

IV-28 CANINE (K-9) UNIT

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I POLICY:

A. The West Palm Beach Police Department uses trained canines and their handlers to ensure the safety of the citizens and police officers of the City. Because of their superior senses of smell, hearing and physical capabilities, the trained law enforcement canine is a valuable supplement to police manpower. The utilization of canines requires adherence to procedures that properly control their use-of-force potential and that channel their specialized capabilities into legally acceptable crime prevention and control activities. Guidelines are established to govern the use of force by canines, as well as establishing a procedure for the monitoring of the performance of the Canine Unit.

II. DEFINITIONS:

A Canine or K-9: A highly trained dog which has been trained in a wide variety of police related duties such as tracking, building and area searches, criminal apprehension, handler protection, explosive and narcotics detection, all of which make use of the canine's speed, agility and scenting powers.

B. Canine Officer/Canine Handler: A police officer specially trained in the care, handling and utilization of a police canine.

C. Canine Sergeant: A police sergeant who is assigned to manage the Canine Unit. The Canine Sergeant shall be knowledgeable in all aspects of law enforcement canine management.

D. Canine Decoy: A police officer specially trained to assist the Canine Trainer and Canine Handlers.

E. Canine Trainer: A police officer certified by the Department of Law Enforcement Criminal Justice standards & Training Commission to instruct new canine handlers in the care, handling and proper utilization along with the in-service training of a Police Canine.

F. Canine Team: A police canine handler and police canine.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION:

A. The Canine Unit is organizationally aligned under the Support Services Bureau.

B. The West Palm Beach Police Department's Canine Unit is a support unit to primary police operations. Its mission is three-fold:

1. To apprehend offenders who refuse to stop their criminal activity or to seek out those who have taken flight or concealment.
2. To support road patrol and specialized units in whatever way is practical.
3. To promote department goodwill to the public.

C. This Standard Operating Procedure is intended to provide each member of the Canine Unit and the department with the appropriate standards necessary for the successful execution of the canine mission and deployment method.

IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – CANINE SERGEANT:

A. The Canine Unit shall be under the control of the Canine Sergeant who is responsible for coordinating the deployment, training, scheduling, evaluation and performance of the canine Unit.

B. The following are specific duties of the Canine Sergeant. They are representative and should not be considered all inclusive. Additional duties as necessary may be assigned by the Community Response Division Commander.

C. Administration:

1. Select dogs for the Canine Unit in union with the Canine Trainer
2. Participate in the oral board selection process of prospective canine handlers.
3. Maintain statistical files to support the function of the unit.
4. Order supplies and equipment for the proper functioning of the unit, ensure orders are properly billed and delivered.
5. Monitor veterinarian costs, usage and service for accuracy.
6. Prepare Unit budget requests and correspondence.
7. Coordinate public demonstration requests.

8. Prepare daily scheduling of handlers to ensure adequate canine coverage.
9. Provide the Community Response Division Commander or designee with a monthly report to include statistics and training for the Unit and individual handlers.
10. Review and critique all canine incidents and Control of Persons Reports involving Canine Unit personnel.

D. Supervision:

1. Supervise new canine team training.
2. Supervise Department members in existing deployment methods and usage of the Canine Unit and make training recommendations to the Training Sergeant, if needed.
3. Respond to a scene at the direction of a supervisor.
4. Ensure annual testing requirements of the Canine Unit is accomplished and documented.
5. Ensure on-going and continual in-service evaluation of each team is conducted.

V. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CANINE HANDLERS:

A. General Directives:

1. When a canine is not directly involved in a police function or their imminent use is not anticipated, handlers shall ensure that the canine is properly secured in a police vehicle intended for canine use. The emergency alarm monitoring system shall also be activated whenever the handler is not in the vehicle.
2. In all applications where a canine is utilized, the Handler is responsible for the tactical application and deployment of the animal.
3. Handlers will ensure that no persons will have contact with or give commands to the canine without permission from the Canine Handler.
4. Handlers will not allow canines to roam off lead within the police station.
5. Canine vehicles will not be used to transport arrestees, suspects, witnesses or injured persons. Civilian Ride-A-Longs will follow SOP I-16 and have prior approval of the Canine Sergeant and the Community Response Division Commander.
6. Unless the animal is being used for a police purpose, Canines will be kept on-lead where the public has ready access.
7. Canines will not be entered in any show, trial, or exhibition without prior approval of the Canine Sergeant.
8. Behavioral difficulties with the dogs will be made known to the Canine Sergeant for resolution
9. While on-duty, the handler will ensure the canine is given sufficient breaks. In the event that an animal defecates in a public or private building the handler will remove the waste as soon as practical.

B. Notification of Canine Sergeant & Shift Commander:

1. When the Canine Sergeant is off duty, the on-duty Shift Commander will be contacted directly by the handler:
 - a. To call in sick
 - b. To report a serious vehicular accident
 - c. To report a serious handler injury requiring immediate medical treatment
 - d. To report a canine injury requiring immediate medical treatment

- e. To report any bite that appears to be life threatening
- f. To report accidental canine bites to non police personnel
- g. The handler will adhere to SOP any time an order is received that is not in the best interest of the Canine Unit or is contrary to training received.

