



POLICY DIRECTIVE

Policy:	DOC 1.1.23 CANINE PROGRAM	
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Revision Date(s):		
Signature/Title:	/s/ John Schaffer, Public Safety Chief	

I. POLICY

Establish guidelines governing the organization, responsibilities, and deployment of the Department's canine assets and Handlers in furtherance of the Department's Canine Program.

II. PROGRAM MISSION

Provide an effective tool to reduce the use and distribution of contraband both within secure facilities as well as community supervision and enhance the safety and security of the Department and the community.

III. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. Provide a proactive detection tool to increase the likelihood of finding contraband and illicit substances, or contraband items during searches, and:
 - a. Increase offender compliance and accountability.
 - b. Promote positive working relations with local law enforcement agencies.
 - c. Present a proactive image of the Department.
 - d. Strengthen the safety and security of Department facilities, employees, and the community through the use of canines serving in various roles.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

A. General Administration

1. All aspects of the canine program shall be under the direction of the Public Safety Chief.
2. Canine(s) shall be considered the property of the Department while in service to the Department in any capacity.
3. Canine Coordinators overseeing a canine Handler will obtain the necessary certifications to fulfill all obligations and responsibilities related to the Department's canine program.

B. Canine Coordinator Requirements

The Canine Coordinator shall, in writing, be appointed by and report to the Public Safety Chief or authorized designee. The Canine Coordinator will:

1. Maintain communications with the Public Safety Chief or designee and other Command Staff as determined by the Department.
2. Participate in the selection of candidate Handlers.
3. Coordinate and communicate with canine Handlers, their Supervisors and Department facilities and program chiefs.
4. Approve Handler and canine activities.
5. Evaluate the performance of the Handler(s) and their canine(s).

6. Maintain and review canine deployment reports in order to:
 - a. Assess Handler adherence to Department policy;
 - b. Identify training issues and other programmatic matters;
 - c. Catalog incidents and interactions to ensure accurate documentation of Handler and canine activities;
 - d. Oversee the investigation of all canine contacts; and
 - e. Compile reports based on activities, incidents, and recommendations to be presented to the Public Safety Chief or designee.
7. Assist Supervisors in monitoring and maintaining the regular training schedule for the canine and Handlers:
 - a. Ensure continued program efficacy;
 - b. Manage the records of training compliance for all Handlers and canines;
 - c. Assess novel training models and equipment for relevance and application; and
 - d. Assemble reports demonstrating training status for Handlers/canines.
8. Assist Supervisors in assessing and monitoring the housing and conditions in which the canine is kept when in the care of the Handler:
 - a. Undertake a preliminary assessment of the applicant Handler's housing to determine suitability;
 - b. Perform drop-in visits where the canine is kenneled/quartered at any time as needed;
 - c. Make determinations regarding the suitability of the conditions, quarters, and care of the canine;
 - d. Ensure the safety of the canine, Handler, and general public; and
 - e. Maintain a record of the above criteria as they relate to each Handler/canine and provide reports to the Public Safety Chief or designee at regular intervals.
9. Produce an annual report summarizing budget and all data essential to the maintenance of the Department's canine program.
10. Assume control of the canine should the Department lose a Handler, or if a determination to remove the canine from a Handler is made based on any failures to uphold Department policies related to the deployment, use, and care of the canine as determined by policy, the Canine Coordinator, Public Safety Chief/designee, or other Command Staff.
11. Identify and recommend equipment and programs that would benefit the Department's canine program.
12. Serve as liaison with vendor kennel(s).

