



<b>Somerville Police Department</b> 	<b>TYPE:</b> <b>GENERAL ORDER</b>		<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b> <b>132</b>		
	<b>Subject:</b> <b>Police K-9</b>				
	<b>Issuing Authority:</b> <b>David Fallon</b> <b>Chief of Police</b>		<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Effective Date:</b> April 19, 2016	
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<b>Accreditation Standards (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) 41.1.4, 46.2.5, 1.3.5, 33.6.1</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>New</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Revised</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Amended</b>			
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## Purpose

The Somerville Police Department maintains a K-9 Unit as part of its efforts to provide the city with the best police services possible. The K-9 Unit provides improved capabilities in the areas of search, drug detection, tracking, crime deterrence, and public relations.

## Policy

The Somerville Police Department shall have a K-9 Unit that consists of specially trained and certified officers and canines. Only authorized K-9 Unit personnel may use a police canine for any departmental activity. [41.1.4(a)]

## Definitions

K-9 Unit: A group consisting of one or more K-9 Teams.

K-9 Team: A group consisting of only one (1) handler/officer and one (1) trained canine. Together the handler/officer and canine constitute a Team.

## Procedures

### 1. Unit Duties

A. The K-9 Team, depending on its capabilities, shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Tracking of individuals sought by the police, to include missing persons
2. Searching buildings or areas for suspected criminals
3. Locating evidence that has been abandoned or hidden
4. Making reasonable and necessary physical apprehensions

5. Detecting explosive ordinance depending on the canine's capabilities.
6. Detecting illegal narcotics depending on the canine's capabilities.
7. Providing handler protection [41.1.4(a)]

**B.** K-9 Unit officers shall perform general patrol duties except when required for specialized activities or training. When on-duty, K-9 Unit officers should monitor calls for service and respond to incidents where they may be of assistance.

**C.** K-9 Teams may also be used for training presentations and/or public relations.

## **2. Initial Training**

**A.** K-9 Unit handlers and canines shall be properly trained and certified before any independent usage in the K-9 Unit. [41.1.4(b)] [33.6.1]

**B.** The K-9 Unit Supervisor shall approve any initial training and/or certification programs. Such programs shall be based on Municipal Police Training Committee standards or national standards.

**C.** Before any canine is accepted into the program, it shall be given a medical examination by an approved veterinarian.

## **3. K-9 Team Use Prohibitions**

**A.** The K-9 Teams shall not be used for:

1. Searches of other animals
2. Shows or trials without the approval of the Chief
3. Calls/assignments that leave the canine unsupervised for an extended period of time. [41.1.4(a)]
4. Crowd control. Canine units may respond as backup when appropriate but shall not be deployed for crowd control. (see Policy 121, Crowd Management and Control). Canines shall remain in patrol vehicles or other secure locations and, whenever reasonably possible, out of the view of the crowd.

## **4. K-9 Team Deployment**

**A.** K-9 Teams shall only be used for activities in which they are certified:

1. The Somerville Police Department K-9 Policy shall determine the authorized uses for the K-9 Team and the procedures to be followed by the K-9 Team officer when deploying the police canine. Unauthorized use of canines shall be considered just cause for disciplinary action.

2. The K-9 Team officer shall evaluate each K-9 call for service to determine if the use of a canine is feasible and in accordance with department policy. In those cases where the decision is made not to use the canine, the K-9 Team officer will provide other assistance as needed or required.
3. The decision to apply the police canine to a specific police operation is the responsibility of the Special Operation Commander / Supervisor, or, if not available, the on scene Supervisor or Incident Commander. The decision to deploy the canine will remain with the K-9 Team officer, who will evaluate the canine's ability in determining if the canines use is appropriate for the specific police operation.
4. Upon the deployment of a K-9 Team, the K-9 Team officer shall determine the appropriate level of force to be delivered by the canine. Any use of force by officers and police canines shall be in strict compliance with SPD policy 124 Use of Force.

#### **5. Use Within the City:**

- A. A police unit in need of assistance from the K-9 Unit will make its request through the Street Supervisor, who will contact the Shift Commander for approval.
- B. The canine officer should not be assigned to a specific patrol area, but allowed to patrol throughout the city.

