



Lunenburg Police Department

Policy Number: 1.20	Subject: Canine (K-9)
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Issuing Authority: <i>Chief Thomas L. Gammel</i>	

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Because of their superior senses of smell and hearing, physical stamina and agility, trained law enforcement canines are a valuable supplement to police manpower. However, utilization of canines requires adherence to procedures that properly control their use-of-force potential and channel their specialized capabilities into legally-acceptable crime prevention and control activities.

Police dogs are not infallible. Their effectiveness depends largely upon the intelligent application of their capabilities. Police dogs react as trained to situations. Anyone making a sudden or threatening move toward the dog or handler risks the chance of the dog's engaging and causing injury.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a set of guidelines for the proper management and control of the department's canine team(s), as well as the use of police canine team(s) from other police agencies during daily and specialized operations.

This policy will familiarize department personnel with canine operating procedure and policy to ensure the best use of canine teams; the policy will also educate department supervisors on the appropriate uses of canine teams to ensure effective utilization and management in deployment situations.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Lunenburg Police Department to:

- A. Staff, train, deploy, and maintain a canine unit within the department to serve as a support unit in the field to enhance basic patrol and investigative functions. [41.1.4]
- B. Keep innocents, bystanders, and distractions away from canine teams while they work;
- C. Keep crime scenes and areas in which the canines are to deploy as free from contamination as possible;
- D. Provide support for canine teams requested under mutual aid;
- E. This department shall utilize regional police agencies' canine team(s) when it is felt that their use will aid in the apprehension of wanted or escaped persons, tracking, search and rescue operations, seizure of contraband, discovery of explosives, crowd control, locating articles, arson investigation, public relations demonstrations, and other needs of the department.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Police Canine (K9): A police dog that has received specialized training in, but not limited to narcotic detection, tracking, and other patrol tactics.
- B. Canine Team: A police officer/handler and a specially trained working dog working as a team.
- C. Passive Alert Dog: A canine which, when alerting to the presence of controlled substances or other material for which it is trained to search, sits, stands or lies down passively.
- D. Aggressive Alert: A canine which, when alerting to the presence of a controlled substance or other material for which it is trained to search, will dig at the source of odor.
- E. Tactical Authority: Transfer of command and authority for controlling and directing tactical assets within an assigned mission necessary to accomplish a task.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Canine Team Utilization

It is recognized that situations may arise that do not fall within the provisions set forth in this policy. In any such case, use a Police Canine will meet a standard of objective reasonableness, considering the totality of the circumstances. [41.1.4(a)]

1. Canine Handling

Only officers trained to handle a police canine and authorized by the Chief of Police may handle a canine. [41.1.4(a); 41.1.4(b)]

2. Availability

Canine teams should not be used to respond to minor complaints other than their own patrol responsibilities.

The teams may engage in assignments, not enumerated in this policy, with the approval of the shift supervisor (Sergeant).

3. Canine Team Deployment [41.4.4(a)]

- a. The decision to deploy a canine team is the decision of the shift supervisor (Sergeant). If a Sergeant is not available, and only if time permits, the officer in charge shall place a call down through the chain of command starting with the Lieutenant until notification has been made. If a ranking officer cannot be reached tactical authority is automatically transferred to the canine handler.
- b. The canine handler is responsible for determining whether a situation justifies canine use and the appropriate tactical measures that should be taken. The decision on how to deploy the canine team is a decision of the handler. The responsibility for the evaluation of risk and safety of the team lies with the Shift Supervisor (Sergeant), or if not available, and only if time permits, then it is the responsibility of the officer in charge to ensure that consultation is achieved down through the chain of command starting with the Lieutenant. If a ranking officer cannot be notified tactical authority is automatically transferred to the Canine Handler.
- c. If the situation justifies an immediate and fluid response by the Canine handler, e.g., child lost and in danger, violent fugitive on the run in a heavily populated area, and a shift supervisor is not available, then tactical authority is automatically transferred to the Canine Handler. Dispatch shall make notification down the chain of command as soon as possible during the deployment of the canine.
- d. If a Shift supervisor (Sergeant) disagrees with the handler's tactical assessment to deploy a canine; he may instruct the handler not to deploy the canine. When the handler disagrees with a Shift supervisor's tactical assessment to deploy a canine, the handler may choose not to deploy the canine.