C. Handler Qualifications, Selection, and Obligations

1. **Selection Criteria.** Handler candidates shall be selected through a competitive selection process and must satisfy the following minimum qualifications:
 - a. **Certification and Standing.** Hold current Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certification and maintain good employment standing for the preceding 5 years with no findings of excessive force, constitutional violations, or animal cruelty.
 - b. **Service Agreement.** Execute a canine Handler service contract for the duration of the canine's service with the Department.
 - c. **Training Commitment.** Commit in writing to successfully complete a Department-approved canine handling training program, achieve initial certification, and maintain annual recertification throughout the canine's service life.
 - d. **Housing Suitability.** Maintain a residence with adequate space, secure fencing, and conditions suitable for canine welfare; pass pre-assignment home inspection and consent to unannounced quarterly welfare inspections.
 - e. **Judgment and Discretion.** Demonstrate sound judgment, decision-making ability, and capacity to assess deployment scenarios for constitutional compliance, safety risks, and tactical appropriateness.

- f. **Availability.** Maintain flexible schedule availability to accommodate deployment requests, training obligations, emergency callouts, and travel assignments; coordinate off-duty availability with supervisors to ensure Program coverage.
2. **Training Requirements.** Each Handler shall:
- a. **Initial Training.** Successfully complete a Department-approved canine handler training program with curriculum addressing:
 - 1) Constitutional search and seizure standards (Fourth Amendment).
 - 2) Constitutional use of force standards (Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments).
 - 3) Canine behavior, health, and welfare.
 - 4) Detection, tracking, and apprehension techniques, as applicable.
 - 5) De-escalation and crisis intervention.
 - 6) Implicit bias and fair treatment principles.
 - 7) Emergency first aid for canines and humans.
 - 8) Report writing and evidence documentation.
 - 9) Federal civil rights liability (42 U.S.C. § 1983).
 - b. **Ongoing Training.** Each canine team shall complete and document ongoing training sufficient to maintain proficiency and current certification in each operational discipline. Training must meet or exceed the then-current minimum training, maintenance, and recertification requirements established by applicable law, the Department, and the Department-approved certifying body.
 - c. **Annual Recertification.** Attend annual certification seminars conducted by nationally recognized canine associations; pass written and practical examinations demonstrating proficiency in detection, tracking, or apprehension disciplines as applicable.
 - d. **Constitutional and Legal Updates.** Complete annual training on constitutional developments, Federal and state case law affecting canine operations, legislative changes, and Department policy updates.
 - e. **Mental Health and De-Escalation Training.** Complete crisis intervention team (CIT) training or equivalent mental health crisis recognition and de-escalation training within the first year of services and refresh every 2 years.
3. **Handler Duties and Obligations.** Each Handler shall:
- a. **Availability and Responsiveness.** Remain available by telephone during on-duty hours; respond to deployment requests within timeframes specified by supervisor or Canine Coordinator.
 - b. **Training Compliance.** Participate in all required training; document training sessions contemporaneously; submit training logs to the Canine Coordinator monthly.
 - c. **Canine Care.** Provide daily feeding, grooming, exercise, and socialization; maintain clean and sanitary housing; arrange all routine and emergency veterinary care in coordination with the Canine Coordinator; transport canine to veterinary appointments; administer prescribed medications; maintain first aid kit in vehicle.
 - d. **Record-Keeping.** Prepare and submit accurate, complete, and timely deployment reports, incident reports, training logs, veterinary records, and other documentation required by this Policy.
 - e. **Equipment Maintenance.** Maintain Department-issued vehicle, kennel, leash, harness, muzzle, portable crate, and other equipment in clean, safe, and functional condition; report equipment deficiencies immediately.
 - f. **Constitutional Compliance.** Conduct all canine operations in compliance with the Fourth Amendment, Eighth Amendment, Fourteenth Amendment, Federal civil rights laws, and Department policy; decline deployments that would violate constitutional standards or Department policy.
 - g. **Controlled Substances Management.** If assigned to a narcotics-detection canine, comply with all Department, DEA, and other applicable requirements governing the possession, storage, transport, inventory, use, and disposition of controlled-substance training aids.