C. Canine Team Call Out:

1. When all canine teams are off-duty, they may be called back into service at the direction of the Canine Sergeant or an on-duty Shift Commander.
2. The Canine Sergeant will provide Dispatch Operations with a listing of canine teams to be used for callouts and their rotations, if any.
3. Whenever possible, callout requests will be made through the Canine Sergeant. Should a handler responding to a callout determine that additional canine assistance is needed; the handler may callout an additional handler for assistance.

VI. GUIDELINES REGARDING CANINE USE OF FORCE:

A. Canine force shall be utilized only when necessary. Handlers will exhaust all reasonable means to affect apprehension, without incurring a bite. Canine use will be limited to felonies or situations in which circumstances lead to a reasonable concern for the threat of violence or failure to apprehend the subject poses an imminent danger to the general public or law enforcement officers.

B. Canine use of force, either directed by the handler or initiated by the canine, is the responsibility of the handler. Handlers must utilize prescribed training methods and practices. Canine use does not constitute deadly force. The handler must give strong consideration to the nature and degree of the crime and their past training and experience in assessing any threats to the safety of the public and law enforcement personnel. These Guidelines are based on three case laws; *Graham vs Conner*, *Tennessee vs Garner* and *Mendoza vs Block*. These three case laws have been given considerations and the following Federal Guidelines for canine use of force were rendered:

1. Severity of the crime at issue
2. Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others.
3. Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight.

VII. RESPONSE TO SCENE - OFFICER & CANINE HANDLER RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Canine Teams shall be dispatched primarily on calls where specialized training of the Handler and canine will prove advantageous, including the following:

1. In progress crimes where the possibility of containing offenders within a building or given area.
2. Crimes just occurred, the offender fled on foot and a track must be made to discover the movements of the offender or discover evidence.
3. Back-up unit to potentially violent calls.

B. Canine Response to Scene:

1. Handlers will respond to calls for service as practical, consideration for the canine's overall health status, and current condition and the handler's availability.
2. Canines will not be worked unreasonably or beyond current levels of endurance.
3. Handlers will not terminate a call unless all reasonably practical measures available have been exhausted or a higher priority call is received.
4. The decision to disengage will be the sole responsibility of the handler since the handler can best weigh the canine's potential impact on both cases. This decision will generally center around the question of which call poses a most serious threat to the public as well as, responding officers.
5. Handlers will respond to calls for service as quickly and safely as possible. Necessity to reduce the time element can be crucial from a canine perspective; however it should never compromise the safety

of the public or canine team. Handlers will exercise extreme caution when responding by following prescribed State law and SOP.

C. On Scene Working Responsibilities:

1. The Handler is responsible for canine tactics at the scene.
2. The Handler or backup officer will ensure on-scene units are updated of the offender's location in an effort to keep perimeters secured except where it may prove unsafe to the search team.

D. Follow Up Responsibilities:

1. Upon conclusion of the call, the handler will brief officers conducting the investigation the important points to communicate in the investigative reports or the Probable Cause Affidavit.

E. Officer's Responsibilities During an Area Search Include the Following:

1. Keep the scene clear of all non-essential personnel.
2. Notify an on-duty supervisor.
3. Call for additional units to secure the perimeter, blocking all routes of escape in a box-like perimeter that is as visible as possible.
4. Gather essential information the Handler will need upon arrival
 - a. Type of offense
 - b. Suspect description
 - c. Direction of travel
 - d. Time delay

F. Police Officer Responsibilities for a Building Search:

1. When an offender may be hidden within a structure, officers shall accomplish the following:
 - a. Request that additional officers secure the building and all possible exits ensuring no one enters.
 - b. Call for a representative to respond to the scene.
 - c. Do not allow responders inside the building until it is cleared by the Handler.
2. Officers will not enter the building except under the following circumstances;
 - a. The Handler has given permission.
 - b. the Handler or team is injured or cannot be contacted by radio.
 - c. approval of an on-scene supervisor :
3. Officers should evaluate all circumstances prior to entering an area or building to assist the Handler.

VIII. CONDUCT AROUND THE CANINE HANDLER:

A. Canines are well-trained animals that react to certain situations in a particular manner regardless of the occupation of the person confronting the canine or the handler. Therefore, the following shall be adhered to when working in the same proximity as the canine officers:

B. The canine is trained to protect the handler at all times; therefore officers should never walk up to a handler and pat on the back or arm as the canine may mistake this action as a threat to his handler.

C. The canine should never be approached or petted without permission of the Canine Handler.

1. The canine should never be teased or agitated, in or out of the canine vehicle, except at a supervised training session and only when directed by the Canine Trainer.

2. Whenever the canine is released for an apprehension or search, officers should remain in, or return to, their vehicle until the canine is back on lead.
3. When the canine is working, officers must maintain a safe distance between themselves and the canine team to avoid being injured or interfering with the canine.
4. The canine is taught to alert and become aggressive when left alone inside the canine vehicle. Officers should avoid walking near the parked canine vehicle whenever possible. At no time shall an officer, other than a Handler, attempt to enter a canine vehicle.

IX. INJURY TO THE CANINE HANDLER:

A. If the Handler becomes injured or incapacitated, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Do not, under any circumstances, approach the canine or attempt to render first aid to the Handler unless the injury is life threatening.
2. Attempt to get the Canine Handler to control his canine.
3. Contact another Handler to attempt to control the canine.
4. Contact a member of the Handler's family to control the canine.

