



## K-9 POLICY



### **PURPOSE:**

To establish policy governing the duties and responsibilities of the K-9 Team(s) within the Cleveland Heights Police Department.

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### Definitions:

- Sitting position - situation when the K-9 handler is exercising total control over his dog. The dog can be in an actual sitting position next to the handler or on the two foot lead when moving.
- Watch position – is intended to mean when the K-9 handler has alerted his dog and has extended the dog on the two foot lead. This should be the only position where the assumption is that dog bites may occur. The two foot lead ensures total control.

#### A. General Uses of the K-9 Teams

The K-9 Team can be utilized, but not limited to, the following incidents:

- Patrol
- Burglaries
- Suspicious Alarms
- Tracking Suspects
- Missing or Lost Persons
- Narcotics Searches
- Crimes in Progress
- Prowler and Peeping Tom Calls

#### B. Requests for K-9 Teams/Officer

The decision to use the K-9 Team shall be the responsibility of the Officer-in-Charge after consulting with the dog handler. The K-9 handler shall be in control of the scene as long as a dog is being used.

Officers in the field requesting the use of the K-9 Team must obtain authorization from the Officer-in-Charge.

#### C. Requests for K-9 Teams by Other Police Agencies

The OIC may approve the use of a K-9 team by an agency from an adjacent community for serious calls for service (i.e. lost child search, felony suspect search). Requests for K-9 teams by adjacent agencies for other purposes must be approved by the Chief of Police or his designee. Requests by agencies not adjacent to the City of Cleveland Heights must be approved by the Chief of Police or his designee.

Any K-9 team responding to a request for assistance from another law enforcement agency will insure there are significant facts, reasonable suspicion or probable cause for the use of the K-9. K-9 handler will document their K-9 team's assistance to another law enforcement agency, including the reason for request, significant facts, reasonable suspicion, or probable cause.

The K-9 Team may be used for an off duty detail with the permission of the Chief of Police. The dog must be transported in the specially adapted K-9 vehicle.

D. Types of Searches

- Crimes in progress call - the perimeter is established first. The K-9 Team and one responding unit shall respond directly to the location of the occurrence.
- Building searches - the exterior of the building shall be secured immediately and a K-9 Team called. Except in emergency situations, no one may enter the building prior to the arrival of the K-9 Team. The handler shall decide on how many back-ups shall be inside during the search.
- Area search - the initial units responding shall establish a perimeter around the immediate area. Officers shall stay inside their vehicles or downwind of the area to be searched in order not to contaminate the scene. The K-9 Team and one backup officer shall enter the area first and commence the search.

E. Announcement Prior to K-9 Search

Prior to commencement of a building or area search, an officer shall make an announcement in loud and clear voice to make the suspect and bystanders aware of the search. The following announcement is standard for all dog handlers: "This is the Cleveland Heights Police Department. Tell the nearest police officer that you are going to surrender. The area will be searched by a police dog. If you do not come out immediately, you may be bit."

F. Guidelines for Use of K-9 during Routine Traffic Stops

- The use of a K-9 during a routine traffic stop shall not last longer than is necessary to resolve the issue that led to the stop and the issuance of the traffic citation, unless the officer can articulate suspicion of criminal activity, other than the traffic violation itself.
- If the duration of the traffic stop is extended beyond what a reasonable traffic stop would take to complete in order to bring a drug-sniffing dog to the scene, the officer must have reasonable suspicion that the vehicle contains drugs.
- If a K-9 alerts to the potential presence of a controlled substance or contraband during a vehicle stop, an immediate search can be conducted of the vehicle to secure or seize contraband. A search conducted on the street will not exceed the search procedures outlined in the Cleveland Heights Police Vehicle Inventory Policy. Any search requiring advanced mechanical manipulation of a vehicle, or its structure, will be conducted after the vehicle is seized, and a search warrant obtained.
- If the vehicle is seized pursuant to some traffic violation, or incident to arrest, and is in the possession of the Cleveland Heights Police Department, a search warrant should be obtained if additional search is requested.
- It will be the responsibility of the K-9 handler to insure that the use of a K-9 during any routine traffic stop is fully and accurately documented.
  - a. If no arrest or seizure is made, a CAD entry will be used to document the incident. The necessary police report will be completed if an arrest or seizure results from the use of a police K-9.

