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VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

CANINE UNIT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

MISSION
The purpose of the Ventura County Sheriff's Canine Unit is to provide highly trained Police Service Dog handler/dog teams to support the Department's Mission of safeguarding the lives and property of residents of Ventura County.

STRATEGY
Our strategy for accomplishing this mission is to provide timely canine resources utilizing the superior senses and capabilities of our highly trained canines to assist our Department and other law enforcement agencies within Ventura County in an atmosphere of cooperation. We are committed to providing the highest professional services possible to search for illegal substances, track adults and lost children, preserve the peace, prevent crime, apprehend offenders, and enforce laws in a fair an impartial manner.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE
Patrol Services Division
Canine Unit

Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing Policies, Procedures, and Standards for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019

Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To clarify and ensure who is responsible for creating policies, procedures, and standards for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

I. POLICY AND OPERATIONS

A. Policies

Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit Policies, Procedures, and Standards shall be developed, implemented, and approved by Department personnel and staff. This is not designed to limit Department personnel from seeking information or professional or expert help and opinions concerning development of policies, procedures, and standards. The final decisions on Policies, Procedures, and Standards shall rest with Department staff and personnel.

B. Operations

The canine teams will be assigned to the Patrol Divisions and deployed in clearly marked patrol vehicles. The canine teams are deployed as assigned or unassigned patrol units, with the ability to augment traditional policing services in the community.

The following guidelines are provided for evaluating when a canine team may assist, with a particular call for service.

1. The canine team can be assigned to calls involving any crime "in progress" or crime that has just occurred. They will handle specific report calls when the area unit is not available and it would not be practical to wait for the area unit to go back into service or when the canine team is assigned to a regular beat area to patrol.

2. The canine unit should not be given cold paper calls that would take them out of service for extended periods of time unless they are fulfilling the role of a
minimum deployment beat car.

3. Sheriff canine teams, in addition to the responsibilities of an assigned beat or area will primarily be utilized for:
   a) Backup and assisting other patrol officers
   b) In progress crimes
   c) Robbery and burglary alarm calls
   d) Suspect searches
   e) Apprehension of fleeing suspects
   f) Narcotics searches
   g) Patrolling of high crime problem areas
   h) Searching for and locating evidence
   i) Lost person searches
   j) Tracking persons

4. The canine handler will advise the dispatcher whenever it is responding to any calls to which it is not assigned.

5. The canine handler should not be used as Field Training Officers when possible.

C. Canine - Use of Force

The police canine should be considered as non-lethal. The primary purpose of the police canine is utilization of the canines olfactory ability. When necessary, the police canine can be also used for apprehension and handler protection.

When using a canine as a means of force, the handler must give proper consideration to the Department's policies, the California Penal Code, as well as current case law relating to the use of police canines.

A police service dog may be used to track/locate and if necessary apprehend a suspect if the canine handler reasonably believes that the individual has either committed or is about to commit any offense and if any of the following conditions exist:

1. There is a reasonable belief that the individual poses an immediate threat of violence or serious harm to the public, any officer, or the handler.
2. The individual is physically resisting arrest and the use of a canine reasonably appears to be necessary to overcome such resistance.
3. The individual(s) is/are believed to be concealed in an area where entry by other than the canine would pose a threat to the safety of officers or the public.

It is recognized that situations may arise which 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 a police canine in view of the totality of the circumstances.

**NOTE:** Absent the presence of one or more of the above conditions, mere flight from pursuing officer(s) shall not serve as good cause for the use of a police canine to apprehend an individual. This does not negate the use of the police canine to track or search for individuals.

Prior to the use of a police canine to search for or apprehend any individual, the canine handler and/or the supervisor on scene shall carefully consider all pertinent information reasonably available at the time. The information shall include, but is not limited to the following:

- The individual’s age or estimate thereof.
- The nature of the suspected offense.
- Any potential danger to the public and/or other officers at the scene if the police canine is released.
- The degree of resistance, if any, the subject has shown.
- The potential for escape or flight if the police canine is not utilized.
- The potential for injury to officers or the public caused by the suspect if the police canine is not utilized.
- The use of weapons.
- Any other factors or information that might be available at the time.

A canine handler shall have the ultimate authority not to deploy the canine. The handler will evaluate each situation and determine if the use of a canine is technically feasible. Generally the decision to deploy the canine shall remain with the handler. However, a supervisor sufficiently apprised of the situation may decide not to deploy the canine.

**Warnings Given to Announce the Use of a Police Canine**

Unless it would otherwise increase the risk of injury or escape, a clearly audible warning to announce that a police canine will be released if the person does not come forth, shall be made prior to releasing a police canine. If the handler is able to give the announcement in a second language (e.g. Spanish,) he/she is encouraged to do so. Prior to starting the search, the handler will wait a reasonable amount of time for any individuals’ in the search area to respond to the announcement. The canine handler, when practical, shall first advise the supervisor of their decision if a verbal warning is not given prior to releasing the canine. If the warning is not given, the handler will explain the circumstances in an incident report.

