

**9.06**  
**CRAIG POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**Office of Chief of Police**  
**General Order**

**Date Issued:** November 1, 1997  
**Subject:** Police Canine  
**To:** All Officers

**Revision Date:** April 1, 2009  
**Reference:** CACP STD.120.1 – 120.7

**I. PURPOSE:**

The Craig Police Department Canine Unit strives to provide a trained police canine whenever needed to safeguard the community and its officers. Canines are indispensable when exploiting their enhanced hearing, sense of smell and night vision. This policy establishes the duties and procedures which will govern the Canine Unit and to establish the criteria for the use of the unit as well as the qualifications for the handler.

**II. OBJECTIVES:**

The canine unit is established to provide the following police services (when the animal is certified in the particular area), and to minimize the potential for injury to officers engaged in many of these duties:

1. Tracking fugitives or lost persons
2. Conducting building searches
3. Recovery of evidence
4. Area searches for criminal suspects
5. Narcotics/other drug searches
6. Public Relations activities

Ownership: Police canines are the property of the Craig Police Department.

**III. DEFINITIONS:**

A. Canine Team: A specially trained police employee and canine both of whom have been trained by a recognized training facility in canine law enforcement.

**IV. QUALIFICATIONS:**

A. The canine handler will be an employee who has successfully completed his/her probationary period and has a satisfactory performance and disciplinary record.

B. The employee assigned as the canine handler must be willing to make a minimum commitment of two years to the program.

C. If the employee is married, their family must consent to ~~the~~ their participation in the program and must be willing to assist in the care of the canine. The employee must also have a suitable residence that will allow for the care and control of the canine during off duty hours.

D. The employee must be willing to participate in an intensive initial training period in a law enforcement recognized training program specific to law enforcement use, followed by weekly training with their animal to ensure that the canine team maintains its skills and meets its objectives. As well as participate in a minimum of 8 hours of annual refresher training.

#### **V. Chain of Command:**

A. All handlers will report directly to the on duty supervisor, who will in turn report to the Operations Division Commander.

B. During a field deployment, the handler will report to the on duty supervisor. Handlers are required, however, to exercise control over the method of deployment of their canines. Their decisions will take into account the trained skills, capability and current conditions.

C. In the event the canine team is assigned as part of a tactical operation, the handler will comply exactly with all orders given by the tactical team leader.

#### **VI. Assignment:**

A. Assignment to the position of Canine Handler will be made by the Chief of Police, and the selection will be made from letters of interest that have been submitted to the Chief.

B. The Canine Handler will be under the direct supervision of the Shift Supervisor.

C. The employee assigned to this position will be assigned to a normal work schedule for the division of which the employee is assigned.

#### **VII. Responsibilities of Canine Handler and Police Department:**

A. The employee assigned as the Canine Handler, will be assigned a department vehicle which has been modified and clearly marked for use as a Canine Vehicle. The handler will be responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is properly serviced, clean and maintained. The vehicle may be used by other officers, if applicable, when the canine handler is not working.

B. The employee will be responsible for ensuring that the department-approved veterinarian examines the canine regularly and that the canine receives the appropriate vaccinations each year.

C. The employee will be responsible for providing daily care (food, water & exercise) of the animal both at the station and at his/her home. Handlers will maintain their assigned canine in a safe, humane environment, and provide the following:

1. Maintenance and cleaning of the kennel and yard where the canine is housed.

2. Provision of food, water, and general diet maintenance as prescribed by the departmentally approved veterinarian.

3. Grooming on a daily basis or more often as required by weather, working conditions or other factors.
4. Daily exercise (police canines are not permitted to run at large).
5. General medical attention and maintenance of health care records.
6. Maintenance and care of departmental assigned equipment.
7. Each canine handler will receive two (2) hours of compensatory time for each week that they complete those duties associated with the care and maintenance of their assigned canine. The shift supervisor may direct the canine handler to take the time off for those hours accumulated during the work period.
8. Where the handler is unable to complete these and related duties due to illness, injury, or leave:
  - a. Another individual, who has been previously approved, may be assigned to temporarily care for the dog.
  - b. The canine may be housed in a departmentally approved kennel.

