

GENERAL ORDER XVI

SUBJECT: CANINE UNIT

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10-02-02 REVIEW DATE: 02-05-2014

NOTE: This rule or regulation is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

1. POLICY

The West Plains Police Department establishes the following standard operating procedure for the purpose of detailing guidelines for patrol, arrest and report writing for the Canine Unit. This order also includes procedures on searches, training, tracking, equipment and restrictions of the Canine Unit.

II. PURPOSE

This purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure and guidelines for the deployment of the Canine Unit.

III. OPERATION OF THE CANINE UNIT

A. The Canine Unit is one unit of the Patrol Division and thus works directly for the on-duty watch supervisor. Officers assigned to this unit are responsible for the accomplishment of the police mission and West Plains Police Department's goal and objectives.

B. The mission of the canine unit is to provide assistance in the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension of criminal violators as well as such other duties as directed by competent authority.

1. All members of the West Plains Police Department are directed to cooperate and assist to the maximum extent in achieving these objectives.

2. The canine unit shall perform the regular duties assigned except when their services as a canine unit are required and to fulfill training requirements.

a. The Canine Unit is in no manner relieved from conforming to and complying with other orders of the West Plains Police Department.

C. The Canine Officer is authorized to use the police dog for any of the following purposes for which the animal is trained and certified:

1. Tracking

2. Building Searches

3. Article Searches

4. Criminal Apprehension

5. Officer Protection

6. Crowd Control (no)

a. The police dog may only be used in this capacity as authorized by the Chief of Police.

7. Drug Detection

D. The officer assigned to the Canine Unit shall:

1. Shall be subject to call out while in the West Plains area.

2. Will work hours and shifts as assigned by the Chief of Police or his designate.

IV. CANINE PATROL FUNCTIONS

A. Canine Officers shall be primarily concerned with handling calls for service where a canine would be of assistance. They shall avoid lengthy investigations not requiring canine services which would delay their response to a bonafide canine call.

1. If directed by a supervisor, a canine officer may secure his police dog if he is involved in a lengthy investigation or call where the dog is not needed.

B. When not handling canine calls, the canine unit will assist patrol units.

C. If a Canine Officer is unable to complete or handle a non-canine service call, the Canine Officer will advise the watch supervisor for relief from the call.

D. Canine Officers will not be used in riots, crowd control, or civil disorders, except in cases of self-defense or to rescue an officer in distress. (Unless directed otherwise by the Chief of Police.)

E. The Canine Unit is deployed to supplement patrol efforts with searches and tracking.

F. Canine Officers shall turn in offense reports, complaint cards and patrol logs to the on-duty watch supervisor before ending their tour-of-duty.

V. ARREST PROCEDURES

A. Canines will not be used to threaten a suspect or arrested person. This does not prevent the use of police dogs to guard someone, to prevent an escape or to keep someone from interfering in a police function. (Serving of search warrants, arrest warrants, stop and frisk situations, etc.)

1. Police dogs shall be leashed when guarding someone.

2. Should a situation escalate into an officer protection situation, a canine may be used to stop offender resistance in accordance with the Use of Force Policy.

B. Canines can be used to apprehend:

1. Felons

2. Persons committing acts of violence

C. If a felon flees a Canine Officer, the officer can release the dog to pursue the violator. However, great caution should be used in releasing the dog in heavily populated or congested areas.

D. When possible, the canine handler should have a backup officer handcuff and search a person. This allows the canine officer to direct efforts toward the control of the dog.

VI. REPORT WRITING PROCEDURES

A. No portion of this section shall conflict with the established report writing order. All unit reports will be submitted to the on-duty watch supervisor.

1. A Canine Unit Daily Activity Log shall be submitted anytime the

Canine Team (officer and dog) perform a regularly scheduled duty assignment.

2. A Canine Activity Record is submitted anytime the Canine Team (officer and dog) perform a specific Canine function. (Search, track, etc) The only exception to this report is a public demonstration authorized by the Police Department.

