

## Canines

### 313.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The canine narcotics detection program is a tool to assist the department in narcotic detection involving offenders. This policy establishes guidelines for the canine narcotic detection teams.

### 313.2 APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all employees.

### 313.3 POLICY

It is the policy of the San Diego County Probation Department that teams of handlers and canines meet and maintain the appropriate proficiency to effectively and reasonably carry out legitimate department approved objectives.

The Canine Narcotic Detection Teams will search for and detect narcotics for the Department in order to assist in the supervision, care, custody, and control of the narcotic-involved offenders and to assist other law enforcement agencies in the detection of narcotic contraband.

### 313.4 CANINE COORDINATOR

The Supervising Probation Officer responsible for the Canine Handler in the Special Operations Division of the Department will serve as the Canine Coordinator and have primary operational responsibility for activities involving Canine Narcotics Detection Teams.

The responsibilities of the coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Reviewing all canine use reports.
- (b) Maintaining accurate records to document canine activities.
- (c) Recommend and oversee the procurement of equipment and services for the handlers and canines.
- (d) Scheduling canine-related activities, including training.
- (e) Liaison with other agency canine coordinators.

### 313.5 REQUESTS FOR CANINE TEAMS

Sworn staff members may request the use of a canine to assist in narcotics searches. Requests may be made directly to the canine handler, or the canine handler's supervisor. Requests may be for either immediate or scheduled use; if scheduled use is requested, three day advance notice is preferred.

#### 313.5.1 OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUEST

All requests for canine assistance from outside agencies must be approved by the Canine Handler's Supervisor and are subject to the following:

- (a) Canine teams shall not be used for any assignment that is not consistent with this policy.

# San Diego County Probation Department

## Policy Manual

### *Canines*

---

- (b) The canine handler shall have the authority to decline a request for any specific assignment that he/she deems unsuitable.
- (c) It shall be the responsibility of the canine handler to coordinate operations with agency personnel in order to minimize the risk of unintended injury.
- (d) It shall be the responsibility of the canine handler to complete all necessary reports or as directed.

#### **313.5.2 PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS**

All public requests for a canine team shall be reviewed and, if appropriate, approved by the canine coordinator prior to making any resource commitment. The canine handler is responsible for obtaining resources and coordinating involvement in the demonstration to include proper safety protocols. Canine handlers shall not demonstrate any detection work unless authorized to do so by the canine coordinator.

#### **313.6 REPORTING DEPLOYMENTS, BITES AND INJURIES**

If a canine bites or causes injury to anyone, the canine handler's supervisor shall be notified immediately and the injuries documented in an incident report. The injured person shall be promptly provided first aid. The victim will be transported to an appropriate medical facility by emergency medical services personnel for further treatment if needed. If first aid or other medical services are refused by the injured person, refusal shall be documented and signed by the injured person, and witness statements obtained.

Any bite or injury caused by a canine, whether on-or off-duty, shall be reported immediately to the canine coordinator.

If an individual alleges an injury, either visible or not visible, the canine handler's supervisor shall be notified immediately and both the individual's injured and uninjured areas shall be photographed as soon as practicable after first tending to the immediate needs of the injured party. Photographs shall be retained as evidence in accordance with current department evidence procedures. The photographs shall be retained until the criminal proceeding is completed and the time for any related civil proceeding has expired.

Canines used by law enforcement agencies are generally exempt from impoundment and reporting requirements. However, the canine shall be made available for examination at any reasonable time if requested by the local health department. The canine handler shall also notify the local health department if the canine exhibits any abnormal behavior after a bite (Health and Safety Code § 121685).

#### **313.7 PROPERTY DAMAGE**

In every case where property damage results from Narcotic Detection canine activity, the following will occur:

- (a) The canine handler will notify the property owner prior to leaving the site and, if possible, include instruction on appropriate claims procedures;

## Canines

---

- (b) The damages should be photographed by the canine handler;
- (c) Witness statements should be obtained by the canine handler;
- (d) The canine handler will document the damage in an incident report.

### **313.8 NARCOTICS DETECTION**

A canine trained in narcotics detection may be used in accordance with current law and under certain circumstances, including:

- (a) The search of residences vehicles, buildings, bags and other articles.
- (b) Assisting in the search for narcotics during a search warrant service.
- (c) Obtaining a search warrant by using the narcotics-detection trained canine in support of probable cause.