4. **Prohibited Conduct.** Handlers shall not:
 - a. Deploy a canine in a manner designed to inflict punishment or cause unnecessary pain;
 - b. Deploy a canine in retaliation for an offender's verbal statements, complaints, or grievances;
 - c. Ignore or fail to respond to legitimate complaints of pain, injury, or excessive force;
 - d. Deploy a canine when less intrusive alternatives are readily available and likely to be effective;
 - e. Fail to issue the warnings required by Section IV.F.4.b before an apprehension deployment, except as permitted by the exigent-circumstances exception in that section;
 - f. Neglect, abuse, or mistreat the canine;
 - g. Use the canine for personal purposes unrelated to Department operations without prior written approval; or
 - h. Falsify deployment reports, training logs, or other Program records.
5. **Handler Travel Expectations**
 - a. Extended travel or special work projects outside of the Handler's jurisdiction may be required on occasion. The following will be adhered to:
 - 1) Canines are boarded at pre-approved kennels, or lodging accommodations are made that permit animals inside the Handler's room;
 - 2) Handlers are roomed according to Department standards and to minimize stress on the canine;
 - 3) The canine is secured in a portable kennel while in the room;
 - 4) The canine will not be left unattended in the room for extended periods of time;
 - 5) The Handler will exercise special care to avoid negligent contact with hotel staff or guests;
 - 6) If the Handler leaves the hotel premises, the canine will accompany the Handler; and
 - 7) The Handler will gather the location and contact information for the nearest veterinarian and/or animal hospital prior to travelling.
6. **Records**
 - a. The Handler shall, according to their respective duties, produce the following records for the Canine Program that are to be maintained by the Canine Coordinator:
 - 1) Sniff/search deployment reports;
 - 2) Tracking deployment reports;
 - 3) Apprehension deployment reports;
 - 4) Deployment related incident reports;
 - 5) Training logs;
 - 6) Quarterly and annual program reports;
 - 7) DEA registration;
 - 8) Training aid inventory use reports; and
 - 9) Canine health records.

D. Canine Requirements

1. The Handler shall:
 - a. Be responsible for maintaining the canine in top physical condition and addressing all health and grooming needs;
 - b. Be responsible for coordinating all regular and emergency veterinary care;
 - c. Provide and maintain clean, healthy, and safe quarters for the canine at the Handler's office, during transportation, and at the Handler's residence;
 - d. Maintain and carry a first-aid kit for emergency treatment of the canine;
 - e. Feed the canine a diet that meets its nutritional needs, as approved by the Department and consistent with veterinary advice;
 - f. Ensure all treats, supplements, and other dietary items must be approved by the Department and the canine's veterinarian prior to administering to the canine.
 - g. Be compensated for required off-duty canine-care activities in accordance with applicable law, Department payroll procedures, and any applicable collective bargaining agreement,

memorandum of understanding, or other authorized compensation agreement. Covered activities and the method, rate, and amount of compensation shall be established through those governing authorities.

2. All Department-authorized costs associated with the canine's care, housing, veterinary treatment, equipment, training, and official transportation are borne by the Department during the canine's active service.
3. **Housing:**
 - a. When not on duty or assignment, the canine shall be housed with the Handler;
 - b. The canine shall be provided with adequate shelter from the elements, and access to food and water; and
 - c. The canine must be housed in a Department-approved kennel when the Handler is not present.
4. **Canine Acquisition.** When acquiring a canine, the Department shall use established and reputable vendors and shall consider available vendor warranties for health and suitability for the intended service. Warranty terms, exclusions, duration, and claim procedures shall be governed by the applicable purchase agreement or contract.
5. **Training and Certification:**
 - a. Each canine and Handler team shall be trained, evaluated, and maintained in accordance with the then-current standards of a Department-approved certifying body for each authorized operational discipline.
 - b. Each canine and Handler team shall complete and document ongoing training sufficient to maintain proficiency and current certification in each authorized operational discipline.
 - c. The Handler shall document each training session in accordance with Department procedures, including the date, duration, discipline or skill trained, training conditions, performance observations, corrective action, and the identity of any evaluator or instructor, when applicable.
 - d. Each canine and Handler team shall maintain current certification or recertification, as applicable, through a Department-approved certifying body.
 - e. A canine or Handler team whose certification expires, is suspended, is revoked, or is not maintained in accordance with applicable standards shall not conduct operational deployments in the affected discipline until the Canine Coordinator documents that the team has returned to compliant status.
 - f. The Canine Coordinator shall maintain a current written record of the training and certification standards applicable to each canine and Handler team and shall monitor compliance with those standards.