X. GUIDELINES FOR AREA SEARCHES: The following guidelines and procedures shall be employed by the Canine Handlers when the use of the canine is required.

A. Area Searches: – outdoor searches in which the canine is worked in a set pattern utilizing the wind to locate the offender's airborne scent and pursue it to its source. It allows the Canine Team to cover a large area, utilizing the canine's ability to locate a hidden offender in a minimum of time with a maximum of safety. Area searches will be conducted utilizing the appropriate lead.

1. When summoned, the handler will contact personnel at the scene to confirm that a criminal offense has been committed and/or situation exists within the guidelines regarding canine use of force. The handler will obtain a description of the offender(s) and verify the establishment of the perimeter before commencing a search.
2. Once established, officers should not enter the perimeter. This includes running into a perimeter while pursuing a suspect. All officers will remain outside the search area unless directed to enter by the Canine Handler or supervisor, or in the case of an emergency.
3. Enclosed Areas - When searching an enclosed or fenced area, the Handler may conduct the search off-lead if the following criteria can be met:
 - a. The area is small enough that the handler can keep reasonable visual contact with the canine at all times.
 - b. The fence, wall or enclosure surrounding the area has been visually checked to ensure that the canine cannot get out and that the canine cannot readily jump it.
 - c. The handler has made every reasonable effort to ensure that no authorized persons are within the area.

B. With enclosed area searches, all initial entries will include a warning except in those cases where it may prove unsafe to the search team or allow the offender to escape. This decision is the sole responsibility of the handler conducting the search. The warning will be given in a loud and clear manner. Warnings shall include the following:

1. An identification of the Police Canine Team
2. An order for all occupants to identify and surrender themselves immediately
3. A warning that the Police Canine will bite

C. After the warning, the Canine Handler will wait an appropriate amount of time to allow the offender to surrender before the canine is placed in the area to be searched.

1. If a subsequent report is required documenting the search, it will contain a detailed account of any and all warnings issued as well as the exclusion of warnings if applicable.

D. When needed, the Canine Handler will request back-up officers to search with the Canine Team.

E. If the canine indicates the possible presence of a hidden offender, every effort will be made to affect the apprehension without a dog bite, affording the offender an opportunity to surrender.

F. The Canine handler is responsible for coordinating apprehension with the back-up officers in the area.

XI. GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING SEARCHES:

A. Building Searches: – an indoor search in which the canine is worked in a set pattern utilizing the air flow to locate the airborne scent and pursues it to its source. It allows the Canine Team to search the interior of any building utilizing the canine's ability to locate a hidden offender in a minimum of time with a maximum of safety.

1. This search may be done off lead when the handler reasonably believes that a warranted criminal offense has been committed within the guidelines regarding canine use of force and the offender is within the building to be searched and the handler has made every reasonable effort to ensure that the structure is empty.

2. Officers should not be placed in a situation that unnecessarily compromises their safety in order to affect the apprehension without the use of the canine unless extenuating circumstances exist.

3. Initial entries will include a warning except in cases where it may prove unsafe to the search team. This decision is the sole responsibility of the handler conducting the search. The warning will be given in a loud and clear manner. Warnings shall include the following:

a. An identification of the Police Canine Team

b. An order for all occupants to identify and surrender themselves immediately

c. A warning that the Police Canine will bite

1. Subsequent written reports documenting the search will always contain a detailed account of any and all warnings issued as well as the exclusion of warnings, if applicable.

4. After the warning, officers will wait an appropriate amount of time to allow the offender to surrender before the canine is placed in the area to be searched.

5. Prior to commencing a search, the Handler will ensure that a secure perimeter exists.

6. When conducting the building search, the handler will make every effort to stay as close to their dog as possible.

7. When needed, the Handler will request back-up officers to search with the Canine Team.

8. If the canine indicates possible presence of an offender, every effort will be made to affect the apprehension without a dog bite, affording the offender an opportunity to surrender.

9. Police-trained canines will not normally be used to search a structure known to contain a barricaded gunman, but may be deployed to assist SWAT Team members at the direction of the SWAT Team Commander. In all situations where the offender is known to be armed, utilization of the canine will be at the discretion of the Handler. Under no circumstances will the life of the canine be placed needlessly at risk.

XII. GUIDELINES FOR TRACKING OR TRAILING AN OFFENDER:

A. Tracking or Trailing an Offender – Tracking is a form of locating a fleeing offender in which the canine is allowed to follow the human windborne and ground scent.

1. In tracking situations the canine will be on lead, utilizing the six (6) foot, fifteen (15) foot, or thirty (30) foot lead, depending on the terrain to be tracked and the tracking harness will be in place.
2. The techniques utilized during the track will follow with training and experience.
 - a. If a report is required documenting the search, it will always contain a detailed account of any and all warnings issued as well as the exclusion of warnings if applicable.