#### **6. Use Outside the City:**

- A. All requests for services of the K-9 Unit outside the city shall be directed to the K-9 Unit Supervisor if he/she is working, or the Shift Commander if not. The Shift Commander shall comply with all agreements made by the Chief with other law enforcement agencies in regards to any established rotating call in list for K-9 use in the area. If there is no active list, the Shift Commander, at his/her discretion, may direct the K-9 Unit to respond, but only for the nature of incidents in which the K-9 Unit would normally respond to within the city. The Shift Commander will ensure a CAD entry is made at the time of the request that will list the requesting department and the nature of the call. The K-9 Unit will assist the requesting agency but must still follow the guidelines of this policy.
- B. An outside agency K-9 Unit may be requested to come into this city to assist. The outside agency K-9 Unit must report to the Street supervisor or the requesting supervisor. At the completion of the use of the outside K-9 Unit, a K-9 deployment report shall be requested.

#### **7. Off Duty Requests for Service**

The K-9 Unit may be called out during off-duty time for K-9 related services for this department, if available. Also the K-9 unit may be called out during off-duty time if a call for service for a K-9 unit is requested from an outside agency. The nature of the incident will be considered. The Shift Commander may dispatch the K-9 unit to the outside agency, if appropriate.

## **8. K-9 Contact**

- A.** Situations in which a K-9 is permitted to subdue a person by biting shall include, but not be limited to:
1. Defending the handler, another officer, or a member of the public from injury, either on-going or imminent
  2. Stopping the flight of an actively resisting or violent/combatative suspect
  3. Preventing the escape of a prisoner
  4. Preventing an emotionally disturbed or suicidal person from causing serious injury to themselves or others
  5. Self-defense of the K-9.
- B.** These situations shall be preceded by verbal K-9 warnings before the K-9 being deployed, except in situations where the officer's safety would be compromised.

## **9. Tracking Situations**

- A.** When tracking suspects or missing/lost persons:
1. K-9s shall be attached to a tracking lead. Under certain circumstances, such as a suspect apprehension, an officer safety issue or exigent circumstances, the K-9 may be released from the tracking lead.
  2. A K-9 officer shall have discretion regarding the assignment of an assisting officer to accompany a track.

## **10. Search Consideration**

- A.** When conducting off-leash searches in either an area or building:
1. The K-9 Team will enter the building and allow the dog to search the area. Whenever possible, and before entering, the suspect should be advised by warnings that the K-9 is to be deployed and will use force if necessary.
  2. Following the warning announcements, and after a reasonable amount of time where there is no indication of surrender, the K-9 may be released.
  3. It is recommended in a building encompassing a large area, that the warnings be repeated.

## 11. Crowd Control

- A. Use of a K-9 Unit for crowd control constitutes a show of force. Canine units may respond as backup when appropriate but shall not be deployed for crowd control. Canines shall remain in patrol vehicles or other secure locations and, whenever reasonably possible, out of the view of the crowd.
- B. The canine may be deployed only when the situation changes where use of force is necessary to protect the lives of officers and others.

## 12. K-9 Induced Injuries

- A. In every situation where a K-9 Team injures a person, the following action will be taken:  
[1.3.5]
  - 1. The Shift Commander will be immediately notified
  - 2. Appropriate medical treatment will be sought as soon as practicable
  - 3. If the injured person is uncooperative, the K-9 officer should have another officer witness the injured person's behavior. This includes refusals to allow the bite area to be observed
  - 4. Any bite to a juvenile requires EMS transport to the hospital as soon as practicable, and the parent or guardian to be notified immediately
  - 5. The injured person shall be interviewed regarding the incident and the K-9's actions
  - 6. These requirements shall prevail even if a bite is unintended and regardless of if it occurs on or off-duty
  - 7. The K-9 officer will file an incident report and attach any medical reports from the treatment facility, if available.
  - 8. If possible, before any medical treatment, photos shall be taken of any injuries incurred. In no instance shall medical treatment be delayed in order to take photos. If possible, photos may be taken at the medical treatment facility or in the Emergency Medical Transport vehicle.
  - 9. If, during a deployment, the canine inflicts bite injuries upon a suspect/officer/witness or bystander, the injuries will be carefully documented in writing on a Somerville Police Department Canine Bite Report / Station Report and will be submitted with a copy of the incident report and photographs. The reviewing supervisor shall ensure that color photographs of the injuries are taken, and that the photographs are sufficient to identify the victim and the injuries. It will be the reviewing supervisor's responsibility to review this packet, attach a cover memorandum summarizing his/her findings, and submit it to the Deputy Chief of the Operations Division for review.