E. Training Aids

1. **Narcotics Training Aids**
 - a. Only confirmed narcotics, including heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, and fentanyl, shall be issued as source odors for training purposes;
 - b. Narcotics shall be obtained exclusively from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), or from other law enforcement agencies through proper chain-of-custody protocols, and be accompanied by certified laboratory analysis confirming substance identity and purity;
 - c. Issued narcotics shall be stored in separate, air-tight containers to reduce cross-contamination and preserve substance integrity;
 - d. Issued training narcotics are to be kept secure in designated locations only accessible by the assigned Handler and Canine Coordinator that satisfy DEA security standards;
 - e. When training narcotics degrade or become contaminated, Handlers shall request replacement of materials through the Canine Coordinator;
 - f. The Handler is responsible for all training aids and communications with relevant authorities;

- g. Handlers shall maintain written chain-of-custody documenting: 1) date and time of acquisition; 2) source agency and transfer agent; 3) substance type, weight, and laboratory certification number; 4) date, time, and purpose of each use; 5) quantity used in each training session; and 6) current inventory balance; and
 - h. Any lost or stolen training narcotics shall be treated as a Priority 1 Incident. The Handler shall immediately report the loss or theft to the Canine Coordinator, notify the DEA within 24 hours when required, and cooperate with Department and DEA investigations.
2. Other training aids or materials. Non-narcotic training aids (explosives, simulants, currency, electronics, tobacco, etc.) will be managed in accordance with the needs of the Department and any applicable regulatory requirements.

F. Canine Deployment

1. **General Standards.** Canine deployment shall be guided by constitutional requirements, offender safety, public safety, and institutional security needs.
- a. The canine is to remain under the control and direction of the Canine Handler at all times with due consideration given to the totality of circumstances.
 - b. Before deployment, when circumstances permit, the Handler shall:
 - 1) Conduct a walk-through of the deployment area to identify environmental hazards (glass, sharp objects, chemicals, extreme temperatures), distractions, and risks to the canine, offenders, and/or staff.
 - 2) Evaluate available information regarding the offender's conduct, history, mental health status, physical condition, and known propensity for violence.
 - 3) Consider whether less intrusive means of achieving the objective are available and likely to succeed.
 - 4) Consult with on-scene supervisor when operational complexity, legal ambiguity, or high injury risk warrant additional oversight.
 - c. All canine deployments must have a written record of the events and circumstances of the deployment compiled by the Handler and submitted to the Canine Coordinator within 24 hours following deployment that includes the following information:
 - 1) date, time, and location of deployment;
 - 2) purpose and legal justification for deployment;
 - 3) name of Handler, supervisor, and other personnel present;
 - 4) offender name and identification number (if applicable);
 - 5) deployment type (sniff/search, tracking, apprehension);
 - 6) canine alerts, indicators, and findings;
 - 7) any use of force, including warning issuance, canine contact, bite, and injury;
 - 8) medical response and treatment provided; and
 - 9) alternatives considered and reasons for deployment decision.
 - d. Canines may be deployed in the following situations:
 - 1) Department authorized searches of offenders and accessible areas;
 - 2) In a detection/tracking role, wherein the canine would remain leashed;
 - 3) To apprehend offenders when authorized under Section IV.F.4 and Section IV.G of this policy;
 - 4) To assist sworn law enforcement officers with searches on active Department of Corrections offenders; and
 - 5) Within Department facilities and Department-contracted facilities as needed, or upon request.
 - e. The Handler retains authority and professional obligation to decline canine deployment when the Handler reasonably determines that deployment would:
 - 1) Violate constitutional standards;
 - 2) Violate Department policy or other applicable law;
 - 3) create unreasonable risk of serious injury or death disproportionate to the threat posed; or