XIII. GUIDELINES FOR RELEASING A CANINE FOR A BITE APPREHENSION:

A. Releasing a Canine for an Apprehension – chases and “takedowns” (on foot) When the canine is released to prevent the escape of a person whom the handler has probable cause to arrest for a criminal offense, (i.e. felony, violent and/or threat to officers or the public.) prior to releasing the canine, and throughout the chase, the handler will ensure that:

1. No other persons, either police or citizens, will be endangered by the release of the canine.
2. All chases or "take downs" will include a warning except in those incidents where it would potentially prove unsafe to the search team, fellow officers, and any innocent civilians should further flight or resistance on the offender’s part place them in jeopardy. In all cases the handler will advise in a loud, clear, and concise manner:

“THIS IS THE POLICE, STOP OR I WILL RELEASE THE DOG.”

3. If a report is required documenting the search, it will always contain a detailed account of any and all warnings issued as well as the exclusion of warnings if applicable.
4. The canine has actually seen the offender and knows that the person is the one to be chased.
5. The handler will maintain visual contact with the canine throughout the chase. In the event that visual contact is about to be lost, the handler will immediately recall the canine
6. It is the policy of the Canine Unit that no canine will be released if the handler cannot arrive at the place of contact within a REASONABLE period of time. This is important for two reasons:
 - a. The first is to prevent serious injury to the offender should his form of resistance cause a bite to a vital area.
 - b. The second is that the handler is in a position to protect the canine should the offender’s form of resistance take a violent turn toward the canine.
7. The decision to chase or “take down” a fleeing criminal is the sole responsibility of the handler and will be based on the Handlers’ training and experience. All methods utilized will follow prescribed training practices.

XIV. GUIDELINES FOR FELONY STOPS:

A. Handler Responsibility:

1. The primary responsibility of a Canine Team during a felony stop is to provide a "backup" to other officers engaged in the stop and in the subsequent extraction stage.
2. In the event that a person elects to flee on foot, it then becomes the sole responsibility of the handler to determine if a running "take down" or initiation of a search/trail is warranted.
3. The decision to utilize canine force and subsequent applicable tactics and techniques will be guided by the sections Guidelines Regarding Canine Use of Force and Guidelines for Releasing a Canine for a Bite Apprehension contained within this SOP.

4. The decision to search/trail and subsequent applicable tactics and techniques will be guided by the sections: Guidelines Regarding Canine Use of Force, Guidelines for Tracking or Trailing an Offender and Guidelines for Area Searches.

XV. GUIDELINES FOR PURSUITS:

A. Pursuits:

1. All Canine Teams may engage in a pursuit that is authorized by departmental policy. Canine Units will respond in accordance with established departmental guidelines and procedures with regard to the number of vehicles involved in a chase. When a Canine Unit is not one of the two units originating the pursuit, it may join the originating two pursuing vehicles in the pursuit.

2. In the case of a bailout and the Canine Handler is the initiating officer or is close enough to initiate a running takedown safely and successfully, the handler may do so. However, it must be recognized that the initial stages of a bailout are often characterized by fellow officer confusion, emotions, and lack of safe tactics. Therefore, the Canine Handler may elect not to use the canine in this manner.

3. If the Canine Handler arrives after the bailout, the handler should establish communication with the officer initiating the bailout. If canine usage is warranted, then the kind, tactics, techniques, etc. will be guided by the previously outlines sections of this manual.

XVI. UTILIZATION OF CANINE UNITS FOR CROWD CONTROL: It is the intention of the West Palm Beach Police Department to establish restricted guidelines in the use of Canine Units for crowd control.

A. Crowd Control – Special Consideration:

1. Canines shall be utilized for crowd control only when authorized by an on-duty Shift Commander under the following guidelines:

- a. Canines should only be used for crowd control when a severe threat or extreme danger exists to the police officers or innocent bystanders are present in the crowd.
- b. Avenues of escape must be open to the crowd prior to being advanced upon by the canine team.
- c. Handlers will utilize a six-foot leash attached to the work collar or harness to restrain their canines while advancing.
- d. Canines will not be released in a crowd control situation unless extenuating circumstances arise.
- e. Handlers will ensure his canine remains a reasonable distance from the nearest person in the crowd being dispersed.
- f. Handlers will be constantly alert for stragglers.
- g. Handlers should not attempt to handle a person and his canine simultaneously.
- h. Handlers have the responsibility of keeping the canine under control at all times.
- i. If possible, a police photographer will be present when police canines are utilized in crowd control.
- j. Canines will not be dispatched to assist another agency in a riot or crowd control situation unless prior approval has been obtained from the on-duty Shift Commander.
- k. Canines may be used to secure staging areas where police equipment is stored.
- l. The decision to use a Canine to control a crowd will be made by the Handler irrespective of any directive made by the shift commander or sworn personnel of higher rank.

XVII. GUIDELINES FOR CANINE DEMONSTRATIONS:

A. All requests for a canine demonstration shall be submitted to the Canine Sergeant. The Canine Sergeant will make the individual assignments on those requests. All requests must be approved by the Community Response Division Commander or designee.

1. No exhibitions or demonstrations with a canine without prior approval are permitted.

2. All requests for public demonstrations by the Canine Unit will be approved by the Canine Sergeant. Operational needs of the department will take priority over such requests.

3. Once approved, the Canine Sergeant or designee will contact the requesting party and determinate the location of the demonstration and evaluate the site, the size of the group that will be in attendance and any other information that will assist in preparing for the demonstration.

