



DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS  
CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER 54  
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Chief of Police

I.D. NUMBER: 383

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**K-9 PROGRAM**

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**A. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Concord Police Department recognizes the potential benefits which can be provided by the K-9 Corps with respect to the community, officer safety, implementing an expedient means of apprehending dangerous, hidden suspects, and locating evidence, property and narcotics. Therefore, the department has established a K-9 unit with the intent of realizing the identified benefits. The department K-9s shall be deployed in a manner that is in compliance with the law and department policy.

**B. GENERAL**

1. The purpose of this General Order is to establish policy for authorized use of a K-9, searching and operation policy, performance standards, the responsibilities of handlers, K-9 Coordinator, K-9 Corporal and Professional Trainer.
2. The Concord Police Department currently deploys Police Service Dogs that are cross-trained (protection and narcotics detection) and operate within the Field Operations Division.

**C. DEPLOYMENT CRITERIA**

1. Police Service Dogs may be used under the following circumstances:
  - .1 To search for a suspect who is hiding whenever the officer has reasonable cause to believe the person has committed a felony, or a misdemeanor involving a weapon and/or violence to a person, and the use of that level of force is appropriate.
  - .2 To stop the flight of a suspect whenever the officer has reasonable cause to believe the person has committed a felony, or a misdemeanor involving a weapon and/or violence to a person, and the use of that level of force is appropriate.
  - .3 In defense of an officer or persons who may be in immediate danger.
  - .4 To search for and apprehend a suspect believed to be concealed in an area where entry by personnel other than the K9 would pose a greater risk.
  - .5 For crowd control, under the following conditions:

- .01 In defense of an officer or persons who may be in immediate danger.
    - .02 As a visual deterrent but not as a 'crowd moving' tool.
  - .6 To search for evidence or property.
  - .7 To trail misdemeanor/felony suspects.
  - .8 To trail for lost persons.
    - .01 If there is specialized needs for search and rescue that go beyond the K-9 team's ability, they will be deferred to a qualified agency with supervisor approval.
  - .9 To clear vehicles in high-risk situations.
  - .10 It is recognized that situations may arise that do not fall within the provisions set forth in this policy. In any such case, a standard of objective reasonableness shall be used to review the decision to use the K9 in view of the totality of the circumstances.
- 2. A Narcotics Detector Dog may be used under the following circumstances:
  - .1 To search for narcotics in conjunction with a valid search warrant, parole or probation (with a search clause), or when consent has been granted.
  - .2 To 'sniff' the air around the exterior of any vehicle in a public place or any place the handler has lawful standing to be. When probable cause has been established, the 'sniff' (K9 search) of the interior of a vehicle is authorized.
  - .3 Requests by outside agencies for use of a Detector Dog must be approved by the on-duty supervisor or the direct supervisor of the handler:
    - .01 If these are off-duty requests, they shall be scheduled and approved in advance with the permission of the K-9 Coordinator or his/her designee.
- 3. Restrictions
  - .1 Police Services Dogs shall not be used to search (excluding trailing/wind-scenting) for persons in hiding when the person is known to be under 14 years of age or to stop the flight of a person known to be under 14 years of age.
    - .01 Exceptions: In defense of an officer or persons who may be in immediate danger.
- 4. Announcements
  - .1 Before releasing a Police Service Dog to search a structure or open area or deploy the dog in a tactical situation, the K-9 handler shall announce his/her intent to use a dog.
    - .01 Loud and clear verbal warnings shall be given before the dog is released.
      - .001 Exception: A search for a suspect who may be armed or considered dangerous where such warnings would jeopardize officer safety.

## **D. OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUESTS**

1. Before a K-9 unit is sent to an outside agency, the on-duty Watch Commander or patrol supervisor shall be notified via Dispatch with a summary of what the K-9 Unit is needed for. This notification can take place via radio or phone contact.
  - .1 Communications Responsibilities
    - .01 Create a call history for the request and obtain pertinent information from the requesting agency about the crime/incident. This information should include nature of the crime, time element, number of suspects, weapons involved and what resources the requesting agency has dedicated to the incident.
    - .02 Notify the on-duty supervisor and note in the call history which supervisor authorized the request.
  - .2 Supervisor Responsibilities
    - .01 After being briefed by Dispatch, make the decision to authorize or deny the request. The following factors should be considered when contemplating sending the K-9 team:
      - .001 The officer safety concerns due to the nature of the incident.
      - .002 Whether the requesting agency has sufficient personnel to provide adequate cover for the K-9 team.
      - .003 The impact on staffing for the City of Concord should the K-9 team be sent.
      - .004 Should additional CPD officers be sent to assist the K-9 team.
      - .005 Upon the K-9 handlers return to the City, or as soon as practical, obtain information relating to the outside agency requests and ensure a daily log entry is made if the deployment is of a significant nature.
  - .3 K-9 Handler Responsibilities
    - .01 Authorization by a supervisor for outside agency deployments is not implied. The handler shall adhere to all the criteria listed in Section C, 1-9 (Deployment Criteria).
    - .02 Upon returning to the City, and as soon as practical, contact the on-duty supervisor and brief him/her on the circumstances of the outside agency request.
    - .03 Complete the documentation as outlined in Sections F.3.1 and F.3.2.