- 4) likely fail due to environmental conditions, canine health or readiness, or tactical unsuitability.
2. **Sniff-and-Search Deployment.** Canine sniff and search operations shall be conducted in accordance with constitutional Fourth Amendment standards and the following protocols:
 - a. **Routine Institutional Sweeps.** Handlers may conduct routine canine sweeps of:
 - 1) Housing units, cells, and dormitories;
 - 2) Common areas, recreation yards, and entry corridors;
 - 3) Perimeter fencing, vehicle sally ports, and loading docks; and
 - 4) Staff areas where contraband introduction risk exists.
 - b. **Sweep Procedures.** During routine sweeps, the Handler shall:
 - 1) Direct the canine systematically through the designated area.
 - 2) Observe and document canine behavior, alerts, and indications.
 - 3) Note environmental factors affecting canine performance (temperature, wind, distractions).
 - 4) Avoid contaminating potential evidence or alert locations.
 - c. **Alert Response-Physical Search Authorization.** When the canine alerts to the odor of contraband, the Handler shall:
 - 1) Mark or isolate the alert location.
 - 2) Document the alert with precision (e.g., “northwest corner of Cell 217, lower bunk mattress seam”).
 - 3) Notify supervisor and request authorization for physical search if not already granted.
 - 4) Conduct or supervise physical search of the alert location using proper evidence handling protocols.
 - 5) Document whether contraband was recovered and whether the alert was confirmed or unconfirmed.
 - d. **Individualized Searches-Reasonable Suspicion.** When canine deployment targets a specific offender’s cell, property, or person based on individualized suspicion, the Handler shall document:
 - 1) The specific, articulable facts establishing reasonable suspicion that the offender possesses contraband.
 - 2) The source of information (informant, staff observation, surveillance, prior conduct).
 - 3) The nexus between the suspicion and the area or person to be searched.
 - e. **Visitor and Staff Consent Searches.** Canine examination of visitors and staff entering Department facilities shall comply with the following:
 - 1) Posted entry notices shall inform visitors and non-custody staff that canine screening may occur as a condition of entry.
 - 2) Visitor and staff may decline canine screening but shall be denied entry if they refuse; refusal alone does not establish probable cause for arrest or detention.
 - 3) If a canine alerts to a visitor or staff, the Handler shall notify the supervisor immediately and shall not conduct a physical search without voluntary consent or independent probable cause sufficient to support a warrant.
 - f. **Vehicle Searches.** Canine examination of vehicles entering Department property shall be conducted pursuant to posted entry policies. If a canine alerts to a vehicle, the Handler shall:
 - 1) Detain the vehicle and driver.
 - 2) Notify supervisor and request authorization for physical search.
 - 3) Conduct physical search only with driver consent or pursuant to warrant, unless exigent circumstances or automobile exception applies.
 - g. **Unconfirmed Alerts-Documentation and Analysis.** When a canine alert is not confirmed by recovery of contraband, the Handler shall document potential explanations, including:
 - 1) Residual odor from prior contraband presence;
 - 2) Cross-contamination from Handler equipment or clothing;
 - 3) Environmental factors (food odors, cleaning chemicals); and
 - 4) Canine error or misinterpretation of behavior.