4. For safety reasons, two or more teams will normally conduct demonstrations. Handlers will predetermine the behavior of the canines that will be involved. It is recommended that the sequence of the demonstration be rehearsed to correct any deficiencies that may be noted.

5. If upon arrival it is found the size of the audience is too large or not manageable, or that the group coordinator has not logically planned the demonstration the decision to conduct the demonstration or offer a static display environment shall rest with the senior handler. The ultimate safety of those in attendance is paramount and will be the primary consideration in reaching this decision.

XVIII. REQUEST FOR CANINE ASSISTANCE BY OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

A. The West Palm Beach Police Department responds to requests for canine assistance from outside agencies, it is incumbent upon the Department to issue guidelines governing these requests. The guidelines promulgated below will assure that other agencies are served in a timely and effective manner and, at the same time, protect the City of West Palm Beach.

B. When an outside agency requests the assistance of a West Palm Beach Police Department Canine Unit, the following steps will be taken:

1. As per Departmental Policy, the Canine Unit will request permission of an on-duty supervisor prior to leaving the City.
2. Upon arrival at the scene or call and prior to the commencement of any search, the Handler will take the following steps:
 - a. Contact the highest ranking Officer on the scene from the requesting agency.
 - b. Ascertain from this officer the facts surrounding the need for a Canine.
 - c. Determine if the use of a Canine is appropriate according to Policy. If not, the Handler will explain to the Officer in charge why the dog cannot be used. If there is still a question, the Handler will raise a West Palm Beach on-duty Supervisor to respond to the scene and resolve the conflict. The supervisor can, at his discretion, refuse service to the other agency and return the Canine Unit to the City if the search does not meet our criteria.
 - d. Will advise the Officer in charge that prior to beginning the search, the Officer in charge will have to agree to abide by the Policy of West Palm Beach Police Department on offenders who are bitten. That policy being that the person who is bitten will receive appropriate medical treatment as needed.

C. If, during the search, an offender is bitten and there is an unreasonable delay (generally more than 15 minutes) in receiving medical attention the Handler will again advise the officer in charge of the policy.

D. If the outside agency still fails to comply with our request, a supervisor will be called to the scene to resolve the problem.

E. As always, if a dog bite results from a canine usage, a Canine Bite Report and other applicable reports will be completed per Canine SOP.

XIX. GUIDELINES FOR BITE SITUATIONS:

A. When a Canine bites an arrestee, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Once the safety of the Canine Team has been established, the canine will be removed and maintained in a tactical position, pending further canine force.
2. The arresting officer, or a designee, will remain with the prisoner until all processing has been completed. When appropriate, a charge of resisting with/without violence shall be included.
3. When the scene is secured, the handler will notify the on-duty shift commander and the Canine Sergeant (if working) of the canine apprehension.
4. It is the duty of each handler utilizing canine force (when possible) to check the extent of injuries. The handler will then advise transporting officers of their findings. In the event that the handler cannot

check the extent of the injuries, the handler should so notify the transporting officer and request that they do so and take whatever action is necessary.

5. ALL CANINE USE OF FORCE APPREHENSIONS DEMAND HOSPITAL MEDICAL ATTENTION TO THE RECIPIENT REGARDLESS OF APPARENT LACK OF SEVERITY.

6. It is the responsibility of the handler utilizing force to ensure that this is accomplished.

7. In most cases, Fire Rescue need not be called to the scene to render any intermediate attention. If the extent of the injuries exceeds the limitation of routine first aid on the scene, Fire Rescue will be called to the scene. If Fire Rescue determines the offender requires immediate medical attention, Fire rescue will transport the offender to the hospital for medical treatment.

8. The handler will ensure digital photographs of the area of the body where the offender was bitten and an overall picture that captures not only the bite but also the offender's full body and face. Digital photographs will also be taken of the area where the offender was apprehended.

9. It shall be the responsibility of the handler to complete a Palm Beach County Animal Bite report, (Appendix A), Canine Usage report (Appendix B), and appropriate incident reports, submitting them to the Canine Sergeant for review.

10. The on-duty Shift Commander will ensure that a Control of Persons report is completed under SOP III-13 Use of Force.

B. Accidental Use of Force - Citizen:

1. Should a person be accidentally bitten, the Handler will immediately ensure that first aid is rendered and the recipient, if willing, is transported to a hospital for proper medical attention.

2. The handler will make no statement as to liability or fault.

3. The handler involved will prepare a report of the incident.

4. All reports will include photographs of the injuries as well as the place of occurrence if applicable. They will also contain copies of the hospital records, if obtainable.

a. A medical release for treatment records of the bite victim should be obtained

5. The on-duty Shift Commander and Canine Sergeant will be notified as soon as practical.

6. On any bite, the handler will not sign any paper making the City responsible for payment of hospital charges. If the hospital or individual insist on such a signature, they will be told that such a signature is against City policy and will be advised to contact the City of West Palm Beach Risk Management Section.

