**SAMPLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Canine Unit**

NOTE: The following guidelines address both safety and policy and are for internal use only. This document does not nor is intended to enlarge an employee’s civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third-party claims. Violations of these guidelines if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

**I. PURPOSE**

To establish policy and procedures for the operation of the SAMPLE Police Department Canine Unit including ownership, care, training and certification, handler responsibilities; uses and deployment, including documentation of use; and other specific procedures.

**II. DEFINITIONS:**

A. Canine Team: A trained handler/officer and a trained command-controlled dog, utilized in a manner consistent with their training and certification.

**III. POLICY**

1. This department will authorize and establish police canine teams for use by law enforcement personnel and the public to further community and department objectives.
2. Canine teams will be utilized in a professional, intelligent manner designed to make the best use of their unique capabilities. Properly trained canine teams will be employed to supplement patrol and investigative functions.

**IV.PROCEDURE**

1. Canine Ownership and Disposal
2. All Police Canines are the property of the SAMPLE Police Department and will not be used for purposes other than official duties.
3. The canines will not be registered with any society or organization unless directly related to departmental use.
4. Canine Care, Veterinary Services
5. All department canines are examined according to a schedule arranged by a veterinarian selected by the department. The veterinarian will administer to all medical needs and any treatment given will be by their order only.
6. Handlers, in an extreme emergency only, may take the canine to the nearest available veterinarian for treatment. In all instances, the extent of the illness or injury will immediately be communicated to the department veterinarian.
7. Veterinary services are available on- or off-duty. Permission will be obtained from the Chief of Police or his/her designee. Time spent at the veterinary service off-duty will be considered compensatory time earned and compensated at the appropriate rate.
8. Annual Leave, Sickness
9. When a handler takes annual leave or is unfit for duty, the canine may be kenneled at the veterinary service permitted by the city.
10. In the event the canine becomes ill or is unfit for duty, the handler will notify the department veterinarian, his/her supervisor, and the Chief of Police, explaining the circumstances. The handler will then report for regular duty.
11. Handlers needing to kennel the canine will request approval from their supervisor after providing the reason for kenneling and the expected number of days to their supervisor. The supervisor will forward the information to the Chief of Police.

D. Home Care

1. Canine handlers will in accordance with FLSA guidelines be allowed 30 minutes per day (3.5 additional hours pay per week) to accomplish home care duties.
2. Canines will be kept at the handler’s residence. Food, kennel, medical requirements, and equipment, such as muzzles, collars, other restraint devices, training apparatus, vehicle compartment modifications, and any other necessary and approved equipment related to the canine will be provided by the department.
3. Each handler is responsible for the well-being and daily care of the canine and will be trained to monitor the general health and condition of the canine. The kennel will be cleaned daily. The canine feed bowl and water bucket will be cleaned weekly with disinfecting solution. The canine house will be cleaned as needed, not less than quarterly.
4. Training
5. Officers assigned to the Canine Team will successfully complete an approved course of training before assignment. The training will be conducted by an accredited law enforcement canine training facility with the properly documented “chain of training” accepted in federal court.
6. Handlers and canines will be provided documented in-service training as determined by the Chief of Police. Handlers must also conduct on-going, self-initiated training to ensure maximum performance of their canine. Training for the canine will be in the discipline(s) in which each canine is trained and certified.
7. Based on a demonstrated need, canine teams may attend outside training facilities to increase effectiveness and efficiency in order to meet department goals. This will be subject to approval by the Chief of Police.
8. Operations

Proper use of the canine unit will increase effectiveness in the detection and prevention of crime as well as the apprehension of criminals. The Canine Team will adhere to the following operational guidelines:

1. General Guidelines
2. No persons, other than canine handlers, will control, use, or handle department canines.
3. During patrol, the canine will remain secure in the vehicle kennel. The handler will not allow the canine access to other areas of the vehicle unless in the performance of duty.
4. Before beginning a track or search, the Handler or immediate supervisor will designate a second officer to accompany him/her to provide security.
5. Once an arrest is made by a canine officer, the suspect will be turned over to the officer requesting canine assistance.
6. If the canine handler becomes incapacitated, officers at the scene may take necessary action to restrain the canine.
7. Canine teams may be utilized for crowd control ONLY when authorized by the on-scene supervisor.
8. Call-Out Procedures
9. A request for canine services may be made by any police officer at the scene of an incident. Request should be approved by on duty supervisor. Request for use of a canine should be made through the Communications Center.
10. At the time the canine team is requested, the handler should be advised of the nature and location of the incident, the type of canine services desired and the officer in charge at the scene.
11. Upon arrival of the canine team, the investigating officer will ensure that the handler is fully advised of the circumstances surrounding the incident.
12. Building Searches
13. When responding to alarms, open windows or doors and the responding officer’s investigation reveals the possibility of a suspect still in the building, he/she will establish a perimeter to secure the crime scene.
14. If it is believed that an armed and dangerous person may be hiding in the building, the supervisor will determine if the Canine Team will be utilized or if any other specialized unit will be called.
15. If a controlled, on or off leash search is conducted; the handler may request additional officers to accompany him into the building.
16. Canine Warning
17. No canine will be used in a building without verbal warnings being given if it can be done without jeopardizing the handler’s safety.
18. Using a patrol vehicle public address system, bullhorn, or loudspeaker, if possible, the handler will identify himself, give instructions for surrender and give notification that a trained police canine will be released if the occupants fail to surrender according to instructions.
19. A warning will be given twice prior to releasing a canine into the building.
20. The canine handler will use the police radio and public address system at the same time so that the warning will be recorded.
21. Handlers shall have body-worn cameras activated at all times while working their canines.
22. Tracking Operations
23. The following factors must be present in order to conduct a successful tracking operation:
24. By eyewitness account or positive interference, the handler must be able to determine the path taken by the suspect or person to be tracked. The path should be free and clear of contamination by other people. This includes emergency response and other vehicles idling emitting exhaust in the area to be searched.
25. On a criminal suspect track, the immediate establishment of a crime scene perimeter may be the single most important factor that determines success or failure. The investigating officer is responsible for establishing the perimeter.
26. When tracking a suspect, the canine team will be accompanied by at least one other officer who will keep other units advised of the direction and progress of the track and protect the handler. Other officers should remain out of the area to avoid contamination.
27. Article Search
28. A canine team may be requested if there is reason to believe that a suspect has discarded evidence by dropping the item while in flight or has attempted to hide the item in a field, wooded or other open area.
29. Narcotics Search
30. The handler will be responsible for confirming that the requesting officer has obtained either consent to search or has probable cause prior to any search.
31. Search Warrant Execution
32. When requested to assist on a narcotic search warrant, the canine handler will be given as much advance notice as possible as to the type of search, whether residential, open field, or vehicle and the type of narcotics expected to be found.
33. When executing a search warrant, officers will secure the scene, contain all persons present in a common area and make no search other than for weapons. Once secured and the search warrant served, the canine team will enter and begin the search. As the search progresses, people present will be moved to a secured area already searched by the canine team. Once the team has cleared an area or room, officers will conduct a secondary search.
34. Vehicle Search
