

NEW CANAAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: CANINE UNIT OPERATIONS

GENERAL ORDER NUMBER: 11-01-115

I. PURPOSE/POLICY

This Policy is to establish a set of guidelines for the proper management and control of the Department's Canine Unit and to promote an atmosphere of service and safety in the community by providing general and specialized law enforcement patrol through the efficient use of the Canine Unit.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all Department personnel to become familiar with and adhere to these procedures. It is the additional responsibility of supervisory staff to insure compliance with these procedures.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Apprehension - The use of a Canine to physically seize, subdue or control a suspect.
- B. Area Search -The use of an off-leash Canine to locate a hidden suspect.
- C. Building Search – The use of a Canine to search the interior of a structure.
- D. Canine-a specially selected and trained dog.
- E. Canine Handler-a specially selected and trained sworn member of the New Canaan Police Department.
- F. Canine Unit – a specialty unit comprised of those officer(s) and Canine(s) assigned by the Department to perform police/Canine functions.
- G. Canine Unit Supervisor-A department supervisor identified by the Captain of Operations who is responsible for supervising the Canine Unit.
- H. Canine Vehicle-a specially equipped marked patrol unit that is assigned to the Canine Unit.
- I. Minimum Force - A training technique in which the Canine is taught to detain a passive subject by barking.
- J. Patrol Route -The use of an on-leash Canine to conduct a search for a suspect.
- K. Tracking -The use of a Canine's heightened sense of smell to follow the path of a missing person or fleeing suspect.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. **Operational Functions** - The Canine Unit shall operate as a support tool responsible for providing effective general and specialized law enforcement service to the community by:
 - 1. Conducting building searches.
 - 2. Conducting searches for lost or missing persons.
 - 3. Conducting suspect, evidence or controlled substance searches.

4. Conducting preventative burglary patrols.
5. Establishing and maintaining good public relations in promoting public confidence and support.
6. Maintaining an effective Canine deployment program.
7. Performing general police work involving patrol and traffic activities in the enforcement of state and municipal laws, regulations, and ordinances.
8. Protecting police officers and citizens from acts of violence.
9. Providing crowd control.
10. Providing police service at any time officer/dog capabilities can be effectively utilized.
11. Providing for public relations appearances and demonstrations.
12. Providing for timely response to crimes in progress and officer assistance calls.
13. Reducing injuries to police officers resulting from criminal attacks by a timely response to high risk incidents.
14. Reducing manpower and time spent in conducting searches for persons, evidence and controlled substances.
15. Rendering assistance to outside jurisdictions.

B. Detail Deployment

1. Subject to the direction of the Patrol Shift Commander, the Canine Unit performs general police work involving patrol and traffic activities as well as canine tasks.
2. When available, the Canine Unit should be dispatched to all calls for service that would effectively utilize the canine's unique abilities, such as: alarms, building searches, disturbances, suspicious persons and suspected narcotic activity.
3. A Canine Unit may be called out at the request of a shift commander to assist any police function or assignment, or called out to provide mutual aid at the request of a supervisor from an outside law enforcement agency. Dependent upon the nature of the request and provided that staffing levels are adequate, the on-duty shift commander may approve the aforementioned mutual aid request. The Captain of Operations shall be notified by telephone of all mutual aid requests which involve the Canine Unit. The mutual aid request shall be logged as an incident in LEAS as an Assist Other Agency.

C. Canine Detail Handler Responsibilities

1. The canine handler responsibilities shall include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Consistently caring for and maintaining the assigned canine.
 - b. Maintaining required standards of canine proficiency.
 - c. Maintaining all service and training equipment in manner that conforms to departmental specifications.
 - d. Preparing and filing all appropriate utilization reports and training logs pertinent to its daily, weekly, and monthly activities related to both operational and training issues. These records shall be reviewed and approved by the Canine Unit Supervisor who will then forward copies to the training sergeant. All records related to the Canine will be kept by the training sergeant. These records shall include but are not limited to training records, certification records, veterinary records, equipment purchase receipts and activity logs.

- e. Providing timely back up and assistance to other police units.
- f. Providing for medical care and treatment by transporting the assigned canine to the veterinarian.
- g. Responding to all incidents when and where the Canine Unit's presence will further police service objectives.

D. Canine Unit Supervisor Responsibilities

- 1. Ensures that the Canine Unit maintains certifications.
- 2. Ensures that records of all controlled substances used for training purposes are maintained in accordance with applicable federal and state guidelines.
- 3. Ensures a monthly training and activity report is provided to the Captain of Operations and to the training sergeant.
- 4. Organizes and documents all training.
- 5. Reviews all incident reports involving the Canine Unit.
- 6. Reviews all use of force incidents involving the canine.
- 7. Supervises the Canine Unit work schedule, training and demonstrations.