- h. **Pattern Monitoring.** The Canine Coordinator shall monitor each canine team's confirmed and unconfirmed alert history, training performance, certification status, and other indicators of reliability. When the Canine Coordinator identifies a pattern or other documented concern that may affect a canine team's reliability or operational readiness, the Canine Coordinator shall recommend appropriate corrective action to the Public Safety Chief. The Public Safety Chief or designee shall determine whether the canine team will be subject to remedial training, reevaluation, recertification, temporary removal from a specified operational discipline, or removal from service.
- 3. **Detection and Tracking Deployment.** When a canine is deployed to detect, track, or locate an offender who has escaped, absconded, or concealed themselves, the following protocols apply:
 - a. **Leash Requirement.** The canine shall remain leashed and under the control of the Handler at all times;
 - b. **Safety Briefing.** Prior to initiating tracking, the Handler shall brief all participating personnel on:
 - 1) Canine behavior and alert signals.
 - 2) Safe positioning relative to the canine.
 - 3) Communication protocols during the track.
 - 4) Procedures in the event that the canine locates the subject.
 - c. **Environmental Assessment.** The Handler shall assess terrain, weather, visibility, and environmental hazards before beginning the track and shall terminate tracking if conditions pose unreasonable risk to personnel or the canine.
 - d. **Subject Contact.** If the canine locates the subject, the Handler shall:
 - 1) Maintain control of the canine and prevent unsanctioned contact;
 - 2) Issue clear verbal commands to the subject to surrender; and
 - 3) Transition to apprehension protocols only when the circumstances satisfy the authorization requirements in Section IV.F.4, Apprehension Deployments, and the Use of Force requirements in Section IV.G.
 - e. **Documentation.** The Handler shall document the tracking operation, including scent article used, track duration and distance, environmental conditions, outcome, and any subject contact.
- 4. **Apprehension Deployments.** Deployment of a canine to pursue, locate, and physically apprehend an offender constitutes use of force governed by Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments standards. Canine apprehension is authorized only when constitutionally justified and operationally necessary.
 - a. **Apprehension Authorization-Threshold Requirements.** A Handler may deploy a canine in an apprehension capacity only when the deployment is constitutionally justified, operationally necessary, and reasonable under the totality of the circumstances. In making that determination, the Handler shall consider the following factors:
 - 1) **Severity of Offense.** The offender has committed, is committing, or is threatening to commit a serious criminal offense, including but not limited to:
 - a) Escape or attempted escape from custody.
 - b) Assault on staff, other offenders, or visitors.
 - c) Riot, hostage-taking, or mass disturbance.
 - d) Armed resistance or threatened use of a weapon.
 - e) Destruction of property creating risk of serious injury.
 - 2) **Immediate Threat.** The offender poses an immediate and objectively reasonable threat to:
 - a) The safety of the Handler or other personnel.
 - b) The safety of other offenders or third parties.
 - c) Institutional security or public safety.
 - 3) **Active Evasion or Concealment.** The offender is actively fleeing from staff in an attempt to escape custody, concealing their location to avoid apprehension; or barricading themselves in a manner that would endanger staff attempting entry.

- 4) **Alternatives Insufficient.** The Handler has considered and reasonably concluded that less intrusive alternatives (verbal commands, containment, chemical agents, less-lethal munitions, tactical entry by personnel) are unavailable, unlikely to succeed, or would create greater risk of injury.
- b. **Mandatory Warning Requirement.** Prior to releasing a canine to apprehend an offender, the Handler shall issue verbal warnings in accordance with the following protocol:
 - 1) **Multiple Warnings Required.** The Handler shall issue at least 2 clear, distinct verbal warnings unless circumstances make multiple warnings infeasible. Warnings shall be issued at intervals sufficient to allow the offender time to comprehend and comply.
 - 2) **Warning Content.** Each warning shall clearly inform the offender that a canine is present and will be released; the canine will pursue and bite the offender if the offender does not surrender immediately; and the offender should make their location known, submit to custody, and follow all staff commands.
 - 3) **Volume and Clarity.** The Handler shall issue each warning in a clear and understandable manner and at a volume reasonably calculated to be heard by the offender, considering distance, barriers, ambient noise, terrain, weather, available communication equipment, and other circumstances affecting audibility. When feasible, the Handler shall pause after each warning for a reasonable period to allow the offender an opportunity to comply.
 - 4) **Language and Capacity Considerations.** The Handler shall consider whether the offender has known hearing impairment, mental illness, intellectual disability, or cognitive impairment affecting ability to comprehend warnings. When the Handler knows or reasonably should know that the offender may have such an impairment, the Handler shall use simplified language, and when feasible, additional warnings, visual signals, amplified warnings, or other reasonable measures to improve comprehension.
 - 5) **Exigent Circumstances Exception.** The Handler may omit the required verbal warning only when the Handler reasonably believes that immediate canine deployment is necessary to prevent imminent death or serious bodily injury and that issuing the warning would create, prolong, or materially increase the risk of that harm. The Handler shall document in the deployment report the specific facts supporting the decision to omit the warning.
- c. **Totality of Circumstances Analysis.** In addition to the factors identified above, the Handler shall consider all reasonably available information relevant to the proposed deployment, including the location; terrain; lighting; environmental conditions; the presence of staff, offenders, or third parties; the feasibility of containment or other alternatives; the offender's conduct; and the foreseeable risk of injury to any person or the canine.
- d. **Supervisor Authority to Prohibit Deployment.** The Handler is responsible for determining whether canine deployment is lawful, consistent with Department policy, and tactically appropriate under the circumstances. A supervisor who is informed of the relevant facts and circumstances may prohibit deployment. Supervisory approval is not required for routine canine deployments. A supervisor shall not direct a Handler to deploy a canine when the Handler reasonably determines that deployment would violate law, Department policy, or applicable safety requirements.
- e. **Handler Authority to Decline Deployment.** The Handler shall have the authority to decline deployment of a canine where it is contraindicated, or the facts and circumstances would violate Department policy and/or applicable law.