35. When there is a request for a vehicle search, the officer at the scene will not search the vehicle before the canine team arrives. The investigating officer at the scene will secure the vehicle. When a canine team is searching a vehicle, the suspect(s) will be secured until the search is completed.
36. Canine Use of Force
37. Handler Responsibilities
38. Handlers are aware that a police officer may use only the amount of force necessary to make an arrest and that the use of the canine under such circumstances constitutes the use of force, or the implied use of force. In determining the degree of force to be used, the handler must take into consideration the totality of existing circumstances such as officer safety and the level of threat to officers and citizens.
39. Handlers must also bear in mind that in responding to a request for a canine team, they are responsible for determining whether use of the canine is justified and feasible under present conditions. In each case a Use of Force Form will be completed.
40. Handlers will decline to conduct a specific canine operation when, in their opinion, such an operation is outside the capacity of the canine or would present unnecessary and unacceptable danger to the handler, canine or other personnel present.
41. The use of a police canine is not regarded as deadly force; however, the utmost discretion will be used when releasing a police canine to apprehend a suspect. Before releasing the canine to apprehend a criminal suspect, the handler will determine that the release of the canine is appropriate and within departmental guidelines, that verbal control can be maintained, and that innocent bystanders will not be endangered.
42. Handlers will work off leash in the following situations:
43. To protect a citizen or police officer from physical injury.
44. The accused has committed a crime of violence or other serious felony and poses a serious threat to the safety of the officer or community.
45. To search a building to locate a criminal.
46. To guard and restrain a suspect(s) under arrest to prevent flight.
47. Handlers will immediately notify their immediate supervisor when the canine bites or causes injury to any person, whether on or off duty, regardless of the location of the incident and complete the required documentation, such as an I/O report.
48. Handlers will notify their immediate supervisor, photograph, and document on an I/O report any property damage caused by canine use.
49. Supervisor Responsibilities
50. The immediate supervisor will respond to the scene.
51. When a police canine has bitten a person, the immediate supervisor will ensure the victim receives prompt medical attention.
52. The supervisor will conduct a thorough investigation of the incident.
53. All bites and abrasions will be photographed.
54. Tears in the clothing of a suspect or other citizen(s) attributed to the canine will also be photographed.
55. The handler will complete a Use of Force Report Form.
56. Mutual Aid
	* 1. Canine services will be provided for mutual aid assistance only when authorized by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
57. Special Events
58. Requests for special canine demonstrations will be screened and are subject to approval by the Chief of Police or his/her designee. The Chief of Police has the responsibility to regulate the activities of canine demonstrations.
59. Records/Reports
60. Handlers are responsible for completing reports pertaining to their duties. The canine report may serve as a supplement to the investigation when the handler is not the action officer.
61. Handlers are responsible for filing and maintaining all training logs, training certificates, health records and other pertinent documentation regarding their assigned canine. The department will maintain separate files for each canine.
62. If a canine is used to apprehend a suspect or any other contact occurs with the suspect, an incident report, and Use of Force Form will be completed as soon as possible. Minor physical contact with a suspect could later become a claim of injury.
63. Canine Contact/Property Damage Report shall be completed on all other incidents involving the canine outside of normal handler calls for service. The report will include the following information:
64. Description of the incident.
65. Photographs
66. Witness information (name, address, telephone)
67. Victim information (name, address, telephone)
68. Location of contact (i.e., arm, leg, etc.)
69. Information on how many injuries due to contact with the canine occurred (i.e., from being bit or scratched, knocked down, etc.)
70. Medical treatment provided (including treating physician’s name, hospital, etc.)
71. Date and time of contact.
72. The canine’s license tag number.
73. A copy of the canine’s rabies certificate.
74. Photographs