3. A monthly Canine Training Report will be maintained by the handler. This report is used to record any training completed by the dog.

a. The above mentioned reports/log is discoverable by court order and will be kept accurate and legible.

4. During Drug Detection Training the Canine Officer will indicate the number of drugs hidden, found and the time spent training.

5. If the Police Canine should become injured, a departmental memorandum shall be completed by the handler detailing the injuries to the dog and how they occurred.

6. Any equipment normally used by the handler shall be kept clean and in good working condition. Any equipment that fails or becomes defective shall be noted by the handler on a departmental equipment failure form.

B. A West Plains Police Department Incident/Supplemental Report shall be used as appropriate, by the handler when:

1. Evidence is recovered;

2. A felony arrest is made by the handler;

3. The Canine Team performs a function which is a significant part of a case or incident;

4. Directed to so do by a Commander/Supervisor, or

5. It may be required by another West Plains Police Department Special Order or directive.

C. When a person, other than a dog handler, is bitten by a police dog, the

Canine Officer shall:

1. Notify a supervisor immediately;
2. Request that the supervisor contact him at the scene, and
3. Complete the departmental Level II Use of Force Report

The on-duty watch supervisor shall photograph any visible injury and proceed with that portion of the Level II Use of Force Report as applicable to him.

4. Whenever the Canine Officer is bitten by a police dog, reporting procedures shall be outlined in reporting employee injuries.

VII. RESTRICTIONS OF THE CANINE UNIT

A. If an activity or request for a canine is outside the scope of the dogs capability, the canine will not be used.

B. Canines will not be used against suspected mental patients. This is not intended to prevent the use of a canine in tracking a missing person that ay be considered a mental patient.

C. Canines will not be used to search persons.

D. A Canine Team is to be considered a one person unit with regards to manpower needs and calls for police service.

VIII. CANINE UNIT CALL-OUT

A. A decision to call-out the Canine Unit shall be made by a supervisor.

B. A supervisor shall analyze a given situation and then he/she shall request the services of the Canine Unit.

C. At no time will the Canine Officer, while off-duty, be called directly by an officer unless approval has been granted by a supervisor.

IX. CANINE SEARCHES

A. Area searches are described as searches within a geographical location surrounded by natural or man made boundaries. When conducting area searches, an officer should:

1. Know the perimeters of a search area and how these perimeters are contained;
2. Know how many people are inside the perimeter, and
3. Conduct the search with the dog leashed, unless the officer can be assured that no person(s) are inside the area except the suspect.

B. When conducting building searches, the following will be remembered:

1. A function of the Canine Officer at a building search is to verify that no persons, other than the suspect(s) are within the building

2. Verification that innocent persons are not in the building to be searched should be done by;

a. Conferring with other officers at the scene, and

b. With verbal warning to person(s) within the building that a canine and officer are present and the canine will be released to conduct the search.

3. Building searches may be done with the dog unleashed unless there are innocent people inside the building.

C. When conducting drug/sniff searches, the following will be remembered:

1. The use of police dogs to sniff suspicious items or containers does not constitute a search (excluding dwellings and businesses). Therefore, drug "sniffs" are not covered by the constitutional

constraints against unreasonable searches and seizures providing the item is in a common area;

2. During the search of dwellings or businesses, the following will be considered:

a. Canines will not be used to conduct drug sniff searches unless the constitutional requirements regarding searches are met.

b. During dwelling searches, the investigating officer should accompany the Canine Team to accurately record the location of drugs and to take possession of contraband for storage, and

c. Prior to conducting a drug sniff/search the handler should verify that the premises are secure, suspects are detained, and the area is free of hazards.

3. When conducting searches of vehicles, vessels, and aircraft, the officer will remember the following:

a. Canine Teams which are requested to conduct a drug sniff of a vehicle will adhere to,

1. The confirmation of a search warrant existence.

2. A consent to search,

3. The establishment of probable cause for the investigating officers, or

4. Incident to a lawful arrest. b. Prior to conducting the search, the vehicle, vessel, or aircraft. shall be checked for hazards which could harm the Canine Team. All doors, windows, or covers should be closed. The vehicle, vessel or aircraft should be left closed for a minimum of five (5) minutes prior to deployment of the canine.

c. The investigating officer has the responsibility of noting the drugs detected by the canine, and

d. The investigating officer will place contraband in the Evidence Room or other secure storage area.