## **E. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

1. In order to qualify as a Police Service Dog, the dog must successfully pass a performance test annually based on the guidelines established by the Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.).

- .1 Obedience. The handler shall demonstrate the ability to control the canine during an obedience performance test. Testing will be conducted using reasonable job related distractions and will be on and off lead.
  - .01 The canine will perform a basic routine of left, right, and about turns, both slow and quick pace and both on and off leash.
  - .02 The handler shall “down” the canine in motion and then recall the dog to a heel position from a distance.
  - .03 The handler shall “down” the canine from a distance and then recall the dog to a heel position.
- .2 Search. Under the direction and reasonable control of the handler, the canine will locate a hidden person in a structure or building and in an outdoor area within a reasonable period of time. The dog will “alert” the handler after finding the person or the person’s odor. The alert will be a recognized signal from the dog that the handler will be able to “read”, indicating the presence of a hidden person.
  - .01 In a structure or building with multiple rooms and hiding places, the dog will locate a hidden person and “alert” the handler.
  - .02 In a large outdoor area, at least one acre in size with multiple hiding locations, the dog will locate a hidden person and alert the handler.
- .3 Apprehension. Under the direction of the handler and while off leash, the canine will pursue and apprehend a person acting as a “suspect” (agitator/decoy).
  - .01 The K-9 Team will demonstrate a pursuit and call off prior to apprehension.
  - .02 On command from the handler, the K-9 will pursue and apprehend the agitator/decoy.
  - .03 From a reasonable distance and on verbal command only, the K-9 will cease the apprehension.
- .4 Handler Protection. The canine will demonstrate the ability to defend the handler during a physical attack. The K-9 will respond only upon command from the handler.
  - .01 During a testing scenario simulating an attack on the handler, the canine will defend the handler against the physical attack
  - .02 On verbal command from the handler, the canine will release the bite on the attacking person.

**IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE REQUIRED P.O.S.T. GUIDELINES, THE CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT REQUIRES ALL CANINES TO RECEIVE CONTINUOUS TRAINING IN THE FOLLOWING PERFORMANCE AREAS.**

- .5 Trailing. The K-9 will demonstrate the ability to trail under the following conditions:
  - .01 The K-9 will follow the path of a trail laid by a stranger for 300-500 paces.

- .02 The trail may have at least one surface and/or terrain change.
        - .04 The trail must have 2-5 turns, with at least one right angle.
        - .05 The trail shall age a minimum of 10 minutes.
        - .06 The K-9 shall demonstrate its ability to differentiate between the suspect's scent and bystander's scent. The K-9 must pass the bystander while on the trail, without paying undue attention, and continue the trail locating the suspect.
- .6 Article Search. The K-9 will demonstrate the ability to search for and find various articles under the following conditions:
  - .01 The K-9 shall locate two out of three articles laid by a stranger.
  - .02 The area shall be outdoors and a minimum of 1,000 square feet and a maximum of 2,000 square feet.
  - .03 The articles shall vary in composition; leather, wood, plastic, metal and paper are acceptable.
  - .04 The K-9 handler may enter the search area to retrieve an indicated article but he/she may not search for the K-9.
- .7 Evaluation. The K-9 team shall be evaluated by a P.O.S.T. approved K-9 team evaluator prior to general law enforcement deployment and at least once annually. If the K-9 team fails testing, the retest shall not be retaken on the same day. The K-9 shall not be deployed until successfully passing the test.
  - .01 The K-9 team evaluator shall be a P.O.S.T. certified K-9 evaluator.
  - .02 In order to avoid any perceived conflict of interest between the Evaluator and the K-9 team, the evaluator:
    - .001 Cannot have a monetary interest in training of the K-9 team being evaluated.
    - .002 Cannot be the dog's handler.
    - .003 Cannot be the trainer for the dog or the handler.
- 2. In order to qualify as a Narcotics Detector Dog, the dog must successfully pass a performance test designed by the departmental trainer. The performance test is based on, but exceeds the guidelines established by the Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.). Handlers are strongly encouraged to also certify to the standards of the California Narcotics Canine Association (CNCA).
  - .1 While demonstrating reasonable control and coordination between the handler and the K9, the K9 must find (within a reasonable period of time as determined by the evaluator) the odors they have been trained to find in the environments they have been trained to search. These odors shall include Heroin, Cocaine, Methamphetamine, and Marijuana. The training environments should include buildings, vehicles and outside areas.