**D. Suspect Searches**

1. **Buildings and/or Areas**
b) When practical, a perimeter of the search area will be provided by patrol personnel.

c) The decision to conduct the search on or off-lead will be left up to the handler.

E. Crowd Control

1. Canine teams **Shall Not** be used for basic, non-violent crowd control.
   
a) In determining whether the canine teams are to be used in an unruly crowd situation, the age and composition of the crowd must be considered. Crowds with small children or very old persons should be considered as unique and a canine's use is discouraged.

b) Crowds within a building, such as large meeting rooms and dance areas, should also receive special consideration. Limited exit possibilities and the potential for panic reaction of the crowd must be considered.

c) The canine will remain on-leash at all times and will not be released into the crowd. Handlers will make every effort to prevent the canine from biting anyone unless the handler, another officer, or any other person is attacked, or is in such jeopardy that no other means of intervention is reasonable.

d) If a crowd becomes unruly or violent, and there is a strong possibility of injury to any individual or the destruction of property, the canine team may be utilized to assist in dispersing and controlling the crowd. The on-site supervisor will make this decision after the handler has appraised them of the Department's Canine Policy regarding crowd control.

F. Public Places and Residences

1. The canine will not be taken into a public place (e.g. bars, restaurants, or theaters) or a residence under normal circumstances. The canine may be taken into such
places if there are circumstances that necessitate the use of a canine.

2. All canines shall be under the direct control of their handler when in a public place and shall not be left unattended for any reason. An exception would be when the canine is left in a locked vehicle or secured in an appropriate kennel.

G. Narcotics Searches

1. A certified narcotics detection canine may be used in accordance with current law to assist in the search for narcotics during a search warrant, to obtain a search warrant by using the detection canine in support of probable cause, and to search vehicles, building, bags or any other articles deemed necessary.

2. A narcotics detection canine shall not be used to search a person for narcotics.

H. Transportation of Arrested Persons in Canine Units

1. Transporting arrested persons in the canine unit is generally discouraged; however, the canine unit may be used when other transportation is not reasonably available and the person is not violent. If the canine unit is utilized the person is to be handcuffed behind his/her back and seat belted into the front passenger seat. The canine is to be restrained to the canine portion of the unit.

I. Ride Along in a Canine Unit

1. Each canine has a different personality; therefore it will be left up to the discretion of the Canine Supervisor or the Canine Manager and each canine handler as to the taking of a ride along during a routine shift.

J. Canine Control in the Station and/or Jail Facility

1. While at the station, the handler has the option of leaving the canine in the locked canine unit, securing the canine in the station kennel, or having the canine accompany him/her. However, if the canine remains with the handler, the handler will remain in control of the canine at all times and will not allow the canine to disrupt station operations.

2. The canine will not be permitted inside any of the jail facilities unless requested by the Facility “Watch Commander.”

K. Breeding of Department Canines

1. The Sheriff’s canines will not be bred while under the ownership of the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE  
Patrol Services Division  
Canine Unit  
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing Deployment Procedures for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019  
Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner  
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To clarify and outline the deployment of personnel and canines within the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

II. DEPLOYMENT

A. Scheduling

1. Each canine team will be assigned to and deployed from local area stations throughout the Patrol Services Division. The respective area station supervisors will supervise a canine teams day-to-day operations.

2. The Canine Unit will assign the canine teams schedule or shift, unless the canine team is being used as minimum deployment, then the station scheduler will assign the canine team a particular shift in coordination with the Canine Supervisor to accommodate 24/7 canine coverage. Every effort will be made to accommodate the needs of the stations as well as making sure there is 24/7 canine coverage.

B. Shift Hours

1. Canine teams shall be assigned as cover units and not assigned in minimum deployment beat areas, unless department needs require different.

2. Canine teams will be assigned to a 12-hour patrol style shift unless the overall needs of the Department or Canine Unit require a change.
   a) During 12-hour shifts the canine teams will generally be assigned to shift IV (1000-2200) or shift V (1500-0300), but shifts may vary depending on specific needs of the station and Canine Unit.

3. Training days are a part of the handler’s normal work week.
4. The handler may be scheduled to cover weekends and holidays in order to give maximum coverage at the times of highest activity.

C. Canine Request

1. Urgent requests for the canine unit are to be made through the "Watch Commander" or field supervisor whenever practical. Refer to the Policy Manual, Policy 318 "Call Out Procedure."

2. "Planned" canine requests (i.e. search warrants) should be requested via the Canine Supervisor or Canine Program Manager.

3. When "planned" events are scheduled, it is the duty of the canine handler to make notifications to station supervisors, managers and when impacting normal patrol operations the "Watch Commander" as necessary.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE
Patrol Services Division
Canine Unit
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing the Chain of Command Procedures for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019
Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To clarify and outline the Chain of Command within the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

III. CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit is directed by the designated Captain, whose title will be “Canine Program Manager.” In the matters regarding the training, utilization, or reporting of the unit, the Canine Program Manager shall report to a designated Patrol Services Division Commander. The Canine Program Manager may designate a sergeant to act as the “Canine Supervisor.” Operationally, the canine team is under the direct control of the on-duty Watch Commander or other on-duty supervisor.