4. Mutual Aid Requests

When another agency requests the use of the department's canine team:

- a. The dispatcher shall notify the shift supervisor (Sergeant) of the request and a brief description of the nature of the incident. If a Sergeant is not available a call shall be placed down through the chain of command starting with the Lieutenant.
- b. If the request is approved by the shift supervisor (Sergeant) an on-duty canine team will be assigned to respond to the requesting agency. If the canine team is off duty or unavailable then the request by another agency shall be denied unless the shift supervisor (Sergeant) determines that the request amounts to an extreme emergency or exigent circumstances prevail.

5. Responsibilities of Requesting Officer:

- a. Minimize noise and confusion at the scene to avoid exciting or distracting the canine.
- b. Do not follow or get close to a dog that is working, unless instructed to do so by the handler.

- c. Shut off vehicles in the area if feasible to minimize scent contamination by engine exhaust.
 - d. In the event that a resident has a pet at the scene, request that the owner remove the pet completely away from the area.
6. Building Search
- a. Attempt to determine if anyone may be lawfully in the building.
 - b. Secure the building to prevent entry by others and to prevent escape.
 - c. Determine the last known location of the suspect. Secure the area from any further scent contamination.
7. Tracking/Area Search
- a. Determine the last known location of the suspect. Secure the area from any further scent contamination.
 - b. Set up a perimeter to prevent the escape of the suspect. Secure the area from any further scent contamination.
8. Article Searches
- a. Secure the area where the articles are to be searched for to avoid any further scent contamination.
 - b. Leave items in plain view, undisturbed and in place, if possible, and point them out to the handler.
 - c. If articles must be recovered, advise the handler of what was recovered and where.
9. Approaching Canines
- a. Personnel shall not provoke, tease or abuse the canine.
 - b. Employees shall not approach the canine without the consent of the handler.
 - c. Employees shall not feed the canine without consent of the handler.
 - d. Employees shall not provide any commands to the canine.
 - e. Employees shall not show the canine to any person(s) without the consent of the handler.
 - f. Employees shall refrain from making any threatening gestures, engaging in horse play, or making any motions toward the handler while in the presence of the canine. Such actions may trigger a protective response from the canine.
 - g. The handler shall share in the responsibility of keeping personnel aware of these rules and shall report any violations.

B. Canine Operations [41.1.4(a)]

1. Crowd Control
- a. Due to the nature of crowd control situations the Canine (K9) will not be deployed unless an emergency circumstance arises, i.e. risk of serious bodily injury, that requires the use of a Canine (K9) team.
 - b. Canine teams shall not be used for crowd control at peaceful demonstrations.
 - c. The canine team shall allow open avenues of escape to the crowd.
 - d. Canines shall be restrained on a leash no longer than six-feet attached to a collar.

- e. Canines shall not be unleashed and sent into a crowd.
- 2. Drug Detection Canines [41.1.4(a); 41.1.4(b)]
 - a. The canine officer shall maintain records that document the use and the proficiency of individual canines in drug detection. This documentation shall be readily available to officers and others who may need it when seeking warrants.
- 3. Sniffing in Public Places [41.4.4(a)]
 - a. Random exploratory sniffing of luggage, packages or other inanimate objects may be conducted in public facilities such as airports or train stations, as authorized by the shift supervisor or other authorized commanding officer.
 - b. Exploratory sniffing in these facilities shall be confined solely to those areas open to the general public and, whenever possible, with the advance knowledge and consent of the appropriate facility manager.
 - c. Exploratory sniffing shall be conducted without interference or annoyance to the public or interruption of facility operations.
 - d. *Sniffing in Areas Restricted to the Public*: Canine sniffs conducted in areas restricted to the public, such as baggage staging areas, are considered searches and may be conducted only with reasonable suspicion or probable cause to believe that specific items contain illegal narcotics.
 - e. *Sniffing at Shipping Facilities*: Exploratory sniffing may be conducted on the premises of private shipping companies at the request of the facility manager and with the consent of the Chief of Police or his designee.
 - f. *Sniffing of Persons*: Sniffing of an individual's person is permitted only when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the individual is in possession of illegal narcotics. Sniffing may be conducted using a passive alert dog only.
- 4. Use of Drug Detection Canines in Schools [41.1.4(a)]