D. The employee may, when on leave, board the canine at a facility that has been approved by the department.

1. When the handler goes on vacation and remains home, the handler shall be responsible for the care and boarding of the canine. If the handler intends to go away on vacation, the department will provide care and boarding while the handler is away.

E. The department will provide competent veterinary care.

F. At no time will the canine be allowed to roam free unattended or unsupervised.

G. When unable to care for the dog, the handler will assure care is provided. The Operations Division Commander will be notified whenever the dog is left with a third party. That third party will be familiar with the dog, its training and any hazard that may exist.

H. Handlers will be responsible for the safety and health of their animals, regardless of the actual caretaker.

I. Due to the special nature of police canines, they must be cared for and supervised at all times. The canine handler is responsible for constantly assuring the safety of the dog and the public.

### **VIII. Duties:**

A. The canine handler will function as a police officer, or whatever their normal assignment may be, and will carry out routine duties for the respective assignment, when not engaged in canine related operations.

B. During the normal tour of duty, any officer may request the assistance of the Canine Handler in those circumstances described in the program objectives (when the animal is certified in the specific area requested) and others as designated by the shift supervisor.

C. The handler will keep the canine on lead and under physical control at all times. The canine may be released from lead while maintaining verbal control when it is believed necessary to:

1. Search a structure, enclosure or area believed uninhabited by innocent parties for the purpose of locating a person or evidence;
2. To rest, train and/or exercise the canine.
3. The use of a trained police dog by its handler may, in certain circumstances, be considered use of force. The canine handler will follow Department guidelines regarding use of force when deploying the police dog.

D. The handler may release the canine from lead at other times and locations when the canine handler reasonably believes that the use of the canine is, under the circumstances known to the handler, the safest and most effective tool available.

E. The canine handler will, when so directed by the Chief of Police or his designee, appear at certain functions or special events.

1. Public demonstrations: The purpose of public demonstrations by the canine teams is two-fold. The public education of the canine team is the primary function. The second is not so apparent. Due to the nature of police work, public demonstration is not possible for most functions. Canines are a visual, exciting component of the patrol function. Additionally, the majority of the public enjoys and like dogs.

Although the public deserves the opportunity to see the Canine Units performance, the demand can easily outstrip the units ability to meet both these and operational needs.

All public demonstrations will be cleared through the Operations Division Commander prior to any commitment being made. In any event, the operational needs of the department must be met.

## **IX. Search Guidelines:**

A. The area to be searched will be secured to the extent possible and no one allowed to enter.

B. The handler will determine the method and direction of the search.

C. The handler will make an announcement three times prior to releasing the police dog of the intent to use a trained police dog to conduct a search. In the case of a large building, this announcement will be repeated, as needed when different areas are encountered or where the initial announcement may not have been heard. The announcement will be made unless it is tactically inappropriate to make such announcement.

## **X. Building Searches:**

A. A primary use of police canines is for locating people in buildings or related structures where search by officers would create an unnecessary risk. These searches shall be governed by the following:

1. The building perimeter shall be secured by patrol personnel.
2. Whenever possible, the building's owner should be contacted to determine whether there may be tenants or others in the building and to ascertain the buildings layout.
3. When a building search by a canine is anticipated, a preliminary search by officers should not be conducted, as this will interfere with the canine's ability to discriminate scents.
4. The on-scene supervisor should also take the following steps in preparation for the canine search:
  - a. Evacuate all tenants, workers, or others from the building.
  - b. Request that all air conditioning, heating, or other air blowing systems be shut off as to not interfere with the canine's ability to detect the scent.
5. Upon entrance to the building, all exits should be secured and communications limited to those of a tactical nature.
6. The canine should not be used to search facilities that contain substances potentially harmful to the animal unless overriding risk to human life is present.