### **313.9 CANINE SELECTION**

The minimum qualifications for the selection of a canine include:

- (a) Minimum age of 18 months and maximum age of 4 years;
- (b) Pre-tested to determine appropriate level of play drive;
- (c) Positive evaluation of dog's breed;
- (d) Positive evaluation of dog's physical fitness;
- (e) Positive evaluation of dog's temperament;
- (f) Ability to provide a minimum of two (2) years of service.

### **313.10 HANDLER SELECTION**

The minimum qualifications for the assignment of canine handler include:

- (a) Must be a Deputy Probation Officer or Senior Probation Officer;
- (b) Has completed all requirements for approval for on-duty arming by the Chief Probation Officer.
- (c) Is capable of caring for the dog 24 hours a day;
- (d) Residing in an adequately fenced, single-family residence (minimum 5-foot high fence with locking gates).
- (e) Living within 30 minutes travel time from the San Diego County limits.
- (f) Ability to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships with the public, fellow staff members, and outside law enforcement agencies and personnel.

### **313.11 HANDLER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The canine handler shall ultimately be responsible for the health and welfare of the canine and shall ensure that the canine receives proper nutrition, grooming, training, medical care, and living conditions.

# San Diego County Probation Department

## Policy Manual

### *Canines*

---

The canine handler will be responsible for the following:

- (a) Except as required during appropriate deployment, the handler shall not expose the canine to any foreseeable and unreasonable risk of harm.
- (b) The handler shall maintain all department equipment under his/her control in a clean and serviceable condition.
- (c) When not in service, and also during working hours, the handler shall maintain the canine vehicle in a safe and secure manner.
- (d) Any changes in the living status of the handler that may affect the lodging or environment of the canine shall be reported to the canine coordinator as soon as possible.
- (e) The canine should be permitted to socialize in the home with the handler's family for short periods of time and under the supervision of the handler.
- (f) Under no circumstances will the canine be lodged at another location unless approved by the canine coordinator or designee.
- (g) When off-duty, the handler shall not involve the canine in any law enforcement activity or official conduct unless approved in advance by the canine coordinator or their supervisor.
- (h) Whenever a canine handler is off-duty for an extended number of days, it may be necessary to temporarily relocate the canine. In those situations, the handler shall give reasonable notice to the canine coordinator so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

#### **313.11.1 CANINE IN PUBLIC AREAS**

The canine should be kept on a leash when in areas that allow access to the public. Exceptions to this rule would include specific law enforcement operations for which the canine is trained

- (a) A canine shall not be left unattended in any area to which the public may have access.
- (b) When the canine vehicle is left unattended, all windows and doors shall be secured in such a manner as to prevent unauthorized access to the dog. The handler shall also ensure that the unattended vehicle remains inhabitable for the canine.

#### **313.12 TRANSPORTATION**

Because of their special use, Narcotic Detection Team vehicles must be kept in good operating condition and cleaned regularly.

Narcotic Detection Team vehicles are to be equipped with the health and safety of the canine and Handler in mind, including non-skid surfaces in the K-9 compartment, access to water, and proper interior temperature control.

When the Narcotic Detection Canine is left unattended in the vehicle:

- Windows will be positioned to allow for proper ventilation;
- Air conditioning will be used to maintain a safe temperature;
- Shade will be provided by tint or removable cover when necessary; and
- Vehicle will be locked.

# San Diego County Probation Department

## Policy Manual

### *Canines*

---

#### **313.13 LICENSING**

The K-9 is property of the County of San Diego and will be licensed to the County of San Diego per procedure set forth by the San Diego County Department of Animal Control.

#### **313.14 VETERINARY CARE**

All non-emergency veterinary care shall be coordinated through the Canine Handler.

In the event that a canine is injured, or there is an indication that the canine is not in good physical condition, the injury or condition will be reported to the canine handler's supervisor as soon as practicable.

In the event emergency medical treatment is needed for the canine, the canine handler shall initiate medical treatment and advise the canine Coordinator immediately.

All medical attention shall be rendered by the designated canine veterinarian, except during an emergency where treatment should be obtained from the nearest available appropriate veterinarian. All records of medical treatment shall be maintained by the canine handler.

