



# Minneapolis Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual

Number:  
7-800

## Volume Seven – Field Operations

### Tactical Response

#### 7-807 Authorized Use of Canines

(05/21/96) (02/16/23)

##### I. Purpose

Police canines are valuable assets to the MPD because of canines' superior sense of smell, hearing, agility and loyalty. Use of canines requires adherence to procedures that properly control their use and to channel their specialized capabilities into legal and ethical law enforcement tools.

##### II. Definitions

**Apprehension:** When a police canine physically engages a suspect in an effort to take them into custody.

**Canine Administration:** This includes the Commander of the division overseeing the Canine unit, and the Lieutenant and the Sergeants of the Canine unit.

**Canine Deployment:** Anytime a canine is used outside of training or a demonstration.

**Canine Handler:** A Minneapolis police officer specifically trained to use a canine.

**Canine Team:** Minneapolis police officer trained as canine handler working with a MPD canine.

**Certified (Certification):** An MPD canine team that has passed the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) Regional Field Trial or another certifying accredited entity approved by the Canine Administration.

**Certifying Entity:** The accredited entity approved by the Canine Administration, that is responsible for setting certification standards and conducting any required trials. Generally, the certifying entity is the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA).

##### Field Trials:

**Regional Field Trial:** The certification field trial conducted and hosted by the approved certifying entity.

**Mini-Trial:** Small-size field trials hosted by agencies, but approved and sponsored by the approved certifying entity.

### **III. Policy**

#### **A. Sole Responsibility of Handler**

The Canine Handler shall be solely responsible for the best practical application and deployment of their dog in all instances.

#### **B. Report to Ranking Officer at the Scene**

1. During operational deployment, the assigned canine handler will report to the ranking officer at the scene.
2. The canine sergeants and canine officers are all active canine handlers.

#### **C. Permissible Uses**

Department canines may be used for the following situations, when the associated conditions in this policy are met:

- Searching for or apprehending suspects.
- Locating missing or lost persons.
- Searching for explosives, narcotics or other evidence.
- Security of MPD and City equipment and property.
- Public relations demonstrations, with the prior approval of the Canine unit supervisor.

#### **D. Prohibited Uses**

Department canines shall not be used for any of the following purposes:

- Crowd control purposes at protests or demonstrations.
- Searching for animals.
- Punitive purposes against suspects.
- For off-duty employment (in accordance with P&P 3-800).

#### **E. Dangerous Situations**

Canines should not be put in dangerous situations needlessly.

### **IV. Procedures/Regulations**

#### **A. Searching For or Apprehending Suspects**

1. Department canines may be used to search for or apprehend a suspect if:
  - a. The canine handler reasonably believes that the individual has either committed or is about to commit a serious offense, *and*

b. Any of the following conditions exist:

- 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.
  - The individual is physically resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest and the use of a canine is reasonably necessary force under the circumstances to overcome such resistance or prevent the escape of the suspect.
  - The individual is 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.
2. When canines are used for apprehensions, handlers shall disengage their canines as soon as reasonably possible after the suspect is able to be controlled or secured.

## **B. Warnings**

1. If feasible, a verbal warning shall be given loud enough to be reasonably heard by the suspect or other persons prior to any deployment of a police canine. This warning shall include all of the following:
- The identification of the MPD.
  - That the canine is being released.
  - That the subject is under arrest.
  - That the subject may be bitten by the canine.
2. Circumstances may arise that make it unsafe for a canine handler to give a verbal warning if the handler's safety or the safety of another is jeopardized.

## **C. Injuries and Apprehensions**

1. Injuries by a canine
- a. In accordance with P&P 5-301, officers are responsible for ensuring any person injured by an MPD canine receives medical treatment as soon as reasonably possible.
  - b. Officers shall request an ambulance to the scene whenever a person is apprehended by a canine.
  - c. Canine handlers shall photograph all injuries and ensure the images are uploaded in accordance with P&P 10-400.
2. Notify Sergeants of apprehension

The canine handler shall notify the Canine Sergeants immediately after any canine apprehension or accidental bite.

- a. Officers will be debriefed by canine unit supervisors and trainers as soon as possible following notification.

- b. If a Canine Sergeant is not available, another MPD sergeant may be asked to do the force review.

3. Review form

Upon notification of a bite or apprehension, a Canine Sergeant will complete the K-9 Unit Apprehension Review form (MP-9090) and will send it electronically to the members of the review panel.

4. Injuries to a handler or canine

- a. The handler shall notify a Canine Sergeant immediately if the handler or canine suffers a serious injury requiring immediate treatment.
  - b. If a canine is injured in the Line of Duty, the handler shall complete a report using the code K9ASLT.

5. Handler unable to command canine

All officers shall consider the following course of action in the event a handler is injured and unable to command their canine:

- a. Request another Canine Handler or Canine Sergeant to the scene, or
  - b. Place the Canine Officer's squad car near the injured Officer, and:
    - i. Command the Canine to "kennel," or
    - ii. Lure the canine into the back of the squad with one of the Canine toys in squad car such as a Kong, Tug Toy or Bite Sleeve commonly stored in the rear of the Canine squad car.

#### **D. Building Searches**

1. Using a canine to search a structure minimizes risk to officers. Regular patrol units should not search a structure if a canine unit is responding.
1. In addition to the other conditions in this policy, the following requirements apply to building searches for a suspect:
  - a. Before the canine is deployed, the handler will attempt to ensure the area is clear of civilians and police personnel.
  - b. Canine handlers shall give verbal warnings inside a building prior to deployment, if tactically feasible.
  - c. Canine handlers shall repeat warnings in large or multi-level buildings as necessary and as feasible.