The use of drug detection canines in public schools is permitted only when:

 - a. The school's Superintendent or designated authority requests or approves use of the canines;
 - b. The school's Administrator or Principal has reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal narcotics are being possessed, distributed and/or consumed on the premises, such that the interests of the school are being unacceptably compromised; and
 - c. The search is limited to inanimate objects in public areas and the exterior of student lockers unless reasonable suspicion exists to gain admission to lockers and related areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.
- 5. Sniffs of the exterior of Residences [41.1.4(a)]
 - a. Sniffs of the exterior of residences, either individual dwellings or the common areas of multiple unit dwellings, are not permitted without a search warrant.
- 6. Motor Vehicle Searches with Drug Sniffing Dogs [41.1.4(a)]

Drug-sniffing canines may be used to sniff motor vehicles when:

 - a. Reasonable suspicion exists to believe the operator or passengers are in possession of illegal narcotics.

- b. During a valid vehicle stop, the use of a canine to sniff the vehicle's exterior in an exploratory manner is not a search. Unless the canine alerts to the vehicle, the operator may not be detained longer than necessary to conclude the business associated with the initial stop.
- c. Probable cause to search exists under the motor vehicle exception to the warrant requirement.
- d. Canines may be used in consent searches.
- e. Canines may assist in the execution of search warrants.

7. *Building Searches* [41.1.4(a)]

- a. When the responding officer believes an unauthorized person is in a building, no preliminary building search should be conducted. The officer's responsibility is to secure the building, permitting no one to enter, and to call a canine team, which will enter and search the building.
- b. Evacuate all tenants, workers and others from the facility.
- c. Request that all air conditioning, heating, or other air-blowing systems be shut off so as not to interfere with the canine's scent.
- d. Upon entrance to the building, all exits should be kept secured, and communications limited to those of a tactical nature.
- e. It will be the responsibility of the handler to determine whether or not the canine should be unleashed during a building search. Consideration will be given to the imminent risk of injury to innocent persons within the facility.
- f. Prior to the building search, the handler will verbally announce two warnings to anyone inside the building that a K-9 will be released to conduct a search. The handler will urge anyone inside the building to surrender at that time. If there is no response, the Canine Team will then conduct the initial search. This warning shall be repeated on each level of all multilevel structures.
- g. If, in the opinion of the handler, it is tactically unsafe to announce the presence of the canine team, and if the on-scene supervisor approves, the canine team may enter the building unannounced.
- h. When apprehending suspects, canines shall be removed or disengaged as soon as it is safe to do so.

NOTE: When a building has been closed for the night, the odors in the building tend to dissipate. When a person enters the building or opens a door or window, this allows a draft or wind to enter, disturbing the suspect's odor trail and spoiling the scene.

8. *Tracking* [41.1.4(a)]

- a. Humid, early morning hours with no wind offer ideal tracking conditions.
- b. Tracking on paved streets is difficult because of the odor of the pavement itself.
- c. Wind of twenty miles per hour or more or heavy rain, makes tracking difficult. Light rainfall frequently provides ideal tracking conditions.
- d. If officers are pursuing or searching for a suspect and contact with the suspect is lost, prior to summoning a canine team the officers should try to pinpoint the location where the suspect was last seen, and avoid vehicle or foot movement in that area.
- e. Back up officers should not respond to the scene. Back up officer should position themselves around the perimeter of the incident to contain the suspect in the search area.