A. Selection and Requirements of Canine Supervisor

1. The Canine Supervisor will be of the rank of sergeant and will be selected by the Canine Program Manager.

2. The Canine Supervisor should have a good working knowledge of canine behavior and how it pertains to deployment in a law enforcement capacity.

B. Duties of Canine Supervisor

1. The Canine Supervisor will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the unit and supervision of the canine team when dealing with canine issues.

2. The Canine Supervisor will be responsible for attending and participating in Weekly canine training. This includes the monitoring of all training for each of The Sheriff’s canine teams, offering assistance and support when and where necessary.

3. The Canine Supervisor will be responsible for completing the weekly “Administration Report” which covers the weekly activities, training and any
other issues, which need documentation.

4. The Canine Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring the accurate completion of all reports submitted by canine handlers, which deal with canine issues. Examples of reports would include Training Reports, Weekly Logs, and reports dealing with any and all canine incidents.

5. The Canine Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that all files relating to canine issues are up to date and maintained in a quickly obtainable fashion.

6. The Canine Supervisor will be responsible for routine inspections of the canine equipment. This will include the equipment issued to the handlers, the equipment in storage, and any other equipment designated for canine use. This will also include regular inspections of kennel facilities built and maintained at each of the handler’s home.

7. The Canine Supervisor will be responsible for developing, maintaining, and providing a current list of canine demonstrations to the Canine Program Manager along with the designated station Captains/Managers. This list should be updated and provided to indicate personnel on the weekly basis or as the list is updated.

8. The Canine Supervisor or his/her designee will be responsible for scheduling the canine teams and updating the canine schedule on the Department Intranet site.

9. The Canine Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring the security of all training aids.

10. The Canine Supervisor will also assist the Canine Program Manager in other areas of the canine program, as designated by the Canine Program Manager, (canine selection, handler selection, etc.).
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE
Patrol Services Division
Canine Unit
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing the Canine Reporting Procedures for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019

Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To outline the reporting procedures on all canine training, canine bites and apprehensions within the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES

A. Dog Bite/Apprehension Reports

1. In every situation where a Sheriff’s canine engages or injures anyone, in any manner, the following shall apply:

a) The handler will first tend to the immediate needs of the injured party by providing and/or obtaining medical attention for them.

b) The handler will notify the Watch Commander and advise of the circumstances surrounding the incident.

c) The Watch Commander or his/her designee will notify the Canine Supervisor and the Canine Program Manager of the incident.

d) When necessary, the Canine Program Manager or his/her designee will notify the Sheriff’s Special Counsel of the incident and information surrounding the circumstances. At that time it will be determined if the circumstances dictate the response of Sheriff’s Special Counsel.

e) All reports, including (crime, arrest, supplemental form, etc.) shall be completed prior to going off-duty shift, unless otherwise permitted by the Watch Commander, the Canine Program Manager, and or the Canine Supervisor.

f) The handler shall photograph the affected area(s). If the subject alleges an injury that is not visible, notification shall be made to a supervisor and the location of the alleged injury shall be photographed.
g) If the subject refuses to allow the handler to view the affected area, the
handler will call another officer, preferably a supervisor, to act as a
witness to the refusal.

2. Initial Watch Commander Procedure - When an incident occurs that involves an
injury to a person from the use of a Department canine, certain timely notifications
need to be made along with a review of the original reports in the case. This
procedure does not negate the Watch Commander from following other procedures,
such as making notifications to the effected Division’s Commander, Area Captain,
and any other personnel needing to be notified.

The Sheriff’s Special Counsel may elect to respond to the scene and/or hospital,
depending on the circumstances, to represent the interests of the Sheriff and Sheriff’s
employees. As the Sheriff’s Counsel, he/she may also wish to review the original
criminal reports before the reports are submitted to our Records Bureau or
Detectives, for the filing of charges.

The following procedure has been established to allow for the notifications and
timely review, so as to not disrupt the normal processing of our original criminal
reports.

   a) The involved handler will contact and brief the Watch Commander
      and Canine Unit Supervisor as to the circumstances and extent of the
      injuries.

   b) The on duty Watch Commander or Canine Unit Supervisor will notify the
      Canine Manager or designee.

   c) The Canine Manager is responsible for briefing the Commander in charge
      of the Canine Unit and Sheriff’s Special Counsel.

   d) The Watch Commander shall direct that all original reports related to the
      case be completed prior to the end of shift and approved by the area
      supervisor, except the canine handler’s report, which is to be approved
      by the Canine Unit Supervisor or designee.

   e) The original reports will then be forwarded to the Canine Unit Manager
      or designee as soon as possible.

   f) If the incident should occur over the weekend, all reports shall be
      delivered on Monday or the next regular court day if a court holiday is
      involved. Review of the original reports shall take place as soon as
      possible keeping in mind that detectives only have 48 hours to file the
      case
      when a suspect is in custody.

   g) For investigative purposes a copy of the reports will be provided to
investigators labeled “Pending Approval.” This will suffice until the original reports are submitted for processing. No copies of the report shall be submitted to the Records Bureau until the original is reviewed and approved.

h) When necessary, arrangements shall be made with the Sheriff’s Special Counsel, Commander of the Canine Unit, Commander of the effected division, Canine Manager, and any other personnel deemed necessary to meet and review the original reports prior to their normal processing and distribution through normal channels, keeping in mind the above timeline.