#### **XI. Requests for School Searches:**

A. School searches are a term, which applies to the action of the dog "sniffing" for controlled substances. It is understood that this action is not technically a search as defined under the Fourth Amendment.

B. Requests by the local school district for the purpose of searching for and seizing controlled substances shall only be authorized after the following criteria have been met:

1. The request must be received by a supervisor of the Police Department from the Chief School Administrator or the building principal.
2. The request must state that the search is directed toward maintaining a safe and secure school environment.
3. The request should be related to specific facts substantiating a drug problem, not merely suspicions.
4. The request must state that the school officials will take either administrative or criminal action against those determined to be in possession of illegal drugs.

5. Upon completion of the search, the canine handler will make a detailed report of the search and results.

#### C. Canine team school search procedure.

1. Only locker or room searches or parked cars on school grounds will be conducted. No body searches will be performed.
2. Administrative Action Search: The canine handler will mark lockers or areas where the police dog gives indications. The canine handler will not open or pry into these areas or make arrests.
3. Criminal Action Search: Searches will be based on probable cause when not on exigent circumstances. The investigating officer and canine handler will consult with the District Attorney's Officer prior to this search. The Chief School Administrator will be contacted prior to executing the search when practical.

## **XII. Instructions, call outs, conditions, reporting and limitations of usage:**

### A. Instructions

All police officers will be given instructions on potential uses of the canine unit as well as how to establish area perimeters and officer behavior in and around the canine.

### B. Call Outs

At those times that the canine team is needed and the handler and the canine are not on duty, an officer wishing to use the team will notify the supervisor on duty of this request. It will be the duty of the supervisor to decide whether or not to call out the canine, based on the circumstances of the request and the abilities of the canine unit to handle the incident.

When not on duty and called out by the department, the handler will respond to the scene as soon as possible. If the response time is more than one hour, the handler/handler will so advise and consideration may be given to utilizing another canine team from another jurisdiction based on the circumstances. The shift supervisor may direct the canine handler to take the time off for those hours accumulated at a call out, if incurred during the work period.

### C. Conditions

The following conditions will be taken into consideration when requesting the services of the canine unit.

1. Type of offense
2. Safety of the handler and the canine
3. Exigent Circumstances
4. Location
5. Time since offense occurred
6. Time of day

7. Weather conditions
8. Safety of the general public

If the decision is made to call out the canine handler, the area to be searched will be immediately secured and non-essential personnel will be kept out of the area. Upon the arrival of the canine handler, the supervisor on duty will ensure that the handler is fully briefed as to the circumstances surrounding the call out and what is being looked for.

#### D. Reporting

Once the canine has completed the assignment, the canine handler will as soon as possible complete a record of the activity and/or an incident report (if necessary) detailing the use of the canine and any outcome.

#### E. Limitations of usage

1. The use of the canine unit is for law enforcement services only. No persons will be allowed to use the unit for private purposes nor will the handler and/or department for any activity accept any payment.
2. Outside agency requests shall be handled on a case by case basis and will be at the discretion of the shift supervisor and;
  - a. Such assistance does not impede the Craig Police Department's level of protection or service to the community.
  - b. The request for service is not more than thirty (30) miles from the City, unless special authorization is obtained from the Operations Division Commander.
  - c. Whenever the canine unit is assigned to assist another agency, an incident/offense report will be completed by the canine handler, including but not limited to: name of the requesting agency, nature of request, action, and results of canine involvement.
  - d. The requesting agency shall provide the following information at the time of the request;
    1. Reason for the request
    2. Time since incident
    3. Type of area and conditions
    4. Any prior search or canine use
    5. Any possible hazards
  - e. Required procedures of the Craig Police Canine Unit shall be transmitted to the requesting agency at the time of the request.