4. When there is a money seizure, the following procedures apply:

a. If possible, drug contaminated money sniffs should be conducted at the location where the money is discovered,

- b. Contaminated money sniffs will be conducted using containers (bags or boxes),
- c. A minimum of four (4) containers will be used for the sniff test,
- d. Each container will be numbered prior to placing objects within the container,
- e. Suspected contaminated money will be placed in one of the containers,
- f. All containers will be folded, placed or aligned so they are similar in size and shape,
- g. The location of the container with the suspected contraband will be unknown to the Canine Team prior to the sniff, and
- h. All containers should be handled as evidence after completing the sniff.

X. TRACKING CALLS

- A. Canine units may be used to track person.
- B. All tracking searches will begin with the dog leashed.
- C. Canine Officers should keep other officers and other persons behind them during the tracking process.
- D. If the person being tracked is to be arrested, the handler may release the dog from its leash provided that no innocent person is between the canine and the suspect.
- E. Any physical evidence discovered during a track should be handled by a backup officer.

XI. REQUEST FOR CANINE ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER AGENCIES

- A. When the Canine Team is requested to conduct activities for other law enforcement agencies inside the City of West Plains while on duty, the Canine Officer will ensure that:
 - 1. The request is approved by a supervisor,
 - 2. The requesting agency will be present during the canine activity, and
 - 3. The requesting agency will take possession of all evidence.
- B. When the canine team is requested to conduct activities for any agency while in an off-duty status, a supervisor will be contacted for approval.
- C. Whenever the canine team is on duty and requested to conduct a vehicle or short term search within five (5) miles of the city limits of West Plains or if the activity requested is further than five (5) miles and/or involves a lengthy or dangerous activity (i.e. manhunt, tracking) a supervisor will be notified.
 - 1. A memorandum will be completed on all "assist agency" calls to a supervisor.

XII. CANINE SELECTION AND TRAINING

- A. Selection of a police dog is based on the animal's:
 - 1. Even temperament and disposition,

3. Being between the ages of 18 to 36 months old; and
 4. Ability to pass the training as required for certification as either a Narcotics dog or Dual purpose dog. (Patrol/Narcotics)
- B. Basic obedience of the canine should be maintained by the dog's handler.
 - C. Criminal apprehension training will not be conducted using non-sworn police officers as helper, decoy or a suspect, unless prior approval has been given by the Chief of Police.
 - D. Sworn members may participate with Canine training with the approval of a supervisor.
 - E. Canine training may be conducted on city property or private property as approved by a supervisor.

XIII. DRUG TRAINING AIDS

- A. Training aids for canine drug detection shall be separated into a kit:
 1. Marijuana;
 2. Cocaine Base;
 3. Heroin HCL, and
 4. Methamphetamines.

XIV. HEALTH CARE AND SANITATION

- A. Except in emergency situations, the Canine Officer shall consult with the contract veterinarian before dispensing medications or treatments for the dog.
- B. When the Canine Officer is not on duty, the canine will be kept in an approved kennel at:
 1. Officer's residence,
 2. A contracted kennel,
 3. A contracted veterinarian; or
 4. Other location as approved by the Chief of Police.
- C. Canines and their dog houses, kennel, runs and feeding equipment must be kept clean at all times. The following items must also be maintained daily;
 1. Canine waste and uneaten food shall be removed;
 2. Canines shall have fresh water in a suitable container at all times; and
 3. Patrol vehicles used to transport canines shall be cleaned and water bowls freshened.

XV. CANINE INJURIES

- A. Canines, when injured, shall be administered first aid by the handler. The handler will also:
 1. Contact the contract veterinarian to determine medical treatments; and

2. Take the canine to a facility approved by the contract veterinarian.

Most of the canine injuries will be treated by the contract veterinarian.

