issued canine equipment.
 - i. Handlers shall submit all reports through proper channels with a copy forwarded to the unit coordinator.
3. Handlers shall not:
 - a. Enter their canines in any dog show or exhibits without the approval of the unit coordinator.
 - b. Register their canines with any society or organization without authority.
 - c. Use or permit the use of a Patrol canine for stud service.
 - d. Deliberately treat Patrol canines inhumanely.
4. Unit Coordinator Responsibilities
 - a. The unit coordinator serves in the capacity of supervisor regarding the training of K-9 Unit personnel and coordination of program activities.
 - b. The unit coordinator is responsible for keeping abreast of legal issues that may impact the program and serving as a resource/liaison person for the Sheriff's Office on K-9 Unit related matters.

- c. The unit coordinator shall be responsible for maintaining training, certification and other applicable records related to the canine program.

41.5.2 REQUESTS FOR CANINE UNIT ASSISTANCE

- A. Deputies may request canine assistance by contacting their respective watch supervisors.
 1. Requests for assistance shall contain specific information clearly setting forth the reason(s) for the request.
 2. The handler shall evaluate the request and seek additional information as needed in order to determine if the request is warranted and/or feasible.
 3. In the event a request is denied, the handler shall inform the deputy requesting assistance of the reason for such denial.
 4. Denied requests shall be brought to the attention of the K-9 Unit coordinator.
- B. Requests for canine assistance from other agencies shall be forwarded to the unit coordinator who may approve or deny the request. If exigent circumstances exist or immediate action is warranted, a watch supervisor, or the canine handler, may determine if the request for assistance shall be accommodated.
- C. On-duty routine requests for Patrol Canine assistance from another agency can be handled in accordance with the below criteria.
 1. Search for suspect wanted for a serious felony crime, or
 2. Suspect actively resisting or evading arrest.
- D. Preparations for Deploying a Canine.
 1. Prior to the use of a canine to search for or apprehend any individual, the canine handler and/or the supervisor on scene shall carefully consider all pertinent information reasonably available at the time. The information shall include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. The individual's age or estimate thereof.
 - b. The nature of the suspected offense.
 - c. Any potential danger to the public and/or other officers at the scene if the canine is released.
 - d. The degree of resistance, if any, the subject has shown.
 - e. The potential for escape or flight if the canine is not utilized.
 - f. The potential for injury to deputies or the public caused by suspect if the canine is not utilized.
 - g. When possible, ascertain from owner or responsible party if someone with permission is likely to be in the building.
 2. General Guidelines.

- a. Under no circumstances will a handler transport a prisoner that has been bitten by a Sheriff canine unless the canine is secured elsewhere.
 - b. Civilian ride-alongs will generally not be permitted in a canine vehicle. Only the division commander or higher may authorize a civilian ride-along.
 - c. Canine handlers will avoid becoming involved in vehicle pursuits as the primary unit unless absolutely necessary.
 - d. Patrol canines may be used as an extraction tool to remove a suspect from a hiding place.
3. Special Circumstances.
- a. Civil Disturbances - The use of canines in a civil disturbance may influence an already volatile situation, a supervisor must authorize the use of a canine.
 - 1. The K-9 Unit may be used to assist apprehension/arrest teams that must enter a crowd to make an arrest.
 - 2. The K-9 Unit may be used to support the skirmish line as it attempts to move people that have failed to respond to the lawful orders of law enforcement. The team used in this fashion would be responsible for not allowing persons to come around the end of the skirmish line and into the cleared area.
 - b. Running Apprehension - A patrol canine will not be sent to apprehend a fleeing suspect when said suspect is wanted for misdemeanor or equivalent offenses, unless the suspect poses a threat to deputies or citizens. Before deploying to apprehend a fleeing suspect, the handler must be reasonably certain that the correct target has been identified.
4. A canine handler shall have the ultimate authority not to deploy the canine. The handler will evaluate each situation and determine if the use of a canine is technically feasible. Generally, the decision to deploy the canine shall remain with the handler, however, a supervisor sufficiently apprised of the situation may decide not to deploy the canine.

41.5.3 ON-SCENE PROCEDURES

- A. The deputy or agency requesting K-9 Unit assistance shall be responsible for securing and protecting the area or item to be searched until the K-9 Unit has arrived.
- B. The deputy or agency requesting the K-9 Unit shall assist at the canine handler's request. Only the handler may direct the actions of the canine when on an assignment.
- C. Before a canine is deployed to search a building or populated area, or work out an alert, the handler must give a warning to anyone who may be inside the area to be searched. The announcement will be given at least twice with a reasonable amount of time in between. When searching a large building or area, announcements should be given

numerous times throughout the search.