- d. Canine handlers shall not routinely search buildings on alarm calls where there is no evidence of forced entry. If officers determine a canine search is necessary, the canine should remain on a lead.

#### **E. Area Searches**

In addition to the other conditions in this policy, the following requirements apply to area searches for a suspect:

1. If a suspect has fled and is to be tracked using a canine:
  - a. Personnel at the scene shall secure the scene until the arrival of the canine team.
  - b. All personnel shall stay clear of the area where the suspect was last seen.
2. While the canine is being used, all personnel except those assigned to assist the handler shall stay away from the handler and the canine. Personnel shall not do things that will distract the canine.
3. The canine shall remain on a long lead during area searches, whenever it is reasonable and does not jeopardize officer safety.

#### **F. Narcotics Searches**

1. Officers must have a reasonable, articulable suspicion that narcotics are involved before conducting a narcotics search using a canine. Random narcotics searches are prohibited.
2. Any MPD canine used for narcotics detection shall have completed the MPD Canine Narcotics Detection Training Course.
3. Any MPD canine used for narcotics detection shall be narcotics certified by the approved certifying entity.
4. The canine handler shall complete a statement about the search in the offense report any time narcotics are located by a canine.

#### **G. Explosives Searches**

1. Any MPD canine used for explosives detection shall have completed the MPD Canine Explosives Detection Training Course.
2. Any MPD canine used for explosives detection shall be explosives certified by the approved certifying entity.
3. In the event of a bomb threat, the procedures in P&P 7-800 shall be followed.
4. If a canine is used for an explosives search, the handler will determine the most practical way to proceed.

5. The MPD Bomb Squad shall be called if a suspicious device is found. A canine will not be used if a suspicious device is found, unless requested by the Bomb Squad.

#### **H. Searching For Lost or Missing Persons**

1. Canines may be used to track or search for non-suspects, including but not limited to, lost children, missing persons, or individuals who may be disoriented or in need of medical attention. The canine handler shall determine the canine's suitability for such assignments based on the conditions and on the abilities of the canine.
2. In addition to the other conditions in this policy, the following requirements apply to searching for or tracking non-suspects:
  - a. Absent a change in circumstances that presents an immediate threat to officers, the canine or the public, such deployments shall be conducted on-lead or under conditions that minimize the likelihood the canine will bite or otherwise injure the individual, once located.
  - b. Throughout the deployment, the handler should periodically give verbal assurances that the canine will not hurt or bite the individual and should encourage the individual to make themselves known.

#### **I. Canine Handler Duties and Responsibilities**

1. The canine handler shall be responsible for the best practical application and deployment of their dog in all instances.
2. When a canine is not involved in a police function, the handler shall secure the dog in the police vehicle.
3. Canine handlers shall keep their canine secure while inside of their vehicle.
  - a. The emergency alarm temperature monitoring system shall be activated at all times during their shift.
  - b. Handlers shall not allow the kennel divider between the rear cage and front seat of the squad to be open, while the vehicle is occupied by a canine.
4. Canine vehicles shall not be used to detain, interview or transport suspects or arrestees without the prior approval of a supervisor. Canine vehicles should not be used to transport witnesses or injured persons unless emergency circumstances exist.
5. The canine will be kept on a lead in areas where the public has ready access, unless the dog is being used for a specific police purpose.
6. The handler shall notify a Canine Sergeant immediately if they are ordered to perform in a way that may be contrary to policy or to unit training.

7. The handler is responsible for the health, care and feeding of their canine. The handler shall not permit anyone other than the handler, their immediate family or authorized personnel to care for or feed the canine.

#### **J. Canine Sergeant Duties and Responsibilities**

1. The Canine Sergeant shall immediately remove a canine team from service that fails to certify through the approved certifying entity's regional field trial, and shall ensure the team demonstrates competence prior to returning to service.
2. Canine Sergeants have the authority to remove any Canine Team from service immediately if the supervisors determine the canine team does not perform satisfactorily. Canine teams that certify through an approved field trial but demonstrate weakness in control areas will be removed from patrol work for retraining.
3. The Canine Sergeant shall handle canine-related issues and concerns as directed.
4. The Canine Sergeant shall organize and facilitate critical incident debriefing involving canine teams.

#### **K. Training**

1. All patrol canine teams will be required to certify annually through an approved regional field trial.
  - a. Any canine team that fails to certify through an approved regional field trial will be removed from service immediately.
    - i. The team will not be returned to service until completing retraining and then demonstrating competence in all areas of patrol work.
    - i. The team will be required to participate in the next available approved regional field trial, or an approved mini trial if there is no regional trial available.
    - ii. Any canine team that fails to certify in two consecutive approved regional field trials, or fails an approved mini trial after failing an approved regional field trial, will be removed from the Canine Unit after the situation is reviewed by the Canine Administration.
2. All patrol canine teams shall be required to train their canine in either explosives or narcotics detection within one year of graduating from the twelve-week MPD Basic Patrol Canine School, and shall certify their canine in their detection specialty annually through a Detection Certification Course from the approved certifying entity.
3. Handlers shall ensure all handler and canine training is documented, in accordance with P&P 2-501.