G. Use of Force:

1. Any use of force shall follow the Department's use of force guidelines outlined in *DOC 3.1.8 Use of Force and Restraints*, this policy, and adhere to all applicable canine contact and incident-reporting requirements.
2. **Bite Termination.** Once the canine has secured an offender by bite and the Handler determines that the offender no longer poses an immediate threat, the Handler shall promptly

command the canine to release and, when it is safe and practical to do so, physically remove the canine from contact with the offender. The Handler shall not prolong canine contact after the offender is subdued or otherwise no longer presents an immediate threat.

3. **Medical Care and Documentation.** Following canine contact during an apprehension, the Handler shall ensure that the offender receives appropriate first aid and medical attention, as indicated, and:
 - a. When medically appropriate and consistent with safety and security needs, provide the offender an opportunity to describe the incident, identify injuries or medical concerns, and state whether medical treatment is requested. The Handler shall document the offender's statements, any reported injuries or complaints of pain, and any request for medical evaluation in the applicable incident and use of force reports;
 - b. When an offender has an apparent medical emergency or requests emergency medical assistance, the Handler shall promptly summon appropriate medical personnel and provide first aid within the Handler's training and scope of authority until relieved;
 - c. Ensure any injury resulting in a puncture wound, abrasion, scratch that breaks the skin, or other apparent injury is evaluated by a medical professional; and
 - d. Ensure that wound sites are photographed after they have been cleaned and properly treated, consistent with applicable evidence and medical-record procedures.
4. **Reporting.** Following any canine apprehension deployment involving canine contact or a bite, the Handler shall complete the deployment report required by Section IV.F.1.c within 24 hours and shall complete all additional reports required by *DOC 3.1.8 Use of Force and Restraints*, this policy, and applicable incident-reporting procedures as soon as practicable and within any applicable reporting deadline. The report shall describe the circumstances of the deployment; all canine contact, including non-bite contact and bites; warnings issued or the specific exigent circumstances supporting omission of a warning; injuries and medical care provided; and other relevant facts. The Handler shall submit the report to the Canine Coordinator for review.
5. **Review.** The Canine Coordinator shall review each apprehension deployment involving canine contact or bite for compliance with this policy, training and certification requirements, and applicable use-of-force reporting procedures.

H. Vehicles

1. The Department shall provide a dedicated vehicle for the safe, reliable transportation of the canine, Handler, and required equipment. The vehicle:
 - a. Must have a large, well-ventilated area in which to confine the canine;
 - b. Must have an adequate heating and cooling system, including a temperature alarm system;
 - c. Will be kept clean and sanitary as part of the Handler's daily duties; and
 - d. Will be clearly identified as a dedicated canine vehicle and will display warning signs to the public.

