
21.0 CANINE UNIT

The Canine Unit is a branch of the Patrol Division and Canine Teams (a handler and canine) will be assigned to Patrol Teams.

21.01 SUPERVISION

- A. The Canine Unit operates under the direct supervision of the Canine Unit Supervisor, although canine handlers assigned to Patrol Teams will be under the direct supervision of the Team Sergeant for daily activities outside the scope of the Canine Unit.

21.02 TRAINING

- A. Canine Teams will be trained for the following tasks:
 - 1. Controlled substances detection.

21.03 HANDLER QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Canine handlers must have adequate experience as a peace officer as determined by the Chief of Police and must have demonstrated a good work ethic and a good grasp of principles of policing.
- B. Interested individuals shall submit a request in writing to the Chief of Police explaining their qualifications.
- C. Qualified candidates must then participate in a training session (if possible) and an oral interview. A recommendation will then be made to the Chief of Police who will make the final decision.

21.04 INITIAL AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING

- A. When a new Canine Team is assembled, the initial training will be done on a fulltime basis under the direction of the Canine Unit trainer. This will continue until the Canine Team meets or exceeds the performance standards.
- B. Initial training may be terminated when, in the opinion of the Canine Unit supervisor and trainer, one (1) or both members of a Canine Team are not going to be able to achieve the performance standards in a reasonable timeframe.
- C. In-service training shall also be conducted under the direction of the Canine Unit trainer.
- D. Each handler shall participate and document a minimum number of hours of in-service training monthly as determined by the Department. Exceptions may be made for absences such as vacation or illness. Extended absences shall require the approval of the Canine Unit trainer and supervisor prior to the Canine Team returning to service.
- E. The in-service training time shall be spent working on increased proficiency, improved tactics, new environments, certifications, competitions, or other areas as directed by the Canine Unit trainer.
- F. In-service training shall include specialized training (conferences, seminars, competitions, certifications, etc.) to help ensure that all Canine Teams are kept abreast of current trends, practices, and training techniques. The Canine Unit trainer shall prepare an annual training plan for submission to the unit supervisor and the Chief of Police.

21.05 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- A. All Department Canine Teams shall certify according to Department performance standards prior to being assigned for duty.

- B. After being assigned for duty, Canine Teams shall demonstrate proficiency by meeting the performance standards at least once annually.
- C. A list of current performance standards for the Department shall be kept on file by the Canine Unit trainer. Canine handlers shall be compensated for time spent in the care, feeding, grooming, and other needs of the canine in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

21.06 HANDLER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Handlers will perform all patrol related functions as directed by the shift supervisor.
- B. Handlers will be responsible for the actions of their assigned canine.
- C. Handlers will be responsible for the proper care of their assigned canine, including:
 - 1. Arranging for bi-annual canine medical examinations, utilizing a Department-approved veterinarian.
 - 2. Keeping vaccinations current.
 - 3. Properly grooming the canine.
 - 4. Handlers will assist in initial and in-service training as directed by the Canine Unit trainer.
 - 5. Handlers will respond to dispatched calls for service whether on or off duty if practical.
 - 6. Handlers will actively participate in public demonstrations as assigned by the unit supervisor.
 - 7. Handlers will be responsible for the proper care and maintenance of all issued equipment.
 - 8. The handler will be responsible to maintain the canine at an acceptable performance level and point out any and all deficient areas to the Canine Unit trainer.
 - 9. The handler is responsible to ensure that all reports are completed before ending a tour of duty unless otherwise directed by the shift supervisor.
 - 10. The handler is expected to use their skills and those of their assigned canine to actively deter and detect criminal activity.
- D. Each handler is responsible for providing the following documents to the Canine Unit supervisor:
 - 1. The canine's daily training and/or utilization records, which will be completed each day and submitted at the end of each month.
 - 2. Copies of the canine's veterinarian records, including immunizations.
 - 3. A written incident report following an injury inflicted to any individual by a canine, whether on or off duty.
 - 4. Yearly certification records, including patrol and detection certifications.

21.07 CANINE UNIT TRAINER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Assist in the selection process of prospective handlers.
- B. Test and select prospective canines for use by the unit.
- C. Train prospective canines and handlers to meet the performance standards.
- D. Ensure that certified teams maintain set performance standards.
- E. Identify any deficient areas of Canine Teams and initiate corrective or remedial training.
- F. Properly maintain the Department's canine facilities and equipment.
- G. Provide updates and make recommendations to the Canine Unit supervisor regarding the performance of Canine Teams within the unit.

21.08 CANINE UNIT SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Be directly accountable to the Operations Lieutenant on all canine related matters.
- B. Be responsible for the overall operation of the Canine Unit.
- C. Meet periodically with other supervisors and Canine Unit members to ensure that the unit is operating efficiently.
- D. Ensure that a secure kennel is properly constructed and maintained at each handler's residence.
- E. Assign requests for public demonstrations.
- F. Review and maintain a file of all Canine Unit reports to insure adherence to Departmental guidelines.
- G. Confer with other supervisors and the Canine Unit trainer in the selection of prospective handlers and canines and the evaluation of the Canine Unit's Canine Teams.
- H. Review work performance of Canine Unit members, identify any areas that may need improvement and prepare performance evaluations for unit members.
- I. Prepare a current emergency call-out list for communications.
- J. Assist the Canine Unit trainer as necessary and apprise the trainer of areas needing to be addressed.
- K. Assure that handlers are performing the necessary training work as prescribed by the Canine Unit trainer.

21.09 CANINE TEAMS GENERAL PATROL DUTIES

- A. Canine Teams will be assigned general patrol duties as directed by the Canine Unit supervisor.