- .2 The narcotics/dangerous drugs used in testing and training may be obtained from or certified by a lab. Drugs may also be obtained from the property bureau at the Concord Police Department once cases are adjudicated.
3. Once a K-9 team has satisfactorily passed the basic entry performance test, the team shall participate in a one-week transitional training program prior to assuming their duties with their assigned unit. The Department Trainer or K9 Corporal shall conduct the training.
4. Insignia. After successfully passing the initial P.O.S.T. certification evaluations, each K-9 team will be issued an official department K-9 badge.
  - .1 The K9 badge should be worn by the dog at public demonstrations. However, due to varying deployment conditions and equipment needs, in-service use of the K9 badge will be at the handler's discretion.

## **F. K-9 HANDLER RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The Police Service Dog team shall be assigned to a designated squad on the basis of department seniority. The K-9 Corporal will pick his/her shift first. Primary supervision of the K-9 handler shall be that of the patrol squad supervisor. The K-9 handler shall also be accountable to the K-9 Coordinator and K-9 Corporal for issues or performance related to the use of the K-9. K-9 handlers assume responsibilities of this assignment in addition to their regularly assigned duties within their patrol squad.
2. Training sessions are mandatory and the handler is required to attend these training sessions with his/her assigned K-9. On-going K-9 training is beneficial for both the K-9 and the handler and it is a core job function and the responsibility of each K-9 handler.
  - .1 Absent street staffing and emergency calls for service, a K-9 team that misses three or more consecutive training sessions will be decertified. The K-9 team will then have to complete a remedial certification evaluation before the canine can be used on the street. This recertification should be conducted by a P.O.S.T. certified evaluator as described in section E.1.7 of this policy.
  - .2 Semester training attendance. Absent street staffing requirements, and emergency calls for service, each K-9 team shall attend no less than 80% of all scheduled K-9 training sessions within any consecutive six (6) month period.
    - .01 Any K-9 team which fails to meet this minimum training attendance may have to complete one or more of the following: mandatory P.O.S.T. and/or CPD recertification of the K-9 team (in whole or in part); assigned makeup training session(s), and/or an assessment of the K-9 handler's performance and suitability for his/her assignment.
3. K-9 handlers are also responsible for the following:
  - .1 Submitting computer generated documentation of maintenance training, demonstrations, deployments, and K-9 trials weekly to the K-9 Coordinator. This documentation shall be logged in the C.A.R.S program.
  - .2 Submitting a thorough police report regarding the use of the K9 when appropriate.

- .01 The handler shall prepare a thorough police report whenever there is intentional physical contact between the K9 and a person; whenever there is unintentional contact whether there be an injury or not; and any contact that is highly noteworthy or may need administrative review. This report shall include any injuries sustained, any medical treatment offered/given and information concerning photographs of the injuries (or lack of injury).
  - .001 Photographs should be taken of all injuries immediately after they have been cleaned by medical staff. Refusal of treatment and/or photographs shall be noted in a police report.
- .02 In the event an individual is injured by a department K-9, the handler shall immediately notify his/her immediate supervisor. The supervisor shall notify the on-duty Watch Commander.
- .03 The handler shall also complete a thorough police report whenever the K9 recovers evidence involved in a case or whenever the actions of the canine may eventually affect the case.
- .04 The handler shall also complete a thorough police report whenever there is a seizure of illegal drugs due to the K9's alert or there is a positive alert while doing a "money sniff".
- .3 Reporting off-duty K-9 involved injuries. If a department K-9 injures someone while off-duty, the handler shall notify the on-duty Sergeant or Watch Commander. The handler shall complete a police report (or memo if more appropriate) directed to the K-9 Coordinator documenting the circumstances as soon as practical.
  - .01 The on-duty supervisor may direct the on-duty Crime Scene Investigator to respond to the location of the incident and take photographs of the injuries.
- .4 Instructing departmental personnel and agencies who would request and deploy CPD's dogs in their jurisdiction in the use and tactics of the dog and safe conduct around the Police Service Dogs and the Narcotic Detector Dog.
- .5 Providing proper grooming, feeding and care of the dog. The dog shall be kept in good physical health. Medical care shall be at the City's expense. Unless an emergency arises necessitating immediate care by a veterinarian, the handler shall first procure the approval from the K9 Corporal or K9 Coordinator prior to utilizing veterinarian services. However, normal annual care required for the dog may be obtained without prior approval.
  - .01 Anytime that the dog is injured, whether on or off duty, it shall be brought to the attention of the K9 Corporal and K-9 Coordinator.
- .6 Maintaining current license and immunization records.
- .7 Providing proper care, use and maintenance of training equipment; Each officer shall ensure that the equipment provided to him/her is kept in good working condition. If a piece of department provided equipment is damaged, lost or stolen, the handler shall