B. A Police Canine Report of Injury will be completed and submitted by the handler by use of a departmental memorandum.

C. A General Offense Report shall be submitted by the handler anytime an intentional injury occurs to the dog. If such an injury occurs, the officer will:

1. Attend to the injured animal;
2. Request a supervisor to come to the scene for photographs,
3. Immediately notify a supervisor.

XVI. OFFICER REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING

A. Officers desiring assignment to the Canine Unit shall have:

1. Two (2) years patrol experience with the West Plains Police Department;
2. Competent or higher evaluation scores during the past year;
3. No disciplinary actions during the past year;
4. A willingness to commit to the unit and the City of West Plains for three (3) years, and
5. No excessive force violations sustained against them in the last five (5) years;
6. Approval by the Chief of Police.

B. Officers must meet and maintain standards which:

1. Require the successful completion of a basic canine handling course as approved by the department; and
2. Conform to canine training guidelines as established by the West Plains Police department and the State of Missouri.

C. The West Plains Police Department recognizes the need for ongoing training. To achieve this purpose, the Canine Officer shall obtain information on and attend recognized training for dogs and handlers.

D. The Canine Officer shall attend training that tests the dog's capabilities periodically as approved by the Chief of Police.

E. The Canine Officer will schedule at least one yearly in-service type re- certification training course for both him and his dog.

1. The above mentioned training and re-certification can be accomplished by researching and locating such type training courses and requesting attendance through the Chief of Police.

XVII. UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES

A. Officers assigned to Canine duty will be issued uniforms and equipment as outlined in West Plains Police Department Special Orders covering uniforms and equipment for Police Officer. Additionally, Canine Officers will be issued:

1. Three (3) sets of blue "tactical" (BDU) type shirts and trousers.

B. The Canine Officer shall wear the "tactical" (BDU) type uniform for a normal work day unless otherwise directed by the Chief of Police.

C. If the Canine Officer is in training or called in from an off-duty status, the uniform shall be the bdu type military uniform mentioned above.

D. The objective of having specially equipped police vehicles for transportation of police canines is the safety and comfort of the animal. Officers will drive police vehicles which have the following changes or additions:

1. The cage removed, the rear seat removed and a redesigned kennel type carrier installed (for safekeeping of the dog);

2. Tinted windows for the dog's comfort;

3. Outside canine markings for public notification;

4. A vehicle equipped with an excellent cooling system; and

5. A water container for canine refreshment.

E. A police vehicle equipped to transport a canine will not be used other than those instances outlined in this order. Any deviation from this order requires the authorization of the Chief of Police.

F. The Canine Officer is required to have at a minimum:

1. Tab leash;

2. Eighteen inch leash;

3. Six foot leash;

4. Canine ID card;

5. Dog tags;

6. Slip collar;

7. Leather agitation collar;

8. Paper bags for cash searches;

9. Tracking harness;

10. Tracking leash; and

11. Canine first aid kit.

G. Optional equipment consists of a:

1. Can of flea powder;
2. Jump suit;
3. Coat rake;
4. Protection sleeve;
5. Agitation muzzle;
6. Leather badge collar;
7. Transport muzzle; and
8. Bite suit.

H. The West Plains Police Department shall issue all equipment necessary for the Canine Officer to handle their dog.

I. Officers shall keep all equipment clean and in good working order.

J. Should equipment become worn or broken, the Canine Officer needs to notify a supervisor.

K. Any person authorized to operate a city vehicle may operate a Canine Unit vehicle as outlined in the Special Orders of the West Plains Police Department.

L. Officers are required to maintain and submit K-9 activity logs to the Chief of Police annually or upon request.

AUTHORITY

A. This policy is issued by the authority of the Chief of Police. Any policy additions, deviations or revisions shall be made only at the direction of the Chief of Police.

By Authority of:

Jeffrey S. Head, Chief of Police