B. Incident Reports, Logs and Statistics

1. In all incidents where a Sheriff’s canine is utilized the incident shall be documented on the weekly activity log. Additionally, if the incident resulted in a narcotics find, suspect find, or apprehension, the appropriate department forms shall be utilized. Any other incident requiring documentation may be written on an incident report. It is the responsibility of the handler to complete the report(s) in a timely manner as directed by their supervisors.

2. Canine handlers shall prepare a “Weekly Activity Report” utilizing the K9 PackTrack computer program summarizing the utilization of the canine team.

3. Each canine handler shall prepare a “Weekly Training Report” utilizing the K9 PackTrack computer program summarizing the training, which was conducted during the regular scheduled training day and any training time during the week.

4. The Canine Supervisor or designee will maintain the monthly and annual statistics for the unit, summarizing the training and utilization of all of the canine teams.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE
Patrol Services Division
Canine Unit
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing the Minimum P.O.S.T. Standards for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019
Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To outline and ensure the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit meets the P.O.S.T. Minimum Standards.

V. TRAINING

A. Before assignment in the field, each canine team shall be trained and certified to meet current minimum P.O.S.T. standards.

B. Each Canine Team shall thereafter be re-certified to minimum P.O.S.T. canine team standards on an annual basis. Additional training considerations are as follows:

1. Canine teams shall participate in training as defined by the Canine Program Manager.

2. Canine teams are encouraged to engage in additional on-duty training. Off-duty training shall be pre-approved by the Canine Supervisor.

3. In order to ensure all training is consistent, no handler, trainer, or outside vendor will be authorized to train to a standard that is contrary to the policies of the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office.

4. The canine handler shall complete a Weekly Canine Training Report documenting the training conducted for the entire week. These reports shall be turned into the Canine Supervisor who will maintain the Weekly Training Reports using the K9 PackTrack computer program.

5. Prior to conducting any training, the canine handler will conduct a training site survey of the location where the intended training will occur. The survey will include the following considerations:
   a) Safety of the public, handlers, and canines.
   b) Security of the site being utilized.
c) The ability of maintaining site security during the course of training.

C. Training Venues

Canine teams are encouraged to locate and utilize a multitude of training venues. This enables a variety of experiences for both the handlers and canines.

D. Injury to Deputies/Helpers During Training Exercises

1. During canine training every effort should be made to safely conduct training. During canine training, injuries may occur. If such an injury does occur, the involved handler will provide immediate first aid and medical attention for the effected person’s(s).

2. The involved handler will notify the Canine Supervisor who will in turn notify the Canine Program Manager.

3. If the injured person is an employee for the County of Ventura, appropriate forms for the on duty injury will be completed and submitted through proper channels.

4. If the injured person is not an employee for the County of Ventura, the Canine Supervisor shall make sure that the effected person’s(s) agency supervisor is notified. It will be the responsibility of the effected person’s(s) agency to complete the necessary forms for on duty injuries.

5. Depending on the situation, the Canine Supervisor and/or the Canine Program Manager will determine if further documentation will be necessary.

6. As per current policy, the Commander in charge of the Canine Unit and the effected deputy’s Division Commander will be notified of the injury. The Commander will in turn make appropriate notifications through the Chain of Command.

E. Explosive Detection Canine Training

Various agencies are currently deploying explosive detection canines in the field. Our canine handlers may have occasion to work and or train with these canine teams. Without the proper training and direction handling explosive training aids can be extremely dangerous.

1. Explosive training aids shall be handled by those deputies who have received approved departmental training in the proper handling of explosive compounds.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE
Patrol Services Division
Canine Unit
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing the Procedures the Handling of Training Narcotics for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019

Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To outline and clarify the necessary procedures of obtaining and controlling training narcotics for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

VI. TRAINING (NARCOTICS)

AUTHORIZED POSSESSION OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES FOR TRAINING PURPOSES

11367.5 California Health & Safety Code provides;

(a) Any Sheriff, Chief of Police, The Chief of the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement, or the Commissioner of the California Highway Patrol, or a designee thereof, may, in his or her discretion, provide controlled substances in his or her possession and control to any duly authorized peace officer or civilian drug detection canine trainer working under the direction of a law enforcement agency, provided the controlled substances are no longer needed as criminal evidence and provided the person receiving the controlled substances, if required by the Drug Enforcement Administration, possesses a current and valid Drug Enforcement Administration registration which specifically authorizes the recipient to possess controlled substances while providing substance abuse training to law enforcement or the community or while providing canine drug detection training.

