

CANCELS:

APPROVED BY: Chief

POLICY

POL-38 CONDUCTING THE NARCOTICS CANINE PROGRAM

This policy explains how the Narcotics Canine Program is conducted in the ABC Police Department.

38.1 The Program's Purpose Is To Assist in CS Violations

The ABC Police Department will use trained and controlled canines in support of law enforcement operations where the dog's superior sense of smell and physical capabilities can efficiently aid in the accomplishment of objectives involving enforcement of controlled substances violations.

38.2 Acquisition Of A Narcotics Canine

Canines will be obtained from a kennel or other supplier with a verifiable record of satisfactory performance in providing dogs and training to other law enforcement agencies. Any canine that is approved for purchase by the ABC Police Department will, prior to acceptance, have a certificate or letter of good health issued by a licensed veterinarian authorized to conduct examinations and certify the physical and emotional condition of the dog.

38.3 Canine Unit's Fitness For Duty - Annual Exam.

Each canine owned or controlled by the department will receive an annual medical examination by a qualified veterinarian to determine the canine's suitability for retention by the department. A canine may have a fitness for duty examination at anytime as determined necessary.

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38.4 Physical Care of the Canine Unit

The type and quality of food, and recommended feeding schedule will be provided by a licensed veterinarian. The kennel will be maintained to comply with established standards for temperature, food, watering, and sanitation. A supervisor or veterinarian will randomly and routinely inspect conditions any time the canine is kept in a kennel. (SEE TSK 38.1)

38.5 Request For Narcotics Canine Services

Any certified law enforcement officer may request the assistance of a canine team while on duty. The on-shift supervisor will approve or disapprove the request. If no on-duty supervisor is available, an off-duty supervisor or higher will be contacted. When the canine team is off-duty, any officer may request their services. Approval or disapproval of the request will be made by the on-duty supervisor or higher.

38.6 Certification of Narcotics Canine Team

Certain requirements must be met in order to insure that the team meets a high level of service readiness before a canine team is placed on operational status. The certification process will be conducted by a law enforcement canine trainer with at least three (3) years experience and having completed a forty-hour course dog training and evaluation. This certification process should be performed at least annually during the service life of the canine.

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38.7 Narcotics Canine Team Training

Canine teams will train at least six (6) hours per month in addition to the annual recertification testing and evaluation. To remain proficient the canine will be able to:

1. Respond to hand and voice commands;
2. Overcome physical obstacles that may occur on the job;
3. Routinely detect/locate narcotics in a controlled environment.

38.8 Canine Bites

In the unlikely event a person should be bitten by the canine, the officer-handler will complete a detailed incident report. In addition to other data normally contained in such a report, the document will include:

1. List of all officers at the scene who observed the action;
2. List of non-officers that observed the incident;
3. Commands given to the canine and the dog's response to those commands; and
4. Any other bite incident during the last twelve months.

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POL 38**38.9 Officer/Handler Minimum Qualifications**

In addition to other Department employment standards officer-handlers will meet as a minimum the following requirements:

1. Minimum of three years of law enforcement experience.
2. Have an enthusiastic and positive attitude, and a high energy level.
3. Demonstrate proper motivation for the canine both verbally and physically.
4. Be self-motivated and able to work with minimum supervision.
5. Be willing to devote personal time to maintenance training, care, and socialization of the canine.
6. Be willing to report for duty after normal duty work hours when a canine team is needed.
7. Have family support in having a working police dog in the home to care for, as a companion, and as a member of the family.
8. Demonstrate a willingness to assist, support, and cooperate with other departments and personnel.
9. Make a commitment to remain the officer/handler of the canine for the remainder of the dog's working life.
10. Have a strong desire to deploy the canine at every opportunity available regardless of inconvenience, weather conditions, time of day, difficult circumstances or personal problems.
11. Demonstrate discretion in highlighting the canine when credit is given for accomplishments.
12. Completion of a WSCJTC certification program designed for officer-handler narcotics canine teams.
13. Performs other duties as required.

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TASK

TSK-38.1 MAINTENANCE - CARE OF THE CANINE UNIT

The canine will be cared for properly at all times. As a part of their basic responsibilities the officer-handler will:

1. Clean the canine living areas daily;
2. Grooms the canine each day prior to reporting for duty;
3. Never takes the dog into a private club, bar, or other public place except as a part of required duties;
4. Never performs demonstrations of the canine's skills and abilities unless directed by a supervisor;
5. Does not permit the canine to be petted or fed by anyone while on duty, unless directed by a supervisor;
6. Never disciplines the canine by striking, kicking, or other physical abuse;
7. Provides care for any illness or injury to the dog, and seek veterinarian assistance as needed;
8. Examine and replace as needed all collars, choke chains, and other equipment daily to assure operational readiness;
9. Never permits an unsupervised dog to run at large within the department, at home, or in a public place;
10. Maintains uniforms and patrol vehicle interiors clean and free of excessive hair and odors;
11. Makes frequent rest and exercise stops in an effort to prevent the dog from urinating or defecating inside or around the outside of a property when responding to calls for service.