I. Canine Retirement, Adoption, and End of Service

1. **Retirement Criteria.** A canine shall be retired from service when:
 - a. The canine reaches an age or physical condition where continued operational deployment would compromise the canine's health or welfare;
 - b. The canine sustains injury or develops illness rendering the canine unable to perform essential job functions despite reasonable rehabilitation efforts;
 - c. The canine fails recertification or demonstrates persistent performance deficiencies that cannot be remedied through retraining; or
 - d. Behavioral changes, aggression toward handlers or staff, or unpredictable conduct render the canine unsuitable for continued service.

2. **Retirement Decision-Making Process.** Retirement decisions shall be informed by input from the following parties:
 - a. Veterinarian, who shall provide a medical assessment and recommendation;
 - b. Current Handler, who shall provide an assessment of the canine's working ability, behavior, and suitability for continued service or adoption;
 - c. Canine Coordinator, who shall evaluate Program needs, the canine's service record, and options for placement; and
 - d. Public Safety Chief or designee, who shall make the final retirement decision.
3. **Adoption by Handler – Application Process.** When a canine is retired, the current Handler may apply to adopt the canine. The adoption application process shall include:
 - a. **Written Application.** The Handler shall submit a written application expressing intent to adopt and describing the living conditions, care plan, and long-term commitment the Handler will provide.
 - b. **Veterinary and Behavioral Assessment.** Prior to approval, a veterinarian shall evaluate the canine and prepare a written report addressing current health status, medical needs, and life expectancy, behavioral stability, aggression history, suitability for placement in a home environment, any special care, medication, risk assessment regarding potential injury to Handler, family members, and third parties.
 - c. **Disclosure Requirement.** The Canine Coordinator shall provide the Handler with complete records of the canine's bite history, use of force incidents, complaints, behavioral incidents, and any known aggression or unpredictability.
 - d. **Home Environment Assessment.** The Canine Coordinator shall inspect the Handler's residence to confirm that housing, fencing, and environmental conditions remain suitable for the retired canine.
4. **Adoption Agreement and Liability Waiver.** If the application is approved, the Handler shall execute an Adoption Agreement that includes:
 - a. **Waiver of Costs.** The Handler releases the Department from all future responsibility for veterinary costs, food, housing, and other expenses related to the canine's care.
 - b. **Indemnification – Handler's Liability.** The Handler agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Department from any liability arising from the Handler's ownership, custody, or control of the retired canine, including but not limited to claims by the Handler from injury or property damage.
5. **Equipment Transfer.** Upon adoption, the Department shall transfer to the Handler the canine's kennel, leash, collar, and other equipment used for safe housing and handling.
6. **Euthanasia.** If the canine's veterinarian determines that the canine is suffering from a terminal condition, severe injury, or irreversible illness causing significant pain, and that euthanasia is the most humane option, or ordered by a court, the Department may authorize euthanasia without offering adoption. Euthanasia decisions shall be documented and approved by the Public Safety Chief.
 - a. **Emergency Euthanasia.** In an emergency where the Public Safety Chief cannot be reached and a licensed veterinarian determines that humane euthanasia is medically necessary, the veterinarian may act in accordance with applicable law and professional standards. The Handler or Canine Coordinator shall notify the Public Safety Chief as soon as practicable and document the circumstances.
7. **Alternative Placement.** If the Handler declines adoption or is not approved, the Department may place the canine with another qualified Handler, law enforcement agency, or canine rescue organization with experience managing retired working dogs. All placements shall include disclosure of the canine's service history and behavioral records.
8. **Department Discretion.** The Department retains sole discretion to retire the canine and determine disposition without following the adoption process set forth herein if operational, legal, or safety considerations warrant immediate action.

V. CLOSING

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Public Safety Chief.

VI. REFERENCES

A. *DOC 3.1.8 Use of Force and Restraints*