#### G. Special K-9 Uses

It is recognized that K-9 Teams can be used effectively in controlling and moving large groups of people, be they orderly or unruly. Therefore, it is the intention of the Cleveland Heights Police Department to utilize K-9 Teams in crowd control situations. The utilization of K-9 Teams in crowd control situations obviously constitutes a show of force. Common sense must prevail. Under the following circumstances, the use of K-9 Teams for crowd control shall be acceptable.

- When, in the opinion of a supervisor, it is immediately necessary in order to prevent injury to a police officer.
- When, in the opinion of a supervisor, it is necessary to prevent or avoid injury to a police officer or citizen in the community.
- When, in the opinion of a supervisor, the presence of K-9 Teams shall prevent or deter a serious breach of the peace.
- On approval of the Chief of Police, when specifically requested at any event where very large crowds are anticipated.
- The supervisor, when on the scene, with the assistance of the senior K-9 officer, shall assume authority over and responsibility of all K-9 Teams responding.
- When K-9 Teams are requested to prevent serious injury to an officer, the dogs shall be utilized in the watch position at the end of a two foot lead.
- When K-9 Teams are requested to prevent or deter a serious breach of the peace, the dogs shall be deployed at a sitting position in a line formation, being highly visible.
- When K-9 Teams are requested for specific events and permission is granted by the Chief of Police, the dogs shall be deployed at a sitting position in a specific assignment that would provide maximum visibility.
- K-9 Teams shall always be used in conjunction with other police officers in a coordinated effort.

#### H. K-9 Demonstrations

The purpose for K-9 demonstrations is two-fold. First, it allows the education of the public on the modern day use of the police work dog. Secondly, it helps promote relations between the community and the police.

In order to enhance community relations, yet at the same time protect the officers and their dogs from strenuous schedules, the following guidelines shall be strictly adhered to by the Department.

##### 1. Basic Program Requirements

- Demonstrations may be given before any type or age group.
- Travel distance shall not exceed the limits of Cleveland Heights unless approved by the Chief of Police.

- If the program is outside the jurisdiction of the Police Department, the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction shall be advised of the demonstration and invited to attend.
2. Handler Requirements
- All demonstrations must be approved by the Chief of Police.
  - When the program is in another law enforcement agency's jurisdiction, that agency shall be contacted and the person's name that represents that agency shall appear on the demonstration report.
3. Miscellaneous Provisions
- The number of demonstrations shall be kept to a minimum so as to not adversely affect the duty schedule and well-being of the handler or the work dog.
- I. Situations Where the K-9 Team Should Not Be Used  
 Building or ground searches where there are substances that may be harmful to the dog or handler. Any situation where the Officer-in-Charge, after consultation with the handler, determines that the dog or handler will be subjected to unavoidable injury.
- J. K-9 Handler Injury  
 In the event that the K-9 handler is injured, the following steps shall be taken should the dog become aggressive in the protection of his handler:
- Do not approach the dog or handler;
  - Do not attempt to give first aid unless the handler's life may be in danger;
  - Attempt to have the handler secure his dog in his vehicle;
  - Once the dog has been secured, first aid can be administered;
  - Should the handler be unconscious or otherwise unable to control his dog, attempt to draw the dog away from the handler with a sleeve and into the back seat of another cruiser. Contact a family member or another handler for assistance if the dog does not respond. As a last resort, the dog can be destroyed in an effort to administer lifesaving first aid or medical treatment.
- K. Officer Conduct in the Presence of a K-9
- Under no circumstances shall another officer strike a handler or engage in any horseplay. You must remember that the dog has been trained to protect his handler with his life.
  - No officer other than the handler shall do any of the following:
    1. Strike or discipline a K-9;
    2. Give a dog a command;
    3. Feed the dog without the handlers permission; or

4. Play with the dog without the handler's permission or without the handler present.

L. Guidelines for Bite Situations

K-9 handlers and supervisors are to familiarize themselves with these guidelines and abide by them:

1. The following are considered bite situations:
  - Handler assaulted;
  - Dog assaulted;
  - To stop a person escaping who the officer has probable cause to arrest for a felony offense;
  - To prevent injury to an officer, citizen or handler;
  - Gunfire;
  - and Unauthorized entry into the K-9 vehicle.
2. The following conditions are situations where the usage of the K-9's are not justified:
  - To effect the arrest of a highly intoxicated or feeble person who obviously cannot escape or resist the officer; or
  - To intimidate, coerce, or frighten a suspect.
3. When a police work dog bites an arrestee, the handler shall:
  - Render first aid if necessary;
  - Have identification pictures taken of the area of the body where the offender was bitten as well as an overall picture which shows not only the bite but the subject's face as well. This may be done at the station or the hospital, but must be done before treatment. The photographs shall become part of the case; and
  - Prepare detailed report reference circumstances of bite.
4. In case of an accidental bite, the handler shall:
  - Administer first aid;
  - Have identification photographs taken of the area bitten before treatment;
  - The handler shall make no statement pertaining to liability or fault in the matter;
  - Write an incident report;
  - Immediately notify the Officer-in-Charge who shall in turn notify the Chief of Police; and
  - If the bite occurs outside the jurisdiction of the Cleveland Heights Police Department, the handler shall follow the same procedures as if the bite occurred in Cleveland Heights. The handler shall notify the appropriate agency and obtain a copy of their report as soon as possible

M. Duties and Responsibilities of K-9 Handlers

The K-9 handler shall maintain a police work dog and due to the scope of their work, the K-9 Team is subject to call at any time.

K-9 handlers are Police Officers first. They shall abide by the rules and regulations, orders and directives of the Chief of Police.

While on patrol, K-9 handlers shall enforce all State laws and City ordinances. They shall maintain radio contact at all times so the team can respond quickly when needed.

N. Duty Hours and Dress

The hours of the K-9 Team will be assigned to meet Department needs.

The handler shall wear his uniform in accordance with the uniform guidelines established by the Chief of Police. Coveralls may be worn as deemed necessary by terrain, weather conditions or assignment.

O. Care of Dogs

The following are the responsibilities of the K-9 handler in the care of his assigned dog:

- Feeding - the dog should be fed according to the K-9's eating habits;

1. Veterinarian Procedures

In the event that a City work dog requires veterinarian care, the handler is to make an appointment before taking his dog to the veterinarian. After the appointment the dog handler is required to notify the Officer-in-Charge of any symptoms of ill health of his dog. Emergency care shall be handled as the situation dictates.

If the dog is too ill or injured to work on a tour of duty, the Officer-in-Charge is to be immediately notified.

P. K-9 Use on duty

- The K-9 should be under control at all times by its handler.
- The K-9 should be under control in all buildings and business establishments when not working. The leash shall be used at the handler's discretion.
- The K-9 should not be taken into taverns or places that serve food unless on official business.
- The K-9 should not ride in the front seat of a City vehicle.
- The K-9 can only be relieved from duty by an order from a veterinarian, the Office-in-Charge, or Chief of Police.

Q. K-9 Off Duty

1. The handler must maintain clean and suitable quarters for his dog.
2. The K-9 must be under control at all times so that it will not cause any problems in the neighborhood of his residence.
3. The handler shall be responsible for paying any and all fines if he is cited into a court of law for the following reasons:
  - Running at large;
  - Noise violations;
  - Inhumane treatment; or
  - Deliberate misuse of the dog.

R. K-9 Work Equipment

The handler shall be responsible for maintaining all issued equipment in proper working condition.

S. K-9 Training

It shall be the responsibility of the K-9 handler to train and maintain his dog to ensure its maximum effectiveness and utilization. A monthly training summary shall be forwarded to the Deputy Chief. The summary should include what training the dog had received, how many hours were spent on training, and the dog's performance.

K-9 handlers shall be responsible for maintaining their certification. The certification testing must be completed every two years. Upon completion, a copy of the documentation shall be forwarded to the Deputy Chief.

T. Reports Used by the K-9 Handler

1. Monthly K-9 Statistics Report

- This is a summary report of the total K-9 activities performed during the month, the location of the assignments, type of assignments, and disposition of assignments.

2. Monthly K-9 Activity Report

- This report provides a narrative description of the activities summarized in the Monthly K-9 Statistics Report. It is used to record details of all activities performed by the dog during its daily tour of duty for the handler's records.