#### **313.15 KENNELING**

Narcotic Detection canines shall be kept at the home of their Handler in appropriate kennels. Kennels shall be kept clean in a clean, sanitary, and safe condition at all times. Care and handling of the canine are to meet accepted veterinary health standards.

The Narcotics Detection Canine must be kenneled while not in the presence of the canine handler and not be allowed to roam at will. An exception may be made at the discretion of the canine handler under certain circumstances, whereas the canine is secured in the backyard during work hours when no other individual will have access to the canine or the area where the canine is located.

#### **313.16 PURCHASE OF FOOD AND EQUIPMENT**

Food (including food supplements) will be purchased by the Handler from funds received as compensation for assignment in accordance with the existing Memorandum of Agreement. Any equipment needed for the maintenance of the Narcotics detection canine will be purchased from funds received as compensation for assignment in accordance with the existing Memorandum of Agreement. Specialized equipment needed to maintain and enhance the K-9 Narcotic Detection Program is subject to the approval of the Division Chief overseeing the canine handler.

The canine handler shall inspect all equipment to ensure proper condition and to maintain a satisfactory inventory. The canine handler is responsible for the care and condition of all equipment used for the care and control of his/her canine.

#### **313.17 TRAINING**

Before assignment in the field, each canine team shall be trained and certified to meet current canine performance guidelines or other recognized and approved certification standards by the

# San Diego County Probation Department

## Policy Manual

### *Canines*

---

California Narcotic Canine Association (CNCA) or other recognized and approved certification standards established for their particular skills.

The canine coordinator shall be responsible for scheduling periodic training for department employees in order to familiarize them with the Canine Narcotics Detection Program.

All canine training should be conducted while on-duty unless otherwise approved by the canine coordinator or designee.

#### **313.17.1 CONTINUED TRAINING**

Each canine team shall thereafter be recertified to current CNCA or other recognized and approved certification standards on an annual basis. To ensure that all training is consistent, no handler, trainer or outside vendor is authorized to train to a standard that is not reviewed and approved by this department.

#### **313.17.2 FAILURE TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE TRAINING**

Any canine team failing to graduate or obtain certification shall not be deployed in the field for tasks the team is not certified to perform until graduation or certification is achieved.

#### **313.17.3 TRAINING RECORDS**

All canine training records shall be maintained in the canine handler's and the canine's training file.

#### **313.17.4 TRAINING AIDS**

Training aids are required to effectively train and maintain the skills of canines. Officers possessing, using or transporting controlled substances for canine training purposes must comply with federal and state requirements regarding the same.

#### **313.17.5 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE TRAINING AIDS**

Officers acting in the performance of their official duties may possess or transfer controlled substances for the purpose of narcotics-detection canine training in compliance with state and federal laws (Health & Safety Code § 11367.5; 21 USC § 823(f)).

The Chief Probation Officer or the authorized designee may authorize a member to seek a court order to allow controlled substances seized by the San Diego County Probation Department to be possessed by the member or a narcotics-detection canine trainer who is working under the direction of this department for training purposes, provided the controlled substances are no longer needed as criminal evidence.

As an alternative, the Chief Probation Officer or the authorized designee may request narcotics training aids from the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA).

### **313.18 REPORTING**

The following reports will be utilized in the Canine Narcotics Detection Program:

- A Narcotic Detection Team Monthly Activity Report will be prepared by canine handlers and forwarded to the canine coordinator as well as their immediate supervisor.

# San Diego County Probation Department

## Policy Manual

### *Canines*

---

- A Narcotic Detection Team Quarterly Activity Report will be prepared by the canine coordinator and forwarded to the Chief Probation Officer via the chain of command.
- A Canine Narcotic Detection Training Log will be maintained by the canine handler(s) to document training
- A Narcotic Detection Team Seizure Record Report will be maintained by the Canine Handler(s).

#### **313.19 RETIREMENT OF CANINES**

When it becomes necessary to retire a canine from active duty, the Department may transfer ownership of the animal to the last handler, provided he/she wishes to accept the canine. In that instance, the canine is purchased from the San Diego County Probation Department for the price of one dollar, in accordance with the existing provisions within the County of San Diego.

Should the last handler decline to accept the canine, the canine coordinator shall determine an appropriate disposition.