7. Upon conclusion of medical treatment, transportation to a reasonable place of the person's choice will be provided.

C. Accidental Use of Force: Fellow Officer:

1. In the event an officer is bitten, first aid will be given and the officer transported to the hospital if necessary.

2. The on-duty Shift Commander and Canine Sergeant will be notified as soon as practical.

3. A police report, and Departmental Notice of Injury form will be completed.

D. Prohibited Uses:

1. Canines will not be used to search for other animals.

2. The Canine will not be used for tracking a lost or missing person unless authorized by a Shift Commander and then only if extenuating circumstances exist, such as evidence of foul play or reason to believe grievous harm will be suffered by the person if not found immediately. If it becomes necessary to track a lost person, the Canine Handler will take reasonable precautions to prevent a bite from occurring. The final decision to use the canine for this purpose will be made by the Canine Handler.
3. Intimidate, coerce, or frighten any persons. A canine will not be present during questioning or interrogation of a suspect.
4. Canines will not be used as decoys or targets to "draw fire" in a controlled situation.
5. Breed or be used for stud purposes unless approved by the Chief of Police, in writing.
6. Canines will not be used in any manner prohibited elsewhere in this SOP.

XX. NARCOTICS CANINE DETECTOR TEAMS USE AND UTILIZATION:

A. The West Palm Beach Police Department utilizes several kinds of searching canines. For the purposes of this policy, the Canine Unit will be used to refer to canines that search for offenders. These canines are active alert canines and they are trained to apprehend an offender by force when necessary. Some of the canines are cross-trained and can search for narcotics. They are called Narcotics Canine Detector Teams and are also active alert canines, and should never be used to search a person.

B. Narcotics Canine Detector Teams can locate the general and specific areas where the odor of a trained narcotic substance is present. Care should be used when searching around people and delicate property because these canines alert aggressively by scratching and/or biting.

C. All officers that handle dual trained canines, certified in narcotics detection, will ensure that they operate in accordance with legal guidelines.

1. The decision to use the narcotics detection canine should be made as soon as possible.
2. The Handler will determine what type of search is to be conducted and if it is within the legal guidelines.
3. Canines will NOT be used to sniff people or objects in their immediate possession.
4. Narcotics Detection Canines can be utilized for the detection of specific types of narcotics. These include:
 - a. Cocaine, any derivative, including crack
 - b. Heroin, any derivative
 - c. Marijuana, any derivative
 - d. Hashish, any derivative
 - e. MDMA
5. Officers utilizing narcotic detection canines should ensure that the canine does not ingest the substance.

D. Outside agencies requesting the use of a West Palm Beach Police Department Narcotics Detection Canine will make the request through the Canine Sergeant or on-duty Shift Commander. The appropriate report will be completed by the Handler.

E. All activity by Narcotic Detection Canines will be fully documented on offense/incident or supplemental reports. Canine Handlers will maintain a log of all narcotics detection training and activity.

F. Call Out Procedures:

1. When all Narcotics Detection Teams are in an off-duty status, they may be called back into service when necessary, at the direction of the Canine Sergeant or any other requesting supervisor.

2. The Canine Sergeant will provide the Dispatch Operations Center with a Listing of Narcotics Detection Teams to be used for such callouts.

3. Narcotics Detection Teams will NOT be called out (but may be used if on-duty) in cases such as a traffic stop for a minor infraction where there little or no additional evidence to suspect sizable quantities of narcotics that misdemeanor amounts of a drug will be found during the search.

4. Every effort should be made to locate an on-duty Narcotics Detection team prior to a call out. Call outs should be made, considering the likelihood of detection, the severity of the case, reasonable suspicion that narcotics are possibly present based on past information, on-going case investigation, or probable cause.

5. The Special Investigations Division's (SID) Narcotics Detection Team may be used at that Division's discretion. Call outs must be approved by a supervisor and the S.I.D. Sergeant to determine if the Narcotics Detection Team will be notified prior to the actual call out and will make the determination if the Narcotic's Detection Team will be called out.

XXI. EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINES SEARCHES:

A. The West Palm Beach Police Department utilizes several kinds of searching canines. For the purposes of this policy, the Canine Unit will be used to refer to dogs that search for suspects. These canines are a trained to apprehend a suspect by force. Some of the canines are cross-trained and can search for bombs (Explosive Detection Canine Teams); and should never be used to search a person.

B. Explosive Detection Canines may be utilized to conduct a search for the purpose of detecting the presence of explosive compounds, the recovery of investigative evidence or the recovery of post blast material or evidence. The Explosives Detection Canine Handler will be a member of the West Palm Beach Bomb Squad and chosen by the Bomb Squad Commander along with input from the Canine Sergeant. All Explosive Detection Canine requests will go through the Bomb Squad Commander. The Bomb Squad Commander or the senior technician in charge will assess a situation to determine if a callout for the Explosive Detection Canine is required.

C. Explosive Detection Canine teams will not search any area that has a known presence of an explosive device or possible improvised device unless exigent circumstances exist. The handler will notify the unit supervisor or designee of the exigent circumstance for their approval prior to conducting the search.

D. The Explosive Detection Handler will decide the scope and extent of the search based on the canine's capabilities. The Explosive Detection Canine is not to be utilized to search an entire building for explosives. The Explosive Detection Canine will be utilized to compliment a human physical search by performing limited area searches in specific locations within buildings such as unsecured rooms which are normally locked, unattended suspicious vehicles in close proximity to the threat, public access areas or other areas of concern. Searches may include, but are not limited to:

1. Buildings,
2. Motor Vehicles,
3. Field or open areas,
4. Parking lots,
5. Luggage/packages,
6. Airplanes,
7. Vessels or
8. Lockers

XXII. SELECTION OF CANINE HANDLERS:

A. Qualifications: The officer/canine team is the heart of the unit's existence. As the controlling element of the team, the handler must rely upon his experience, knowledge, training and decision-making ability. Minimum prerequisites include:

1. Must be off probation as a police officer.
2. Minimum of (5) years police experience.
3. Must have satisfactory performance evaluations
4. Must be free of any physical restriction that may inhibit their ability to work with a canine.