- f. It is important that the responding officer make certain that no person enters the area used by the suspect to make his departure. Since the subject's odor will be predominant, the entire scene must be free of other contamination. Generally, dogs may be capable of detecting a scent several hours after the suspect has left the area if the scene has not been contaminated.
 - g. If material has been dropped by the fleeing suspect, such material and the surrounding area must not be contaminated, since a dog may detect the suspect's odor from the material.
 - h. Canines used for tracking persons should remain on a leash of sufficient length to provide a reasonable measure of safety to the subject of the search without compromising the canine's tracking abilities. The canine handler may decide to track "off-lead" where the threat level to police officers is high.
9. Role of Back-Up Officers
- a. The canine team handler may request a back-up officer.
 - b. A back-up officer's primary responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:
 - i. The back-up officer(s) should remain close to the handler in a position determined by the handler.
 - ii. The back-up officer(s) shall be responsible for all communication between the canine team, on-scene supervisor, and the perimeter officers.
 - iii. The back-up officer(s) should not go ahead of the canine team unless directed to do so by the handler.
 - iv. The back-up officer(s) may not become physically involved with any suspect(s) unless requested to do so by the police officer/handler.
 - v. The back-up officer(s) shall respond to the police officer/handler's request and instructions while involved in the operation. The police officer/handler is in charge of the canine team(s) during the operation.
 - c. Once instructed to do so, it shall be the responsibility of the back-up officer(s) to search the suspect, and remove the suspect from the scene.
 - d. In case of injury to the police officer/handler, the back-up officer is responsible for obtaining help, and being aware of the canine.
10. Canine Warning
- a. A "Canine Warning" should be given prior to releasing the dog unless, in the opinion of the handler, doing so would cause undue risk to the canine team, its presence or intention.
 - b. The canine warning should consist of the following or similar announcement, "This is the police canine team, speak to me now/stop now, or I will send the dog."
 - c. The police officer should deliver more than one warning to ensure that the suspect has received ample warning that the canine will be used to apprehend him/her.
 - d. A warning not only allows a suspect time to surrender; it also alerts any innocent persons of the canine team's presence and intention.
 - e. At NO time shall the canine team use the canine to affect the arrest of a person, who cannot harm the canine handler/officer or other officers, resist officer(s), nor to intimidate, coerce or frighten the suspect(s).

C. Canine Program Administration

1. Canine Bites

- a. Whenever a canine bites an individual, whether or not the canine was acting in the line of duty, the handler shall:
 - i. Examine the injury to determine the seriousness of the bite(s).
 - ii. Obtain medical treatment for the injured person.
 - iii. Notify the shift supervisor, (Sergeant) or if not available, within a reasonable amount of time.
 - iv. Ensure that color photographs are taken of the injured person showing the injury, affected body areas, and face (for identification purposes).
- b. Reports shall be made for all canine bites regardless of the severity or circumstances surrounding the bite(s).
- c. The handler is responsible for completing a supplementary report to the original incident report.
- d. A Use of Force report shall be completed if the canine was used for an apprehension.
- e. The Lieutenant shall conduct an investigation and submit the findings to the Chief of Police.

2. After Incident Utilization Report

- a. Following the completion of each incident where a canine is deployed, the handler will complete a utilization report detailing the significant events of the deployment as they relate to the use of the canine.
- b. Such records shall be maintained to document the canine's reliability as well as the handler's experience.

3. Requirements for Canine Handler [41.1.4(b); 41.1.4(c)]

Requirements for Canine Handler included:

- a. A minimum of two years of full time law enforcement experience with satisfactory work performance, disciplinary and medical leave records.
- b. Being physically capable of performing the rigorous duties of a dog handler.
- c. Being able to work with a minimum of supervision and being willing to take on the responsibilities and risks that the position entails.
- d. Having the ability to provide the proper motivation for the K-9, both verbally and physically.
- e. Commitment to devote some personal time to maintenance, training, care and socialization of the K-9.
- f. Ability to be on call when a canine team is needed, thereby being available to assist, support and cooperate with other departments and personnel.
- g. Having family support to have a police working dog with a secure outdoor area for the canine that conforms to accepted K-9 requirements at the home.
- h. Making a commitment to remain the handler of the canine for at least five years, preferably for the remainder of the dog's working life.
- i. Possessing a strong desire to work with canines and willingness to care for and train the animal; and
- j. Being able to put the working dog's well-being and physical comfort above his/her own.