The purpose of this announcement is to:

1. Identify who you are.
2. Offer the suspect the opportunity to surrender.
3. Advise the suspect the consequences of failing to comply
4. Warn any innocent persons who may be within the search area so they may be known.

This announcement may be waived only when giving said announcement would likely place the deputy in great danger. The handler must be able to articulate this prior to foregoing warnings.

- D. Any potential evidence discovered shall be turned over to the custody of the deputy or agency requesting canine assistance.
- E. In the event a handler becomes incapacitated, another unit handler shall be notified and respond to the scene to secure the canine, if practicable. Deputies at the scene may use any means necessary to secure the canine when the handler is in need of immediate assistance.

41.5.4 BITES AND UNUSUAL INCIDENTS

- A. In the event of a canine bite, regardless of whether or not the bite occurred in the line of duty, the handler shall comply with the following provisions.
 1. Provide appropriate emergency medical assistance.
 2. Immediately notify the unit coordinator or on duty supervisor and make the appropriate notifications for injury to a deputy or citizen.
 3. Document incident, including:
 - a. Injury or lack of injury.
 - b. Medical treatment provided.
 - c. Photograph the bite area, if possible.
 4. Submit an Incident Report, Use of Force Report, and other applicable reports in a timely manner.
- B. All apparent damage to property caused by a canine shall be documented and immediately reported to the unit coordinator.
- C. In the event a canine is lost or escapes containment the handler must immediately notify the unit coordinator and/or the duty supervisor to make the appropriate notifications.

41.5.5. DISPOSITION OF CANINES REMOVED FROM SERVICE

- A. When a canine is removed from service and ownership is transferred to another, the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office will no longer be responsible or liable for the canine's actions or expenses.
- B. Whenever a canine is unsuitable for service or placement outside of Patrol due to physical condition, illness, viciousness or other behavioral problems, the Division Commander may order the animal to be humanely disposed of.
- C. Canines suitable for placement may be adopted by the following persons in descending priority:
 - 1. The canine's present handler
 - 2. The canine's former handler, if any
 - 3. Another trained canine handler
 - 4. Other law enforcement, based on suitability and stability of environment
- D. Any canine trained for use by the Sheriff's Office will not be eligible for adoption by the general public.
- E. Any adopting of a trained canine will require a signed liability waiver.

41.5.6 UTILIZATION OF NARCOTIC DETECTION DOG

- A. General.
 - 1. Narcotic Detection Dogs will be trained to recognize and indicate the presence of cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine. The Narcotics Detection Dog can be utilized in the searching of vehicles, residences, buildings, open areas, luggage and airplanes for narcotic substances.

41.5.7 TRAINING RECORDS

- A. The Handler will document the following items:
 - 1. Date and location of training site.
 - 2. Weight and type of narcotic training aid utilized.
 - 3. Any conflicts utilized.
 - 4. Where the training aid was planted.
 - 5. Any problems the canine had in the search.
 - 6. If there are any problems during training, the handler must note the type of corrective action that was or will be taken to correct the problem.
 - 7. The records will be maintained by the individual K-9 handlers.
 - 8. The unit coordinator will review the records at least annually and shall keep a copy of all training records.

41.5.8 UTILIZATION REPORTS

- A. Search Reports: The purpose of the search report is to document narcotic finds or currency sniffs, whether positive or negative by the canine. The report will document:
 - 1. The case number.
 - 2. Officers involved.
 - 3. Narcotics found and weight amount
 - 4. Suspects arrested.
 - 5. A short narrative of the search.

41.5.9 SEARCHING PROCEDURES

- A. General.
 - 1. Upon arriving at the search area, the handler will make contact with the deputy or detective requesting the search.
 - 2. The handler must make a decision, based on the information provided, whether or not the search is permissible.
 - 3. If there is a Fourth Amendment or Policies & Procedures violation, the canine will not be utilized, and the handler will contact the on-duty supervisor.
- B. Prior to utilizing the canine in any search, the handler will inspect the search area to eliminate any danger to the canine.
- C. Upon completion of the search, the handler will complete a Utilization Report.
- D. Schools
 - 1. The Handler's Coordinator must authorize any use of the canine inside a School District building. School officials must understand that the canine will not be used for administrative action only and any contraband discovered as a result of the canine will be prosecuted at the discretion of Sedgwick County District Attorney's Office.
- E. People
 - 1. Canines will not be used to search for narcotic odor on people.

41.5.10 TRAINING AIDS

- A. Narcotic training aids are vital to the success of a Narcotic Detector Dog Team (NDD). Narcotics used for training aids will be obtained in accordance with policy. Narcotics will be treated with care and accounted for closely.
- B. The unit coordinator will perform regular audits of any narcotic training aids utilized by dog and handler teams.
- C. Any lost or damaged training aids will be immediately reported to the unit coordinator.