#### **XIV. Procedures in Cases of Canine Bites:**

A. The following procedures will be observed whenever a canine bites a person regardless of whether or not the bite took place on or off duty:

1. Administer first aid as needed and summon necessary medical assistance. If the person bitten is in police custody, the person will be transported to the nearest hospital. If the person is not in custody, the person will be encouraged to seek medical treatment. Any refusal of treatment will be so noted in the report.
2. Immediately notify the supervisor on duty. It will be the responsibility of the supervisor to notify the Operations Division Commander.
3. Immediately complete a written report detailing the incident, to include the name, address and telephone number of the person that was bitten and include the circumstances surrounding the bite.
4. Have the injuries sustained by the individual, photographed in color.

B. As soon as possible following the bite, have the canine examined by the department-approved veterinarian for signs of rabies or other disorders. The canine will then be reexamined within twelve days of the bite incident. During the time prior to the second examination, the canine will be closely monitored for any unusual signs or symptoms that may indicate rabies or other disorder. If such signs/symptoms are observed, the canine will be immediately taken to the veterinarian.

C. All reports in connection with the bite will be immediately forwarded to the Chief of Police via the Chain of Command.

D. The requirement for impounding of the canine is not necessary due to the kenneling of the canine at the handler's residence and the subsequent veterinary examinations.

E. The requirements that are set forth will not apply during training, unless serious injury is incurred by the agitator.

F. The use of a trained police dog by its handler may, in certain circumstances, be considered use of force. The canine handler will follow department guidelines regarding use of force when deploying the police dog.

#### **XV. Rules of Conduct for Non-handlers:**

A. It will be the responsibility of the canine handler to instruct and inform all personnel about the canine and its role within the department.

B. Members will strictly adhere to the following rules of conduct as it pertains to interaction with the canine:

1. Obey the canine handler's wishes or instructions with respect to the canine.
2. Stay away from the canine training exercises unless you are involved in the training.

3. Stand still if bitten or if you think you are about to be bitten.
4. Avoid sudden movements in the presence of the canine.
5. Do not pet or touch the canine without the handler's permission.
6. Do not tease or agitate the canine.
7. Do not attempt to entice the canine to break or disobey commands of the handler.
8. Do not use any command you have heard the canine handler use.
9. Do not come in between the canine and a fleeing subject.
10. Do not engage in violent or simulated violent behavior with the handler in the canine's presence.
11. Do not try to take custody of a subject who is being apprehended by the canine.
12. Do not point a weapon at the handler or the canine.
13. Do not bring another canine or any other animal around the canine or a vehicle that the canine is in.
14. Do not enter any vehicle that the canine is in without the permission of the handler.
15. Do not go near a vehicle occupied by the canine when the window is down.

C. A violation of any of these rules may be the grounds for disciplinary action.

#### **XVI. Handler or Canine Injuries:**

A. The assigned Canine Handler is designated as the primary department member responsible for controlling the animal.

B. The following steps will be taken in the event of an injury to either the handler or the canine.

1. If the handler is incapacitated to the extent that he/she cannot control the canine, the supervisor or another officer will attempt to gain control of the canine. If this is not successful, the secondary handler will be called to the scene. The supervisor may attempt to noose the canine if an immediate need exists to control the canine.
2. If unable to noose the canine, the supervisor will contact a handler from another agency to assist in bringing the canine under control.
3. Use of the handler's spouse is to be used as a last resort.

C. In the event of injury to the canine, the handler will immediately transport the canine to the department-approved veterinarian for medical treatment. If this is not possible, the canine will be transported to an approved veterinary clinic that provides twenty-four hour emergency care.

D. As soon as possible following the injury to either the handler or the canine, a report will be completed detailing the circumstances surrounding the injury, the extent of the injury and other related facts. This report will be forwarded to the Chief of Police via the chain of command.

E. In the event of injury to either the canine or the handler, the on duty supervisor will immediately notify the Operations Division Commander and the Chief of Police.