4. Training for Canine Handler [41.1.4(b)]

- a. Officers assigned as canine handlers shall attend and successfully complete a prescribed training program for handling and caring for the police working dog, with specialized training in the dog's specific discipline (patrol, narcotics detection, tracking, etc.).
- b. The canine team supervisor shall ensure that the teams receive at least the minimum training necessary to perform their duties and to maintain current certification.
- c. Canine handlers shall have at least one day of training per month in each specialty and discussions regarding legal updates.
- d. Handlers shall earn annual certification in each specialty from an independent, nationally recognized organization.
- e. They shall participate in other training programs as appropriate.
- f. The supervisor should also be familiar with canine procedures, receive training on legal updates and attend canine-related training programs as appropriate.

5. Training for Canine [41.1.4(b)]

- a. The canine must be properly trained and certified prior to being officially assigned to patrol duty and must maintain such certification to remain on duty. All training shall be documented.
- b. In order to maintain the canine's proficiency and certification in detector dogs, it shall be necessary that the handlers have access to appropriate training aids (controlled substances, explosives, etc.). Canine handlers shall be permitted to possess the types of substances the canines are trained to detect in the performance of their duties.
- c. Training aids should be obtained from an appropriate source (DEA, etc.). They shall be stored in an approved container and in a manner that will prevent odor cross contamination and ensure the safety and security of the training aid.
- d. The Shift supervisor, (Sergeant) shall maintain a logbook for the purposes of logging the controlled substances in and out.
- e. The Shift supervisor, (Sergeant) shall conduct a monthly inspection and inventory of all training aids stored by the canine teams for training purposes.
- f. The Chief or his/her designee may conduct unannounced inspections of the controlled substances stored by the canine teams for training purposes at any time.
- g. In the event any controlled training aid used by the canine team is lost or destroyed during training or while in the possession of the handler, the handler shall notify the canine team supervisor or his/her designee as soon as possible.
- h. A report shall be completed by the handler. A copy of the case report shall be forwarded to the Lieutenant for further review or investigation as determined by the Chief of Police.
- i. Controlled training aids shall not be destroyed or disposed of by the canine handlers. They shall be returned to the issuing agency, where they can be replaced.

6. Use of Decoys

- a. No person shall act as a decoy for training patrol canines unless that person is approved by the Canine Handler. This shall not apply to decoys provided by outside training vendors or agencies.

- b. Decoys shall wear the appropriate safety equipment for the training task at hand, as determined by the handler.
- c. Persons may be used to assist in training tracking dogs at the discretion of the handler.

7. Requirements for Canines

- a. The dog(s) assigned to the canine unit are the property of the police department.
- b. No dog will be used for breeding purposes, participation in shows, field trials, exhibitions or other demonstrations unless authorized by the Chief or his/her designee.
- c. Department canines shall not be used for off-duty employment or police details without approval of the Chief.
- d. No dog that has been trained as a "guard dog" (one that will attack on detection of intrusion, or will attack a human being without command) will be acceptable for utilization by this agency.
- e. Any dog utilized by this department that exhibits a tendency to be uncontrollable by the handler, or poses a threat to an individual or public safety shall be removed from service.
- f. Should the handler retire; be promoted, reassigned, or relieved from the program for any reason; or should the canine be retired, injured or relieved of duty for any reason, the canine may be reassigned to another handler, removed from duty, or ownership may be transferred to the handler or otherwise disposed of at the discretion of the Chief.

8. Canine Care [41.1.4(c)]

- a. Police canines shall not be used for breeding, participation in shows, field trials, exhibitions or other demonstrations, or for off-duty employment unless authorized by the Chief or his/her designee.
- b. Canine handlers are personally responsible for the daily care and feeding of their animal including:
 - i. Maintenance and cleaning of the kennel and yard area where the canine is housed;
 - ii. Provision of food, water and general diet maintenance as prescribed by the department-authorized veterinarian;
 - iii. Grooming on a daily basis, or more often as required by weather, working conditions or other factors;
 - iv. Daily exercise (police canines are not permitted to run at large); and
 - v. General medical attention and maintenance of health care records.
- c. Where the handler is unable to perform these and related duties due to illness, injury or leave, the following may occur:
 - i. Another canine handler may be assigned to temporarily care for the dog; or
 - ii. The canine may be housed in a department-approved kennel when the handler is unavailable.
- d. Teasing, agitating or roughhousing with a police canine is strictly prohibited unless performed as part of a training exercise.
- e. Handlers shall not permit anyone to pet or hug their canine without their prior permission and immediate supervision. Should a civilian express a desire to do so, [s]he should be informed that police canines are serious working dogs and that they can be dangerous if improperly approached.
- f. A canine handler may have first refusal to take possession of his/her dog under such circumstances as:

- i. The dog is retired from duty or relieved due to injury; or
- ii. The handler is transferred, promoted or retires, and a decision is made not to retrain the dog for another handler.

9. Equipment [41.1.4(d)]

Specialized canine equipment shall be furnished by the department.

- a. The following equipment shall be provided to each Canine Team:
 - i. Six foot leash;
 - ii. Choke collar;
 - iii. Flat, correction pinch and/or electronic collars as needed;
 - iv. Fifteen foot tracking line;
 - v. Thirty foot tracking line (optional);
 - vi. Tacking harness (optional);
 - vii. Slicker brush and rake comb;
 - viii. Nail Clippers;
 - ix. Ear and teeth cleaning supplies;
 - x. Water/food bowl;
 - xi. Food (supplied at the expense of the department); and
 - xii. Medications and supplements as determined by the department veterinarian.
- b. The handler shall be responsible for, inventory, maintenance and inspection of this equipment.

10. Injury to Canine

- a. Should a canine be injured, the handler shall provide and arrange for the appropriate emergency medical care for the canine.
- b. The handler shall notify the shift supervisor, (Sergeant).
- c. The handler shall complete a report to the Chief or his/her designee providing the details of the event and injury.

11. Injury to the Handler

- a. In the event that the handler is injured, incapacitated or killed, the following procedure will be followed:
 - i. DO NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, approach the dog that is protecting the injured handler or attempt to assist the officer, unless it is apparent that the failure to respond to the officer would result in death or serious bodily injury.
 - ii. Allow the handler to secure the dog if possible. Follow the instructions of the handler regarding ways to render aid.
 - iii. The dog may be lured into the K-9 vehicle or secured using snares and safety equipment.
 - iv. If feasible, make contact with another handler to remove the dog or control its actions.
 - v. Perform other reasonable actions which allow aid to the injured handler while minimizing injury to the canine.
 - vi. In the unlikely event that all other efforts to respond to the emergency needs of the officer fail, if time permits, contact the department's approved veterinarian, and attempt to tranquilize the dog. If those efforts are unsuccessful, and the officer

is in imminent danger of losing his/her life or compounding an existing injury, the K-9 should be neutralized. If it becomes necessary to shoot the dog, place the shot carefully in order to reduce the animal's suffering. The dog is dutifully protecting its handler. Although this action may seem heartless, human life comes first.

12. Canine Vehicles [41.1.4(d)]

- a. Except under certain circumstances, and then only with the permission of the Shift Supervisor, (Sergeant) the K-9 vehicle is reserved exclusively for use by the department's canine handler who shall be responsible for its proper maintenance and cleanliness.
- b. The Canine vehicle shall be marked, "K-9" in a conspicuous location.
- c. The K-9 vehicle will be specially designed for the canine and handler. The vehicle will include a remote control release mechanism which allows the canine to be released from the vehicle. The rear compartment will be equipped with an interior container specially modified for canine transport.
- d. An interior temperature monitor will be installed.
- e. Window tint will be installed on the rear window and rear door glass of the vehicle.
- f. Arrestees shall not be transported in a vehicle with a police canine unless alternative transportation is not available and immediate transport is essential for safety or security reasons.
- g. Other individuals may be permitted to ride in the K-9 vehicle consistent with departmental rules & regulations, policies & procedures.
- h. If another officer or citizen is transported in the front passenger seat, the cage window will be closed and latched for safety.
- i. No animals other than department owned Canines will be permitted inside the K-9 vehicle. Transporting other animals in the vehicle will increase the potential for the canine to contract various diseases.