5. Must be willing to work flexible days and hours although much of the shift could be nighttime hours.
6. Must be able to provide a secure home for the canine.
7. Must be willing to provide considerable personal attention to the assigned canine to ensure its healthy maintenance.

B. Evaluation of Applicants:

1. Application and the selection of Canine Handlers will be made under Standard Operating Procedure I-8 Assignment to specialized Positions/Components. At the conclusion of the selection process, a recommendation will be forwarded for approval via the chain of command.

XXIII. CANINE TRAINING – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Patrol Officer Awareness: Much of the success realized by the Canine Unit is dependent upon the initial actions of the patrol officer who first arrives on the scene of a call. Handlers will meet with patrol officers during their duty hours for the purpose of discussing the capabilities and limitations of the handler/canine team. They will also conduct orientation classes and in-house training classes for patrol officers as requested by the Training Division or Unit supervisor. Fostering a better understanding will cause the teams to be used to their fullest potential.

B. Canine Trainer:

1. The West Palm Beach Police Department recognizes the need for on-going training. To achieve this purpose, a Canine Trainer position exists within the Canine Unit. The Canine Trainer will:
 - a. Conduct canine training for all canines and their handlers.
 - b. Conduct periodic Canine Team performance evaluations.
 - c. Conduct basic police detection and handling courses.
 - d. Conduct recruit training classes as needed.
 - e. Locate and maintain suitable training areas.
 - f. Assist the Canine Unit with the selection and subsequent training of canines.
 - g. Conduct, evaluate, and document training on a weekly basis.
 - h. Perform other duties as directed by the Canine Sergeant or higher authority.
 - i. The Canine Trainer will report to the Canine Sergeant

C. Canine Decoy:

1. The position of Canine Decoy may be appointed by the West Palm Beach Police Department and will report to the Canine Sergeant or the Canine Trainer. The Canine Decoy will accompany the Canine Handlers during all Canine Unit Certifications and public demonstrations as needed. This officer does not have to be a Canine Handler.

D. Canine Training:

1. Primary Training Program Patrol Canine: The primary training program for the Canine Team shall consist of a minimum (12) twelve weeks, 480 hour Basic Canine Course, conducted by this department. At the completion of this school, the handler should have acquired the basic fundamentals required to maintain a dog in top mental and physical health. The handler and canine will also learn basic obedience, agility, bite work and control and scent work. All new handlers will be required to complete the primary training program regardless of the prior certification of their assigned canine.
 - a. Upon completion of the basic training program, the team will exhibit proficiency in all areas of obedience, criminal apprehension, building search and area search prior to being released for patrol duty.
 - b. Senior Canine Handlers acquiring untrained canines must successfully complete the practical portion of the 480-hour Canine School. The finale examination is comprised of the same practical examination as the full course.
 - c. Senior handlers acquiring canines previously trained from an outside source may forgo the school if the canine has received instruction equivalent to our Basic Canine Course and providing the team successfully passes the final practical examination of the full course.

E. Field Training Program: Upon certification from the basic canine course, each new handler will complete a field training program prior to solo patrol with his canine. The field training period will cover as much time as needed and will be under the direction of at least one but preferably two senior handlers. The primary purpose is to orient the new handler to the practical working environment and the more unique responsibilities as a canine handler.

F. In-service Training:

1. Canine in-service training should consist of ten (10) hours of supervised on-duty training each week for each canine team, unless excused by the Canine Sergeant. Training will consist of physical exercise for the canine as well as the canine officer, refresher training in obedience, agility, tracking, searching, criminal apprehension, apprehension without gunfire, apprehension with gunfire, narcotic detection, explosive detection and handler protection. Training will include scenarios meant to duplicate situations that may be encountered while on-duty.

- a. Weekly training sessions may be used for canine activities such as certification exercises, demonstrations, etc.
- b. Only personnel with prior authorization from the Canine Sergeant will be allowed to assist in the training exercises.
- c. All Canine Teams within the West Palm Beach Police Department will be required to certify annually for Patrol Canine, Explosive Detection and Narcotics Detection through the United States Police Canine Association, National Police Canine Association and/or the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.
- d. If a canine team is unable to participate in the annual certification, the Canine Sergeant will document the circumstances surrounding the non participation.

2. Informal Training: Informal training should be conducted throughout the tour of duty in a workweek as needed and as calls for service, the canine's stamina and environmental conditions will allow.

G. Narcotics Detection Training:

1 This basic 280-hour Narcotics Detection Course will be completed after the canine team has successfully completed the Basic Patrol Canine Course. This advanced training will be at the discretion of the Canine Sergeant and approved by the Support Services Bureau Assistant Chief.