(b) All duly authorized peace officers, while providing substance abuse training to law enforcement or the community or while providing canine drug detection training, in performance of their official duties, and any person working under their immediate direction, supervision, or instruction, are immune from prosecution under this division.
(c) (1) Any person receiving controlled substances pursuant to subdivision (a) shall maintain custody and control of the controlled substances and shall keep records regarding any loss of, or damage to, those controlled substances.
(2) All controlled substances shall be maintained in a secure location approved by the dispensing agency.
(3) Any loss shall be reported immediately to the dispensing agency.
(4) All controlled substances shall be returned to the dispensing agency upon the conclusion of the training or upon demand by the dispensing agency.

A. Procedures

1. Pursuant to the above Health and Safety code section, Ventura County Sheriff’s canine handlers will comply with all its provisions, specifically subsections (c)(1),(2),(3),(4).

5. Prior to conducting any narcotics training, the canine handler will conduct a training site survey. The survey shall include the following considerations:
   a) Safety of the public, handlers, and canines.
b) Security of the location being utilized.

c) The ability of maintaining site security after the narcotic training aids are deployed.

B. Supervisory Responsibility

1. The Canine Supervisor and/or Canine Program Manager will conduct a physical inspection of the handler’s training aids during the weekly canine training sessions.

2. The inspection is to ensure the integrity of the training aids and their packaging.

3. The Canine Supervisor and/or Canine Program Manager will document the inspection of the training aids on the weekly Administrative Report.

C. Vacation / Long Term Storage

1. Procedure

a) As with any item of property which is submitted or stored within the Property Room, the submitting canine handler will initially have to complete and submit a Property Evidence Report with the sealed and locked individual narcotics training aid box. After the initial submittal to the Property Room, no additional paperwork by the canine handler will be necessary other than his/her signature at the time the narcotics training aid box is checked out.

b) Each canine handler will ensure that the following appears on each of their individual narcotics training aid boxes:

(1) Canine handler’s name and department issued identification number.

(2) Canine handler’s cellular phone number.

(3) Canine’s name.

c) The Property Room Staff will create a physical chain and will maintain a
copy of the Property Evidence Report as well as the Chain of Custody Report in a special canine file within the Property Room Office.

d) All submitted narcotics boxes will be bar-coded.

e) Each canine handler will be responsible for submitting their narcotics training aid box locked and sealed with security tape any time the box is submitted to the Property Room.

f) The canine handler will maintain the key/combination to the narcotics training aid box and will be responsible for the contents of their individual boxes. The Property Room Staff will have no access to the interior or to the substances inside the narcotics training aid boxes.

g) The Property Room will be responsible for maintaining custody and security of the submitted narcotics training aid boxes, not the contents.

h) Prior to picking up any narcotics training aid box, the canine handler will call the Property Room and set an appointment with Property Room staff for an appropriate pick-up time. Every effort should be made to give as much advanced notice as possible. When the canine handler checks out the narcotics training aid box the following will be completed:

(1) The canine handler will sign the Physical Property Chain.

(2) The canine handler will confirm the narcotics training aid box is still locked.

(3) The canine handler will confirm that the narcotics training aid box still has the un-tampered seal that was placed on the box by them.

i) During normal Property Room business hours (0800 – 1600) canine handlers can submit their narcotics training aid boxes to the Property Room reception area.

j) During Property Room after-hours, canine handlers can submit their narcotics training aid boxes through the normal evidence process by booking it into the evidence lockers on the west side of the Crime Laboratory building or in the evidence lockers at the East County Station. Canine handlers will not have to submit a Property Evidence Report form, but will have to complete any other necessary signatures or listing of the information that may be needed for the after hour securing of items into the evidence locker.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
Patrol Services Division  
Canine Unit  
Standard Operating Procedure

**SUBJECT:** Establishing the Procedures on Public Relations for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE:</th>
<th>February 7, 2019</th>
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**Prepared by:** Sgt. Scott Duffner  
**Approved by:** Capt. Cory Rubright

**PURPOSE:** To outline and guide the procedures on public relation matters within the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

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**VII. PUBLIC RELATIONS**

A. Requests from the public for programs, demonstrations, etc. are to be cleared through the Canine Program Manager or Canine Supervisor.

B. All information and statistics requested for public use, on the performance of the Sheriff’s Canine Program or individual canine teams, will be cleared and approved by the Canine Program Manager.

C. After a canine handler is assigned to conduct a demonstration, it is his/her responsibility to make the appropriate notifications to his/her supervisor and scheduling person at their respective station or assignment. It is the responsibility of the respective station station supervisor to make appropriate notifications through the station chain of command.

D. Canine handlers, when assigned to public relation duties, shall prepare themselves, their canine, and all canine equipment, including the canine patrol unit, in such a manner as to present a positive and professional image to the audience.