21.10 SHIFTS AND CALL OUT

- A. Canine Teams shall work a standard shift; however, working hours and assignments may vary according to the needs of the Department. At least one (1) Canine Team shall be available for callout twenty-four hours per day as practical.

21.11 DEPLOYMENT OF CANINE UNITS

- A. A canine handler shall have the ultimate authority to make the decision not to deploy the canine; however, a supervisor has the authority not to deploy the canine even if the handler thinks it is feasible to use a canine.
- B. Controlled substances detection. A narcotic detection trained canine may be used in accordance with law to:
 1. Assist in the search for controlled substances during search warrant service.
 2. Obtain a search warrant by using the detection capabilities of a canine in support of probable cause.
 3. Search vehicles, building, bags, and any other articles deemed necessary for controlled substances enforcement; however, a canine should not be used to search a person for controlled substances without extenuating circumstances.

21.12 REQUIRED REPORTS

- A. Whenever a canine is deployed a canine event shall be generated.
- B. If the canine discovers contraband or the canine causes property damage, an incident report shall be completed.
- C. If an accidental bite occurs, handlers will take the following steps:

1. Evaluate the person for injury and ensure that they receive prompt and appropriate medical attention.
2. Notify the shift supervisor.
3. Obtain photographs of the injury or non-injury. Photographs are only to be taken after the wound has been cleaned by medical personnel to show the actual injury. Photos should show the wound both after it was cleaned and after it was treated. All photographs of the bite shall be booked into evidence at the Department.
4. Obtain a statement from the person, if possible.
5. Notify the Canine Unit Sergeant.
6. Obtain witness statements, if possible.
7. Attempt to obtain consent for release of medical information from the person.

21.13 RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

- A. Members are to use discretion when requesting a Canine Unit, making sure the call is appropriate for a canine and ultimately deferring to the handler's decision as to whether the call warrants a canine.
- B. If a Canine Unit is desired, but no Canine Unit is on duty, the shift supervisor shall be responsible for evaluating the request and making the determination as to whether a Canine Team is needed. Discretion should be used, taking into account the time needed to respond and the impact on the Canine Unit.
- C. The member in charge shall furnish all pertinent information, facts, and details of the call to the handler. The canine handler shall be responsible for determining whether the circumstances justify the use of the canine team and how they will deploy and will discuss the decision with the member in charge.
- D. At the scene of a canine event, members shall:
 1. Assist the Canine Team only as requested or ordered by a supervisor or the canine handler.
 2. If assigned as a backup, follow the handler's instructions.
- E. Canine Teams will not transport prisoners unless no other option exists.

21.14 MUTUAL AID REQUESTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES

- A. All requests by other agencies to utilize a Canine Team shall first be approved by the shift supervisor if the request is for service within Teton County, Wyoming.
- B. All other requests shall be approved by the Chief of Police. If the Chief or Operations Lieutenant is not available, the shift supervisor is authorized to make the decision.
- C. At all times while assisting other agencies, Canine Teams are governed by the policies of the Department.
- D. All public requests for a Canine Team shall be approved by the Canine Unit Supervisor or the Chief of Police prior to making any commitment.

21.15 CANINE INJURY

- A. In the event the canine becomes injured, as soon as the situation allows, the Canine Team will be relieved from further duties, and the canine will be immediately taken for treatment, or a veterinarian will be summoned to the scene if necessary. Officer safety shall remain paramount and should not be forsaken for the welfare of the canine.
- B. The Department will pay for all costs associated with a Department canine. However, any illness or injury stemming from improper care, use, or housing of the canine that requires medical treatment will be at the expense of the handler.

21.16 HANDLER INCAPACITATED

- A. In the event a canine handler becomes incapacitated and a canine is not contained, members should:
 - 1. Contact the Shift Supervisor as soon as possible.
 - 2. Follow the directions of the handler if they are conscious.
 - 3. Call someone capable of exercising control of the canine if the handler loses consciousness and the canine cannot be controlled. This may include another handler or trainer, an animal control officer, or a member of the handler's family.
 - 4. Destroy the canine only as a last resort and when the canine presents a danger to persons or other animals.

21.17 TRAINING AIDS UTILIZING CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

- A. All controlled substances used as training aids will be stored in a locked area.
- B. A ledger will be maintained to document the type and quantity of training aids on hand within the Canine Unit. The location and quantity of all training aids will be known at all times. The ledger will remain secured in a locked storage area.
- C. Aids checked out by a handler will be the sole responsibility of the handler.
- D. Any aid lost or damaged due to training will be reported immediately. The report shall be in written form to the Canine Unit supervisor.
- E. Any aid lost or damaged due to suspected criminal activity shall be reported immediately and followed with a written offense report. The location of the incident shall be treated as a crime scene.
- F. Any loss of controlled substances will be reported to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), by the Canine Unit supervisor, the next working day.

21.18 CANINE HANDLER VEHICLE

- A. Each handler will be assigned a vehicle for their exclusive use. Handlers are allowed to use them as follows:
 - 1. During the handler's normal tour of duty;
 - 2. Taking the canine to the veterinarian;
 - 3. Picking up dog food or other required canine equipment;
 - 4. Driving to work-related canine training;
 - 5. Any other work-related transportation.
- B. When the handler is away from his or her vehicle and the canine is in the vehicle, the vehicle shall be locked and appropriate ventilation will be provided.
- C. When operating the vehicle (on or off duty) handlers will be armed with their duty weapon, have handcuffs available, and have police identification, including a badge, with them.

21.19 DISMISSAL FROM THE CANINE UNIT

- A. Violation of the canine policy subjects the handler to dismissal from the Canine Unit or other Departmental review and action.