- a. Upon the successful completion of an approved canine narcotic detector course, the Canine Handler will then be authorized to maintain possession of narcotic training aids for the purpose of proficiency training with all types of narcotic substances.
- b. In order to maintain proper proficiency for the Detector Canine, there must be continuous training with all types of narcotic substances.

H. Narcotics Detection:

1. Narcotics Log Book:

- a. The Canine Sergeant will maintain a separate logbook for each Canine Handler. Entries regarding receipt of narcotics and inspections will be made in this log.
- b. Each Canine Handler will maintain an individual logbook that will be accessible to the Canine Sergeant and/or the Community Services Commander upon request. Entries regarding the receipt of narcotics and its use for training will be made in this log. Each incident regarding the utilization of the training aid will be noted in this log.

2. Procedure for obtaining narcotic training aids from the West Palm Beach Police Evidence Custodian:

- a. The Canine Sergeant will contact the evidence custodian and inform the custodian of the type of narcotics needed for training purposes.
- b. The Canine Handler must submit a written request through the Canine Sergeant for the specific narcotic and the amount needed.
- c. The Canine Handler will take possession of the narcotic after a copy of the approved request is provided to the evidence custodian and a property receipt is completed and signed.
- d. The evidence custodian will maintain a record of the transaction and provide the Canine Sergeant a copy of the property receipt.

- e. The Canine Handler will record the receipt of the narcotic in the logbook.
- f. The Canine Sergeant will inspect the narcotics when first obtained and record the inspection in the supervisor's logbook. A copy of the property receipt for the narcotic will be kept in the canine file.
- g. The Canine Sergeant will verify monthly the amount of narcotics by physical inventory with the Canine Handler. This verification will then be annotated in the Narcotics Logbook.
- h. The Canine Sergeant shall maintain accurate narcotics inventory and training activity logs, which will always be accessible to the Community Response Division Commander.
- i. The Canine Sergeant is responsible for the accountability of the narcotics used by the Canine Handlers for training purposes.
- j. The Canine Sergeant shall be ensure for the proficiency training of the Narcotics Detection Canine Team(s).

3. Storage and Security of Narcotic Training Aids:

- a. Narcotic training aids used by the Canine Handler for training shall be stored in a locked safe, which will be located in the Canine Sergeant office. This safe shall be permanently bolted and secured.
- b. In the event of loss or damage to any narcotics used during the training period, the officer/trainer responsible shall notify the Canine Sergeant and Community Response Division Commander, initiate and complete a report, explaining the incident and actions surrounding the loss.

I. Explosive Detection Training:

- 1. The basic 400-hour Explosive Detection Course will be completed after the canine team has successfully completed the Basic Patrol Canine Course. This advanced training will be at the discretion of the Canine Sergeant and approved by the Support Services Bureau Assistant Chief.
 - a. Upon the successful completion of an approved Canine Explosive Detector Course, the Canine Handler will then be authorized to maintain possession of explosive training aids for the purpose of proficiency training only as outlined in this procedure.
 - b. In order to maintain proper proficiency for the explosive detector canine, there must be continuous training with all types of explosive substances.

J. Canine Training Records:

- 1. Each handler will maintain Canine Training Records utilizing the Canine Management Database in which the training sessions are to be documented. Comments relating to the canine's performance in each exercise will be specific in nature. General comment, e.g., "performed well" or "performed poorly" will be avoided. The training entries will be available and subject to frequent review by the Canine Sergeant and Community Response Division Commander.

K. Explosive Detection:

- 1. Storage and security of explosive training devices for the Explosive Detection Canine.
 - a. Explosive training aids shall be stored in a secure location at West Palm Beach Police Department. The Explosive Detection Canine Handler will maintain possession of the training aids at all times and record in the training log what aids were used and location of use.
 - b. The Explosive Canine Handler shall possess any combinations and/or keys to safes and lock boxes that store explosive training aids. With the exception of assisting in canine training exercises, no member other than the Explosive Canine Handler is authorized to possess any explosive training aid.
 - c. In the absence of Explosive Canine Handler, the Bomb Squad Commander or their designee is authorized to open the safe or lock boxes containing the explosive training aids.
- 2. Misplaced or damaged Explosive Detection Canine training devices.
 - a. In the event an explosive training aid is lost or cannot be accounted for, the Explosive Canine Handler shall immediately notify the Bomb Squad Commander. The Explosive Canine Handler's supervisor shall submit a report to the Chief of Police through the chain of command regarding the circumstances.

b. If any explosive training aid is damaged, an attempt must be made to recover as much "spillage" as possible. Any explosive training aid that cannot be recovered must be destroyed or otherwise rendered unfit for use.

XXIV. STATISTICAL REPORTS:

A. At the end of each month, each Canine Handler will submit one follow-up statistical report. At the end of each month the Canine Sergeant will compile, analyze and record all the statistics from the Canine Unit. These statistics will be submitted to the Community Response Division Commander. The report will include a combined unit monthly statistical cover sheet. Individual officer's statistics will be submitted to the Community Response Division Commander biannually. Bite ratio reports shall also be submitted to the Community Response Division Commander and the Internal Affairs Division.

XXV. REFERENCE:

- SOP # I-8 Assignment to Specialized Positions
- SOP # I-16 Ride Along Program.
- SOP # III-13 Use of Force.
- SOP # IV-22 Internal Affairs Function.

Police

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