E. The standard uniform for public relations demonstration shall be a Class "A" uniform or the uniform approved by the Canine Program Manager.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE
Patrol Services Division
Canine Unit
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing Procedures for the Care and Kenneling of Department Canines Owned by the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019

Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To outline and clarify the procedures on the care and kenneling of canines that are owned and operated by the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

VIII. CARE AND KENNELING

A. Care of the dog

1. It shall be the responsibility of the canine handler to keep his dog in such physical condition that the canine is able to perform the duties expected.

2. Any indication that the canine is ill or not in good condition shall be immediately reported to the Canine Supervisor.

3. The canine shall be fed its daily meal at the completion of its duty, or fed at the advice of the canine trainer.

4. The handler will routinely groom their assigned canine.

5. The canine handler may submit overtime for care and maintenance of their assigned canine, as established by the V.C.D.S.A.’s Memorandum of Agreement. All of the week’s overtime for maintenance and care shall be submitted on one overtime slip.

6. In the event that emergency veterinary service is required for the dog, the treatment shall be rendered and the handler will notify the Canine Program Manager or Canine Supervisor as soon as possible. The handler will also submit a memorandum regarding the incident, to the Canine Program Manager, as soon as practical following the emergency.

7. All veterinary attention not of an emergency nature will be coordinated with the Canine Supervisor and/or the Canine Program Manager, program veterinarian and
B. General Handling

1. The handler will not involve themselves in any outside activities with their canine unless previously authorized by the Canine Program Manager or Canine Supervisor.

2. Under no circumstances will the canine be allowed or encouraged to jump up or onto the exterior of the canine patrol unit.

3. When the canine patrol unit is to be left unattended, it will be locked with the front windows up. The rear windows with screens secured may be left down at the handler’s discretion.

4. Under no circumstances will any member of the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office tease, harass, or otherwise annoy the canine. Members of this department will refrain from any activity around the canine or the canine handler that might agitate or excite the canine, with the exception of supervised training.

C. Kenneling

1. Care and handling of the Sheriff’s canine are to meet the standard established by the canine manual. The handler and family must realize that the canine placed in their care is a 24-hour responsibility, seven (7) days a week. The canine must be an important part of the family’s life and the family must understand that this canine is not a pet. It is a working police canine and must be treated as such.

2. When off-duty, the canine shall be maintained in the kennel, provided by the department, at the home of the handler. When the canine is kenned at the handler’s home, the gate shall be secured with a lock. Also, when off-duty, the canine may be let out of its kennel while under the direct control of its handler. The kennel shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition at all times.

3. When the handler is absent from his/her home for a reasonable period of time, the canine may be secured (locked) in its kennel and left unattended. The canine supervisor and handler will determine what a reasonable period of time is based on the canine and the environment, and shall not exceed twenty-four (24) hours.

4. If the handler is absent from his/her home and the canine will be left unattended for more than twenty-four (24) hours, the handler shall seek permission of the canine supervisor to kennel the canine at an approved public/private kennel facility. If a person, other than the handler, is responsible for providing periodic checks on the canine during the twenty-four (24) hour period, the person must be approved by the handler and Canine Supervisor and qualified to do so.

5. Requirement for approved public/private kennel facility:
   
a) The canine supervisor and manager shall approve the kennel.
b) The kennel facility should be a licensed establishment.

c) The size of the individual kennel used to house the canine shall be adequate for the size of the canine.

d) There should be both interior and exterior areas available to the canine.

e) The kennel shall be clean and well maintained.

f) Every effort should be made to allow for departmental canine to be kept separate from other animals at the kennel facility.

g) The kennel facility shall provide for the necessary care, feeding, and medical concerns of the canine twenty-four (24) hours a day, including weekends.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE
Patrol Services Division
Canine Unit
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing Equipment Procurement and Procedures for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019

Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To outline and establish the procedures on procuring the necessary equipment for the canines and handlers of the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

IX. EQUIPMENT

A. The Canine Supervisor will make periodic inspections of the canine units, equipment, and personnel to ensure that the equipment is being properly maintained and is in good working order. While conducting the inspections the canine supervisor shall evaluate the need to replace worn materials. This does not relieve the canine handler’s from routine equipment inspections and replacing worn materials when necessary.

B. The Canine Supervisor may, with reasonable notice, visit the handlers’ homes on the yearly basis. This visit would be to inspect the conditions under which the canine is being kept, and the condition of any canine equipment under the handler’s control.

C. Canine handlers are responsible for the care and condition of all equipment issued to them for training, use and care of the canine.

D. The canine patrol units are to be kept in good operating order. The interior of the unit shall be kept clean, odor free, and disinfected. All other department regulations pertaining to the proper maintenance of county vehicles shall apply. Handlers are not to customize the canine units with unauthorized equipment, stickers, signs, or other devices.