provide a memorandum to the K-9 Coordinator. The following is a list of equipment provided to the handler, absent him/her having his or her own:

- .01 Tracking lead
- .02 Tracking harness
- .03 Leather collar
- .04 Leather leash
- .05 Vari-kennel
- .06 Agitation muzzle
- .07 Equipment box
- .08 Choke and pinch collar
- .09 Stake-out chain
- .10 An expandable style baton in either a 21" or 26" length, manufactured by ASP, Monadnock, or Peacekeeper R.C.B.
- .11 A handgun-mounted tactical light compatible with the handler's sidearm
- .12 A holster authorized under G.O. 39 capable of securing the handler's sidearm with a tactical light attached
- .13 An outdoor rated doghouse.
- .14 External vest carriers will be provided to K-9 Handlers (as an option) and should only be worn under the following circumstances;
  - .01 Assigned K9 training days, demonstrations and/or classes.
  - .02 K9 callouts from home.
  - .03 During the service of any search/arrest warrant and with the approval of a supervisor.

The department will not issue a new ballistic vest for this external carrier. The vest issued to each officer as described in GO 63 will be transferred to the external vest carrier should the Handler decide to wear it. The wearing of personally owned protective vests in the external vest is authorized so long as the particular vest meets specifications described in Section B.2 of GO 63.

- .8 Ensuring adequate off-duty care and control over the Police Service Dog. Due to the fact that the individual K-9 teams live together, and that the handler is responsible for the dog on a 24/7 basis, the Concord Police Department must ensure that adequate steps are taken to provide for safe, secure, and consistent kenneling of the dogs at the handlers' homes, and while they are away. It is for this reason that the Department will

reimburse handlers for reasonable kennel construction costs, as well as boarding of the dogs with a professional kenneling service, as described below:

- .01 Any yard used to secure a Police Service Dog shall be constructed with self-closing gate(s) and fences high enough to prevent the dog's escape, or civilian intrusion. Further, when unattended, the dog will be kept in a fully enclosed kennel with a roof and locking door. The kennel will be secured to a concrete pad to ensure that the dog cannot dig its way out. The kennel system will be provided in full, or in part, by the Department, depending on what elements of the system the handler does not already possess.
- .02 The City shall pay for professional kenneling of the K9 when the handler is out of town due to authorized leave. .
- .03 The handler shall notify the K-9 Coordinator (or his designated representative) whenever anyone other than the handler or a professional kenneling service is caring for the dog,
  - .9 Each officer shall ensure that the vehicle assigned to him/her is maintained properly; is kept clean inside and out; and is free of anything that could be harmful to the Police Service Dog. Further, due to the high frequency of callouts, handlers are authorized to take their assigned vehicles home. While not required, doing so will allow handlers to respond from their homes directly to a scene, fully equipped, and "Code-3" when the serious nature of the event requires an emergency response.
  - .10 Cleanliness of the kennels located at police headquarters.
    - .01 Department kennels are to be used for Concord Police Service Dogs only. They may not be used for pets or strays, no matter how short the duration.
  - .11 Detector Dog handlers are strictly accountable for the security of narcotic training aids in their possession, while in transit or when in storage.
    - .01 The handler shall immediately notify the K-9 Corporal and K9 Coordinator when a training narcotic aid is lost or destroyed. A memorandum will be completed documenting the circumstances of the incident.