E. Selection and Utilization Criteria

1. Canine Handler Qualifications

- a. Must be a patrol officer with a minimum of 24 months law-enforcement experience with the New Canaan Police Department.
- b. Must be physically fit. Sick time, injury on duty time, and past physical record will be considered as selection criteria.
- c. Must be mature, have a good work record, and be able to work independently and effectively with other officers.
- d. Must be able to work an overlapping or specialty shift and assume "on-call" assignments.
- e. Have no other department or outside responsibilities that would conflict with the commitment of being the canine handler.

2. Canine Qualifications

- a. Before any canine is considered for police training it must be tested and evaluated by a certified canine trainer as to its fitness for service. The purpose for pre-testing is to determine if the animal has any undesirable temperament characteristics that could adversely affect serviceability.

3. Training

- a. All canines and canine handlers must complete a formal prescribed canine course meeting state/local certification for street utilization. Such course shall be selected by the Commander of Operations, with approval by the Chief of Police.
 - 1) Because the use of the canine vehicle and equipment is an integral part of this training, only officers who have successfully completed said training may operate the canine vehicle.

4. **Canine Certification and Annual Evaluation**

- a. Prior to being accepted into the Canine Unit, and annually thereafter, each Canine Unit will be required to undergo certification by a recognized expert in the police canine field. The Canine Unit will be certified by the Connecticut Police Work Dog Association, or the North American Police Work Dog Association or another accredited association as determined by the office of Chief of Police.
- b. If during certification, the Canine Unit is found to be performing at less than a proficient level in any skill area, the canine shall not be utilized in that skill area until being re-evaluated and found to be working at a proficient level. If the Canine Unit is evaluated and found to be performing at less than proficient levels in the areas of obedience or apprehension work, the Canine Unit shall not be utilized in any skill area until receiving a proficient rating in those skill areas.

5. **Department Personnel Training**

- a. The Canine Unit Supervisor and canine handler are responsible for training and familiarizing all department personnel with the capabilities of the canine and related case law. This training/familiarization shall include rules regarding interacting with the canine and canine Handler as well as appropriately responding to incidents (e.g. missing persons, narcotics searches, suspect searches, etc.) where the canine may be used.

6. **Maintenance Training**

- a. Frequent in service training is necessary for the canine and canine handler to maintain the required levels of proficiency. A Canine Unit that performs both patrol and narcotic Detection functions should undergo the required number of in-service training hours per year so as to comply with applicable standards and certifications. Training normally consists of one week in the spring, one week in the fall, and two days per month. The training will be approved at the discretion of the Captain of Operations or his/her designee.

7. **Canine Equipment**

- a. The canine handler will be furnished the following:
 - 1) Choke collar
 - 2) Crate and kennel appropriate to the canine's size
 - 3) Dog food
 - 4) Fifteen-foot tracking line
 - 5) Leather leash
 - 6) Other equipment as needed
 - 7) Pinch collar
 - 8) Slicker brush and rake comb
 - 9) Tracking harness
 - 10) Water / food bowl

8. **Canine Vehicle**

- a. A marked vehicle equipped with a canine containment system and remote door release will be assigned to the canine handler and shall be used in the performance of duties such as patrol, training, public relations programs, and transport to and from work, transportation to the veterinarian, and for call-outs. The canine handler shall be permitted to use the canine vehicle for extra duty assignments when he/she is accompanied by the canine.
- b. The canine vehicle shall contain the following items: leashes, muzzle, water bowl, canine first aid kit, oxygen, human first aid kit, flares, and other equipment that the canine handler and/or Canine Unit supervisor deemed necessary for the successful operation of the Canine Unit.
- c. The canine vehicle will not transport prisoners.
- d. The canine vehicle will not transport animals other than the canine.

9. **Injured or Sick Canine**

- a. If a canine is unfit for duty because of illness or injury, the canine handler will inform the shift commander and the Canine Unit supervisor in a timely manner. Unless otherwise directed, the officer will report to his respective shift commander for assignment.

10. **Veterinarian Services**

- a. In the event that a department canine becomes sick or injured to the extent that professional medical attention is required, it shall be the responsibility of the canine handler to transport the Canine to the veterinarian.
- b. The canine handler will submit a memorandum to the Captain of Operations and the Canine Unit supervisor indicating all the circumstances surrounding the need for medical attention and the treatment received.

11. **Canine Handler Compensation-Fair Labor Standards Act**

- a. The minimum requirements of the *Fair Labor and Standards Act* concerning the canine handler's compensation will be met.

V. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

A. Use of Force by Canine

1. The use of a canine is a form of use of force and shall be in conformance with General Order, 89-17-70, Use of Force.
2. A canine apprehension may result in injury to a suspect. Therefore, the release or use of a canine must be based on the information known to the canine handler prior to release of the canine. In the event a canine is utilized and makes physical contact with a subject, the following procedures shall be adhered to:
 - a. The subject involved in the incident shall immediately be examined and treated by the New Canaan Volunteer Ambulance Corps (NCVAC) and/or other Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and if necessary transported to the nearest medical facility for treatment.
 - b. If the subject refuses medical treatment by NCVAC, EMS or at the medical facility a medical treatment refusal form shall be completed, signed, and witnessed.
 - c. All injuries shall be photographed.

- d. Written statements from witnesses shall be taken.
- e. The assigned officer will report the matter in writing, utilizing the New Canaan Police Department's Incident Report. The shift commander working during the use of force incident is responsible for forwarding a memorandum to the Captain of Operations which summarizes the use of force incident and makes a finding as to whether or not the force used was in accordance with department policies and general orders.
- f. The shift commander will forward a copy of the completed reports to the Canine Unit supervisor and the Captain of Operations.
- g. The New Canaan Police Department will provide for supervisory review of the use of force incident to determine whether:
 - 1) The use of force was justified.
 - 2) Proper first aid was provided.
 - 3) The Canine use of force incident was in accordance with department policy and training standards.

B. Apprehension

- 1. Police canines are trained to pursue and apprehend on command persons suspected of committing criminal acts. New Canaan Police Department canines will also be trained in a concept called "minimum force." Before releasing the canine, the canine handler shall consider the seriousness of the crime, and any violent propensities the suspect may have.
- 2. Before releasing the canine the canine handler must be conscious of the environment and should consider the following conditions: pedestrians, vehicles, etc.
- 3. If the canine is in pursuit of a suspect and that suspect surrenders, the canine on its own, without influence from the canine handler, should de-escalate the level of force needed to affect the apprehension and act accordingly. When a suspect is non-violent and stationary the canine is trained to make no contact with the suspect and control the suspect by barking.
- 4. The use of a well-trained canine in situations involving criminal apprehension has been shown to be a valuable tool. A canine provides a heightened level of officer safety and is capable of using a variety of levels of force in making an apprehension.

C. Tracking

- 1. The canine may be utilized to follow the track of a person from an area in which a known starting point exists. The canine can be utilized to track fleeing suspects as well as lost juveniles and adults. When a canine is used for tracking, the following procedures should be followed.
 - a. Interview possible witnesses in order to determine where the subject was last seen, and the direction of travel of the subject.
 - b. Determine what the nature of the track is: missing person / fleeing suspect.
 - c. Determine what charges, if any, are pending against the subject.
 - d. Determine the subject's name, clothing description, and physical description.
 - e. Determine if the subject is armed or known to be dangerous.
 - f. Assign back-up officers to perimeter locations in order to confine the subject.

- g. Control the scene and keep the area in which the subject was last seen clear of civilians and back-up personnel. If this area is contaminated by civilians or officers, it will make it difficult for the Canine to distinguish between the different scents and reduce the probability of locating the subject.

D. Evidence Search

1. The canine may be used to locate lost or discarded objects or evidence which contains human scent. Areas in which the use of a canine may be particularly effective are: wooded, grassy, and areas of overgrown vegetation. Prior to conducting the evidence search, the canine handler should determine the following:
 - a. The approximate location of the evidence to be located.
 - b. The size and type of evidence.
 - c. If there anything in the search area that would present a hazard to the canine or the canine handler.
 - d. The search area should be kept clear of civilians, back up officers, and other animals.

E. Patrol Route

1. Patrol routes (i.e. “on leash searches”) may be used in a wide variety of situations that can take advantage of the canine’s heightened sense of smell and hearing. Tactical applications of the patrol route may include the following:
 - a. Searching an area for unarmed and non-violent subjects.
 - b. Searching an area for lost persons or children.
 - c. Searching for a subject in hazardous areas such as auto wrecking yards or areas with sudden drop-offs.
 - d. Searching areas where motor vehicle traffic is present.
 - e. Conducting perimeter checks on buildings (e.g. alarm activations)