E. The canine patrol unit that is taken home by the handlers shall be used only for department approved activities.

F. The Canine Program Manager will approve all equipment prior to use by the canine handlers.

G. During off-duty time, the handler’s assigned patrol unit will be kept on the handler’s property and out of sight of the public.
H. When the canine handler needs new equipment, it shall be requested through the Canine Supervisor.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE  
Patrol Services Division  
Canine Unit  
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing the Guidelines on Uniforms Worn by the Members of the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019

Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To outline and establish guidelines on all uniforms worn by canine handlers assigned to the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

X. UNIFORM / UNIT IDENTIFIER

A. Uniform

1. Shirts
   a) The standard uniform for normal patrol duty will be the department authorized Class “C” utility uniform. The shirt shall have an embroidered badge, deputy’s name (first initial, last name) embroidered on the right chest.

   b) A short sleeve polo shirt is authorized (as described in the Uniform Regulations) for training days or a Unit T-shirt approved by the Canine Manager. The Polo shirt shall have an embroidered badge, deputy’s name (first initial, last name) embroidered on the right chest, silk screened shoulder patches on each sleeve, and “SHERIFF” silk screened on the back.

2. Trousers
   a) Specialized trousers are authorized. The same trouser as authorized for the utility uniform except with cargo pockets (as described in the Apparel Specifications).

3. The standard uniform for public relations demonstration shall be a Class "A" uniform or the field uniform approved by the Canine Program Manager.

4. The standard uniform for training shall be the utility uniform consisting of the tan polo shirt and green utility pants or a uniform approved by the Canine Program Manager.
B. Canine Unit Pin

1. In 1989 the Sheriff approved a canine unit pin consisting of a generic “K-9” symbol for canine handlers to wear on their uniform. In June 2002, a new canine pin was designed and submitted to the Uniform Committee for approval. The Uniform Committee and Executive Staff approved the canine unit pin.

2. Personnel assigned as a canine handler for four (4) years or more are eligible to retain his/her canine unit pin and continue to wear the pin after leaving the unit. Personnel must leave the unit in good standing with approval of the Canine Manager.

3. The department authorized Canine Unit Pin shall be worn on the right side of the right pocket flap of Class “A” and Field Uniform shirts.

4. If worn, the department authorized Canine Unit Pin shall be placed on the left side of the right pocket flap of the Class “C” utility shirt.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE  
Patrol Services Division  
Canine Unit  
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing the Guidelines on Handler Qualification and Selection for the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019  
Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner  
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines on the selection and qualification of all sworn applicants interested in becoming a canine handler assigned to the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

XI. HANDLER QUALIFICATION - SELECTION

A. Qualifications

1. Applicants shall be the rank of Deputy.

2. Possess strong character traits such as maturity, patience, initiative, flexibility, dependability, enthusiasm, and the ability to build relationships with their canine partner and fellow team members. The applicant should also have above average writing and communication skills, and good interpersonal skills.

3. Demonstrate the ability to work very complex assignments within team environments under sometimes-stressful conditions.

4. Have a minimum of one and one-half years of patrol experience.

5. Demonstrate the maturity, stability, and patience to care for, train, and reinforce the canine’s training on a daily basis.

6. Perform a constant evaluation of the canine’s readiness and fitness for duty.

7. Prospective handlers may be asked to take a psychological examination as provided by the department.

8. Be physically fit and have no limitations on the physical activities of lifting and handling of a canine.

9. Reside within the County of Ventura or within a close proximity of the Ventura County Line, and own or rent property appropriate for housing a department
canine (i.e., house with an appropriate yard.) If necessary, the applicant must provide approval from the property owner for the installation of a canine kennel at the deputy's residence. Selection of a handler who lives out of county is at the discretion of the Canine Program Manager.

10. Must provide secure, concealed off street parking for their assigned canine patrol unit.

11. Approval of the applicant's family who is residing in the home.

12. Notification of adjoining neighbors to the deputy's home.

13. Accept a three (3) year commitment to the Canine Unit Program.

B. Selection Process

1. A Transfer Request Form should be submitted to Sheriff's Human Resources no later than a date that will be provided.

2. Concurrently, a copy of the Transfer Request Form, current resume, examples of three (3) well written reports, and the last three (3) annual performance appraisals must be submitted to the Canine Supervisor no later than a date that should be provided.

3. Depending on the number of applicants, an initial screening may be conducted by the Canine Program Manager to reduce the applicant numbers to an acceptable level for interviews. The Canine Program Manager reserves the right to extend the open period for submitting applications if necessary.

4. Successful applicants will be invited to participate in an interview.

5. A background investigation may be conducted to evaluate the applicant's suitability for the position. This investigation may include a review of the applicant's personnel file as well as contacts with their current and former supervisors.

6. A numerical ranking of the candidates will not be established.

7. The results of this application process will be utilized for the current opening and one back-up for the opening. Canine position openings beyond the current opening will be announced and the selection process will be repeated. However, an eligibility list may be maintained for one (1) calendar year from the last testing process at the discretion of the Canine Program Manager.

8. The selected deputies will be required to attend and successfully complete a two hundred eighty (280) hour certified canine training program prior to being assigned as a canine deputy.
9. Potential handlers will be given the dates for the application process opening and closing.
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE
Patrol Services Division
Canine Unit
Standard Operating Procedure

SUBJECT: Establishing the Guidelines for the Retirement of Police Service Dogs owned by the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Unit.