## **G. K-9 COORDINATOR**

- 1. The supervisor assigned as K-9 Coordinator is responsible for the following:
  - .1 Ensures in-service maintenance training requirements are being met.
  - .2 Maintains statistical records relating to unit activities including training, public demonstrations, and on/off-duty use of the dog.
  - .3 Prepares the budget special reports as required and procuring equipment.
  - .4 Assist in the selection of handlers for the Police Service Dog.
  - .5 Conducts annual inspections of all K-9 handlers' kennel facilities to ensure a safe environment for the dog and the public.

- .6 Reviews the canine departmental policy and keeps it current.
- .7 Reviews use of canines to ensure compliance with departmental policy.
- .8 Ensures proper auditing of all narcotics training aids.
- .9 Investigates and documents the loss of a narcotic training aid.

#### **H. PROFESSIONAL K-9 TRAINER**

1. The Professional Trainer shall be appointed by the Chief of Police and can either be a sworn officer or a civilian.
2. The Professional Trainer is responsible for the following:
  - .1 Assists in the selection of canine handlers for the Police Service Dogs.
  - .2 Evaluates and selects prospective canines prior to purchase.
  - .3 Provides basic training for each K-9 team. This intensive training shall focus on meeting P.O.S.T. guidelines as well as the standards set for by the Concord Police Department.
    - .01 The Professional K-9 Trainer shall complete weekly progress evaluations for each K-9 team during the basic training.
    - .02 Upon completion of the training, the Professional Trainer will complete a P.O.S.T. basic training report for each team. This report will summarize the training the team received during the basic class.
  - .4 Develops and facilitates a transitional training plan for each new K-9 team after basic training is completed, and before the team is released to the handler's patrol squad.
  - .5 Facilitates and attends regular training sessions with the entire K-9 Unit.
  - .4 The Professional K-9 Trainer is responsible for identifying the training needs of the individual K9 teams and design appropriate training programs to address those needs.

#### **I. K-9 UNIT CORPORAL**

1. The K-9 Unit Corporal position is bestowed upon a current or former canine handler who has demonstrated the knowledge, skill, and commitment to perform the duties outlined. The position will be filled at the discretion of the Chief of Police, with input from the K-9 Coordinator and the Field Operations Division Captain.
2. The K-9 Unit Corporal acts as an assistant to the K-9 Coordinator and has some supervisory responsibilities, as described below:
  - .1 Assist in the selection of handlers for the police service dogs.

- .2 Assist the professional trainer in the evaluation and selection of prospective canines prior to purchase.
- .3 As directed by the K-9 Coordinator, and as patrol staffing allows, periodically attend basic canine training program sessions conducted by the professional trainer.
- .4 Develop a training plan to assist in transitioning new canine teams from a training to a working environment, which includes daily evaluations as well as a final evaluation.
- .5 Conduct performance evaluations of canine handlers and develop training plans as necessary.
- .6 Conduct, coordinate and schedule re-certifications of all officer/dog teams in the police service dog program.
- .7 In conjunction with the professional trainer, identify training needs of individual canine teams and design appropriate training programs.
- .8 Facilitate organized, pre-planned in-service police service dog training, including narcotics detection training.
- .9 Establish in-service training objectives that are to be accomplished by the unit.
- .10 Prepare documentation outlining each canine team's performance during transition, in-service and other specialized training, as directed by the K-9 Coordinator.
- .11 Participate as a member of the canine use-of-force review board.
- .12 Assist the K-9 Coordinator with audits of the canine narcotics training aids.
- .13 Develop a plan for canine orientation for newly employed Concord police officers
- .14 Orders, obtains and receives narcotics used for drug detector canine training.
- .15 Schedules in-service training programs and public demonstrations for Police Service Dogs.
  - .01 In an effort to meet potential service demands, K-9 demonstrations should be scheduled when there are at least two K-9s on-duty.

## **J. K-9 CAUSING INJURY**

- 1. When a department K-9 causes injury to any individual, whether the K-9 is on-duty or off duty, it will be reviewed by the department's K-9 Coordinator, K-9 Trainer, and a Field Operations Division Lieutenant. The purpose of the review includes, but is not limited to:
  - .1 Determining if the handler was within department policy guidelines.
  - .2 Identify individual and department training needs.

- .3 Facilitating policy-making decisions.
- .4 Maintaining a constant review process.
2. The Panel's findings shall be limited to a determination if the event was within or not within policy.
3. The documents related to the review shall then be forwarded to the Office of the Field Operations Division Commander for review.
  - .1 The Field Operations Division Commander shall make a recommendation regarding any further action that may be appropriate and forward those recommendations to the Chief of Police.
4. The Chief of Police shall decide on the final disposition of each case.