All injuries/property damage due to contact will be photographed. If the area to be photographed requires removal of clothing or exposure of undergarments or genitalia, the guidelines established in the Strip Search/Body Cavity Search shall be followed.

1. Prohibited
2. Employees will not tease, pet, or feed any police canine without the consent of the handler. Only at the discretion of the handler will others be permitted to pet or come into contact with their canine.
3. Employees will refrain from any horseplay with the handler in the canine’s presence.
4. Handlers will not demonstrate the canine’s ability to react unless in the line of duty, training, or department approved public demonstration.
5. Handlers will attempt to prevent their canine from soiling public or private property.
6. Use of Canine on School Grounds
7. The SAMPLE Board of Education will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a mutually acceptable policy and procedure for the use of trained narcotics dogs to detect the presence of illegal or unauthorized controlled substance on school grounds. The terms of the agreement apply to SAMPLE High School and SAMPLE Middle School. It shall not apply to the elementary grades of either school. Either party may terminate this agreement at any time. All SAMPLE Police Department personnel will comply with the written agreement.
8. Procedure:
9. Training / Certification: The SAMPLE Police Department will ensure that all handlers and canines employed for the purposes of the Memorandum of Understanding have been properly trained and certified in detecting controlled substances, and they will maintain the requisite documentation. This includes canine assistance from other agencies.
10. Annual Notification: The school will ensure that all students and their parents or guardians are notified in writing each school year that trained narcotics dogs will be deployed periodically to detect the presence of illegal or unauthorized controlled substances on school grounds. The schools will maintain documentation of the wording, format, and distribution of the notice.
11. Drug Sweeps
	1. During the school year, without prior notification to the school, the police will arrive unannounced at one of the school offices and request permission from the principal to conduct a sweep with trained narcotic dogs. To avoid prematurely alerting students or staff, plainclothes personnel will deliver the request, whenever possible. All uniform personnel and vehicles will remain out of sight until permission is granted and the areas to be swept have been secured. No sweep will be conducted without permission of the school principal or the superintendent of schools.
	2. Areas to be swept will be jointly selected by the police and school officials. Generally, each deployment may include student lockers and student parking lots.
	3. Once permission has been granted, and while a class period is in session, designated school and police personnel will be deployed to the selected areas of the school where the sweeps will be conducted. They will maintain continual observation to ensure the selected areas are not disturbed until the sweeps and any subsequent searches have been completed.
	4. Once the selected areas have been secured, the principal will announce a sweep is being conducted and will instruct all students and other staff to remain in their classrooms or offices. Any students or unauthorized staff found in hallways will be escorted to the nearest room until the sweep and any subsequent searches have been completed.
	5. Police canine handlers will deploy their trained narcotics dogs to sniff the selected lockers, vehicles, or other locations. If the dog indicates the presence of a controlled substance, the handlers will mark or otherwise specifically identify the indicated location for further investigation by designated schools’ personnel.
	6. Once the handlers have completed their sweeps and have removed their dogs from the area, the designated schools’ personnel, in the presence of a police officer, will search any suspected locker, book bag, gym bag, or other location, except a motor vehicle for illegal or unauthorized controlled substances, based upon probable cause created by the dog’s alert. If the area to be searched is a motor vehicle, the schools’ personnel will attempt to contact the owner or authorized user to obtain consent to search. If consent is declined, the school and the police will jointly determine whether to seek the issuance of a search warrant.
	7. If evidence of unauthorized or unlawful use or possession of a controlled substance is found, the police will immediately take custody of the item(s) and handle it in accordance with established police procedures for evidence/contraband.
	8. The student identified as being assigned to, owning, or otherwise having primary control of the property containing the evidence will be called to the school office for further investigation.
	9. Upon completion of the investigation, the school principal or headmaster and the police, shall jointly determine whether the matter should be handled through the school’s disciplinary code or referred for criminal prosecution, or both. Criminal prosecution shall be the preferred course of action for any repeat or felony offender.
	10. It is understood that the confidentiality of student disciplinary records must be protected in accordance with the law, and that the contents of those protected records shall not be disclosed.
12. Disagreements
13. Any disagreements between the school and police personnel over the interpretation or application of the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding shall be referred to the Superintendent of the SAMPLE Board of Education and the Chief of Police for resolution.
14. It is understood by all parties that, in general, the schools shall prevail in the interpretation and application of the disciplinary process, but, that the police shall prevail in the interpretation and application of the criminal process.
15. Narcotics/Weapons for Use in Training
16. Training aids (drugs) will be handled in the following manner:
	* 1. All training aids will be stored in individual airtight containers within the designated area of the Department Evidence Room.
		2. Training aids will be obtained from evidence storage. The canine officer will complete the proper form(s) to request the use of drugs for training aids from cases where prosecution has been concluded. Prior to release for use as a training aid the released drugs will be tested, weighed, and sealed in a plastic baggie to prevent loss of the substance.
		3. When the controlled substance is no longer viable as a training aid it will be returned to evidence for destruction. Prior to destruction the substance will again be weighed and tested. Any discrepancy in appearance or weight will be noted.
		4. Records of receipt of the training aids from evidence and return of the training aids to evidence for destruction will be maintained by the canine officer and the evidence custodian.
		5. During training there is the potential risk a canine will destroy the packaging material, resulting in the loss of some of the training aid. In this event, the canine handler will retrieve as much of the training aid as possible. The remaining and recovered training aid will be returned to evidence for destruction and replacement. The handler will initiate a memo detailing the circumstances of the incident and forward it to the evidence custodian.
		6. There will be an audit/inspection at least annually of the training aids.
		7. Officers who are trained canine handlers must possess, if required, the proper and current paperwork issued by the D.E.A. to have in their possession, illegal drugs for training purposes. Officers must provide a copy of this paperwork to the Chief of Police to be maintained in their personnel file.
17. Firearms will not be used for training purposes. The department’s training officer has “dummy” weapons for this purpose.

APPROVED: CHIEF OF POLICE DATE

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS ORDER

SIGNATURE OF OFFICER DATE

***DISCLAIMER***

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