F. Building Search

1. When it is believed that a person hiding is within a building:
 - a. The on-duty Canine Unit will advise a shift commander that he/she can assist.
 - b. When the Canine Unit arrives, the canine handler will discuss the incident with the on-scene shift commander, assess the situation, determine the best way to enter the building and determine how to deploy the Canine.
 - c. Prior to entering the building, the canine handler will give a series of verbal warnings that a dog is being released inside to search the premises. The verbal warning is intended to afford any suspects hiding within the building an opportunity to surrender. The canine handler shall wait approximately one minute after issuing the last warning before sending the canine into the building.
 - d. When a search is being conducted of a multi-story building, each floor should be secured, after the search is completed, to prevent any suspects from doubling back and escaping. An additional set of warnings shall be issued upon searching each floor or story.
 - e. When an area or floor search is completed, the canine handler will alert back-up officers to seal avenues of escape.
 - f. The final decision to deploy a canine in a search shall rest with the canine handler.

- g. While conducting a building search, the canine handler shall evaluate all the facts and circumstances available to him/her at the time to determine the best tactical approach to secure the building.

G. Area Search

1. Using a canine to locate a hidden suspect in a large area is effective and tactically sound. The use of a canine to conduct these searches affords a degree of safety to officers, which is not available when using any other technique. Prior to conducting an area search, the canine handler shall evaluate the situation and determine the following:
 - a. That the perimeter of the area to be searched has been controlled and that the area is free of civilians.
 - b. That the subject being sought is considered violent or has committed a felony.
 - c. That a series of verbal warnings have been issued and the suspect has been afforded a reasonable opportunity to surrender.
 - d. That conducting a search of the area without the use of the Canine would place an undue risk of harm to officers.

H. Narcotic Detection

1. The canine has the ability to quickly and effectively locate a variety of controlled substances that may be hidden from view.
 - a. Officers can request the use of the Canine Unit for a narcotics search. Searches shall be conducted in accordance with applicable laws and court decisions. The Canine Unit supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the canine handler and all department personnel are aware of court decisions that may impact the Canine Unit.
 - b. In order to maintain the canine's proficiency and certification in narcotic detection it will be necessary that the canine handler have access to controlled substances for Canine training. As such, the New Canaan Police Department Canine Unit shall be licensed as an instructional laboratory to handle controlled substances in Schedules 1 through 5 by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Registration Unit and the State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection, Drug Control Division.
 - c. The New Canaan Police Department shall maintain a protocol consistent with the regulations required by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Office of Consumer Protection regarding the care and handling of narcotics used for Canine training. Refer to Division Order 11-01-08, K-9 Controlled Substance Handling & Storage.

I. Community Education and Demonstrations

1. The Canine Unit may provide public demonstrations with the approval of the Captain of Operations or the Canine Unit supervisor.

J. Rules for Department Personnel

1. When responding to a scene along with the Canine Unit, officers shall coordinate the handling of a combative or resistant suspect with the canine handler. Officers shall tell the canine handler when they intend to use the Electronic Control Device, (i.e. "the Taser"), or other weapon, so that the canine is not deployed prematurely.
2. Department personnel will not tease, provoke or make threatening gestures towards the canine or canine handler at any time.

3. Department personnel will not approach the canine without the consent of the canine handler.
4. Department personnel will not attempt to feed the canine, issue the canine commands or attempt to show the canine to a member of the public without permission of the canine handler.
5. The canine handler shall provide training/familiarization with the canine's abilities to all department personnel.

K. Canine Handler Injured

1. If a canine handler is injured and unable to take control of the canine, the first responding officer shall have the dispatcher attempt to locate an area police canine handler who can take control of the canine. If a police canine handler is not available then the Canine Unit supervisor or the Animal Control Officer can be called to assist. If none of the aforementioned individuals are available, the officer at the scene shall control the canine with the leashes and collars that are available in the canine vehicle.
2. After the canine is secured, arrangements shall be made to transport it to the injured Canine Handler's home or another suitable facility.
3. In the event the Canine is also injured, a veterinarian will be contacted and advised of the emergency. The Canine will be transported to the veterinary facility for treatment.

L. Retirement of Canine

1. A department Canine will be retired from service when it cannot physically or mentally perform to established standards. Any retired Canine for mutually agreed upon consideration may be turned over to the Canine Handler, or other prospective owner, if the prospective owner signs a release form accepting all responsibility for said Canine.

VI. Distribution

This general order will be reproduced in electronic and traditional media. All sworn personnel shall have access to Department general orders through a read-only file on their individual domain of the Department's computer network. Printed copies and/or CD's will also be placed in locations within police headquarters so that they are easily accessible to all personnel.

VII. Effective date

This general order approved by the Police Commission on February 16, 2011 and is effective February 16, 2011

Revised December 2011

Per Order,

Edward J. Nadriczny
Chief of Police