## **XVI. Canine Equipment and Supplies:**

A. The handler will maintain a complete inventory of all department provided canine equipment. In the event of a replacement or new purchase of handler equipment, the handler will furnish a memorandum detailing the need and circumstances surrounding the purchase request, routed through the Chain of Command. The handler will follow the purchasing procedure of the Craig Police Department.

The canine vehicle will contain, at a minimum, the following equipment:

1. Dog insert (cage)
2. Various length leads
3. Tracking harness
4. 1" dog dope/search collar
5. Drug toy
6. Ball toy
7. Scent pads
8. Grooming equipment and boots for the dogs feet.

## **XVII. Pursuit Driving:**

It is very difficult to concentrate on the pursuit, make a felony traffic stop, and control the canine all at the same time. The K-9 unit generally should not be the primary unit in vehicle pursuit. The handler shall take a position once the pursuit has ended where the canine can be effectively used in assisting the arresting officers. The ideal position for the K-9 unit during a pursuit is simply to follow the pursuit (as an assist unit). This allows the lead units to effect the felony stop and concentrate on the suspect vehicle and it's occupants while the handler positions the canine for it's most effective use. Under extreme conditions, it may be necessary for the K-9 unit to be the primary unit if no other units are available. However, as soon as practical, the K-9 unit will replace himself of becoming the primary unit and assume the role of following the pursuit to it's conclusion, if necessary.

## **XVI. K-9 Uniform:**

When on duty, the K-9 uniform may be the standard issue uniform shirts and trousers, or any special tactical uniforms as may be required.

## **XVII. Police Decoys:**

It is recommended that the only persons allowed to perform as police decoy be a law enforcement officer. When a civilian wishes to participate as a police decoy, express permission to do so shall come from the Operations Division Commander.

## **XVIII. Training and Certification:**

A. All personnel in the K-9 program shall receive training as determined by the Operations Division Commander. The handlers will also maintain records of training.

B. All dogs selected for the K-9 program will have completed a department approved K-9 training program.

C. All dogs in the K-9 program must be certified prior to being assigned to the patrol division.

1. Criteria for certification is safe and competent performance in one, or more, of the following areas as recognized by the United States Police Canine Association.

- a. Obedience
- b. Prisoner Searches
- c. Building Searches
- d. Narcotics Finds

2. A dog will be certified only after competent performance of the above criteria before a recognized K-9 trainer.

3. The dog will only be used in the area(s) in which it is certified.

## **XIX. Drug Detection:**

The Craig Police Department K-9 unit is capable of narcotic and dangerous drug detection. The following rules apply for K-9 teams that are certified as narcotic and dangerous drug detection teams.

A. Call out procedures for the K-9 drug detection team is the same as for any other K-9 team.

B. Narcotics and dangerous drugs to be used solely for training purposes may be maintained by the handlers who are assigned to K-9 narcotic and dangerous drug teams in accordance with department Property Control procedures.

C. All training drugs shall be sealed in approved containers to prevent cross contamination and stored in a secure location when they are not in actual use. Only the handler and Evidence Technician will have access to the training drugs locker.

D. Only K-9 handlers actually assigned to K-9 narcotic and dangerous drug detection teams are authorized to maintain and utilize training narcotics and dangerous drugs.

E. The Operations Division Commander and/or the Evidence Technician will conduct random checks on training drugs to verify their condition and weight.

**XX. K-9 Retirement:**

When it becomes necessary to retire a canine from active duty, the department may transfer ownership to the handler. Should the handler wish to seek ownership of the canine, they shall request purchase of the canine from the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police shall set determination of costs. This procedure shall relieve the City of Craig Police Department from any and all legal obligations and responsibilities of the canine after retirement from active duty. When a handler leaves the unit an assessment by the chain of command will evaluate the cost effectiveness of retraining the animal to a new handler or retiring a canine to the original handler.

**Approved By:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Walter K. Vanatta". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Walter K. Vanatta**  
**Chief of Police**