DATE: February 7, 2019

Prepared by: Sgt. Scott Duffner
Approved by: Capt. Cory Rubright

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines and procedures on the retirement and placement of Police Service Dogs owned by the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Canine Unit.

XII RETIREMENT OF A CANINE

BACKGROUND/PROCEDURE

The Ventura County Sheriff’s Office purchases canines to be utilized as Police Service Canines trained in law enforcement duties. Since its inception in 1986 the funding for the purchase of these canines is provided from private donations made by private persons, businesses, and organizations. On occasion, it is necessary to sell and/or retire canines. This policy outlines the procedure for such sales and transfers.

RETIREMENT OF A CANINE

A. Evaluation of PSD for sale/retirement

1. When determining if a police canine should be retired/sold, several criteria should be evaluated and taken into consideration:
   A. Service record with the Canine Unit.
   B. Current age of the police canine.
   C. Age of the canine when purchased from the vendor.
   D. Medical conditions during the service life.
   E. Current medical conditions.
   F. Recommendation of the trainers.
   G. Estimated service life remaining vs. the cost to re-train the canine with another handler.

2. When a Sheriff’s canine is going to be retired or sold, the ownership may, at the department’s discretion, be transferred to a vendor, the canines last handler, or any previous canine handler if deemed qualified.
3. In order for a vendor or handler to take ownership of a Sheriff's owned canine that is going to be retired or sold, he/she must sign the release of liability an agreement prepared by the Sheriff's Office and fulfill those obligations set forth in the agreement. If the vendor or handler is unwilling to sign or abide by the agreement, final disposition of the canine will rest with the Canine Program Manager.

4. Handlers shall have no expectation of purchasing the canine, which is assigned to them during their service with the Canine Unit. This does not disallow the handler from making a request to purchase the canine that he/she was assigned during their service with the Canine Unit.

5. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office reserves first option to keep any canine if the handler is promoted to the rank of sergeant, transfers to another assignment, or should decide to leave the unit.

6. If it is determined that a handler is unable or unwilling to continue to own and/or control the canine at any time, he/she may forthwith return the canine to the Ventura County Sheriff's Office Canine Program Manager for disposition.

B. Amortization of the Police Service Canine

1. All handlers are requested to give at minimum a three (3) year commitment to the Canine Unit.

2. In light of the agreement signed between the person purchasing a police canine and the County of Ventura agreeing that the canine will not be utilized as a resource, in any way, or in the scope and course of his employment as an employee of this or any other law enforcement department, agency, or public entity, only the initial purchase price of the canine will be considered when amortizing the canine. Patrol training, detection training, urban tracking training, and any other training costs will not be added into the overall cost of the canine when determining amortization.

3. The canine shall be amortized over a period of six (6) years, which takes into account that handlers agree to make a three (3) year commitment.

4. At the end of the service life, estimated as six (6) years or longer, the canine may no longer have value and may be retired as described above. In complying with County Rules & Regulations, no property may be gifted, therefore the vendor or handler taking possession of the canine shall pay $1.
C. Transfer of Ownership

The transfer of ownership from the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office shall be conducted in contract form documented on either a “Police Service Dog (PSD) Retirement Agreement” or “Police Service Dog (PSD) Sales Agreement.”

The Canine Program Manager, the General Services Agency, purchasing agent, and the vendor/handler, shall approve and sign the agreement.

1. Both GSA and the vendor/handler shall be provided original copies of the agreement.

2. The payment shall be made to the Ventura County Sheriff’s Canine Trust Fund BU 4014/2316.

3. Upon signing the agreement, the handler shall no longer be entitled to compensation for care and maintenance of the police canine.

4. Refer to the following forms for processing:
   A. Police Service Dog (PSD) Retirement Agreement
   B. Police Service Dog (PSD) Sales Agreement

D. Veterinary Treatment

1. If a Sheriff's owned canine is retired or sold to a vendor or canine handler, the handler will assume all responsibility for the following:
   A. All of the canine’s veterinary needs for all conditions, past, present, and future.
   B. All of the canine’s vaccinations, including those required for licensing through the Department of Animal Control.
   C. Any and all medications needed by the canine’s for any past, present, and future ailments.

E. Equipment

1. Kennel
   A. When a canine is retired to the canine’s last handler, the kennel and slab may remain at the handler’s home. Once retirement has taken place and ownership has been transferred, the kennel and slab become the property of the handler. Any and all costs for removal or transfer will rest with the handler.
   B. If the canine should be sold to a vendor, no slab or kennel will be
provided. The vendor will provide all equipment necessary for safe control of the canine.

2. Grooming and maintenance of equipment

   A. When a canine is retired to the canine's last handler, the only pieces of equipment the handler may keep, besides the kennel and slab, are the leather leash and fur saver collar. All other items will be returned to the Canine Supervisor.

3. Food, vitamins and supplements

   A. When a canine is retired, the handler will be responsible for all cost of food, vitamins and supplements for the canine.