10. The Deputy Chief of the Operation Division will, when appropriate, confer with the Chief of Police for review and to determine the justification in the use of force. Upon making a final determination, Chief of Police, via chain of command, will advise the Special Operations Section Commander of his findings and recommendations, who in turn will notify the K-9 officer involved of these findings.
11. A copy of the file will be made available to Office of Professional Standards for file retention. Results of the final determination will be transmitted to the Special Operations Section Commander and involved officer via chain of command.
12. When a canine in the course of a training exercise or demo bites a member of the canine team/officer, the handler shall seek medical attention, if necessary, for the wound and complete an Injury to Officer Report.

### **13. Unit Injures**

- A. If a K-9 officer becomes incapacitated or injured and is unable to handle his/her dog, officers at the scene should:
  1. If possible, have the K-9 officer call and control his/her dog
  2. Attempt to get another trained handler (e.g., Sheriff's Department, State Police)
  3. Consider bringing the spouse or a member of the K-9 officer's family to the scene
  4. If necessary, tranquilize the canine
  5. As a last resort, destroy the canine.
- B. Once the canine is under control, medical attention can be provided to the K-9 officer.

### **14. Patrol Officer Guidelines**

- A. Patrol officers who become involved in incidents involving a K-9 Unit deployment must be aware of certain guidelines that will improve both their safety and that of the K-9 Unit, and which will increase the effectiveness of the canine:
  1. Officers should avoid illuminating a working K-9 Team with spotlights or flashlights.
  2. Once a canine has been sent to make an apprehension, other officers shall not attempt to take the person into custody until the canine has been called-off, secured or at the direct instruction of the K-9 officer.
  3. Officer interference with a canine in pursuit may result in injury to the officer. If a working canine (i.e., an actively tracking, scenting, or apprehending) approaches an officer, he/she should stand as still and make no overt movements

4. Department members shall not:
  - a. Touch, handle, or pet a canine unless given permission by the K-9 officer
  - b. Tease, agitate, or harass a canine
  - c. Engage in horseplay, especially with the K-9 officer, when a police canine is present
  - d. Make aggressive gestures towards the K-9 officer

#### **15. Pre-Search Considerations:**

- A. Whenever possible, officers should avoid contaminating a search area before, and during, a K-9 unit's search and should refrain from touching any discarded evidence
- B. If officers enter a search area or building before the K-9 Unit's arrival, they should vacate the area before the K-9 unit's search
- C. The K-9 officer should be made aware of any area that has been contaminated

#### **16. During a Search**

- A. Supervisors and field officers participating in an active search should follow these guidelines:
  1. Officers shall maintain perimeter security and attempt to contain the area to the extent possible to prevent escape of the suspect(s) and remain on scene until notified that the search has concluded
  2. Patrol units assigned to perimeter locations will be moved to correspond with the K-9 unit's search
  3. Perimeter units should keep the area clear of civilian personnel
  4. Officers shall refrain from unnecessary conversation, stay clear of doors and windows, and shall not enter a search area unless instructed by the K-9 officer or supervisor
  5. When a K-9 Team enters a building or search area, another officer shall be assigned to accompany them. This officer's responsibility is to provide cover for the Team
  6. Officers accompanying the K-9 Team during a search shall take a position to the rear of the K-9 officer, or as directed by the K-9 officer, and carefully follow all instructions given by the K-9 officer.

## 17. Socializing of Police Canines

- A. No canine trained or maintained as a patrol dog shall be intentionally allowed to come into contact with a member of the general public, or another agency, for socializing without the consent of the K-9 officer or his/her designee. This requirement:
  - 1. Applies to any police canine on or off-duty
  - 2. Shall not limit contact with the K-9 officer's immediate family
  - 3. Shall not prohibit contacts that are the direct result of the canine performing an assigned task.
- B. Contact with a scent detection canine shall be at the discretion of the K-9's officer.

## 18. Maintenance Training: [41.1.4 (b)] [33.6.1]

- A. K-9 officers shall attend training sessions, classes, seminars, and conferences in order to maintain proficiency
- B. The K-9 Unit Supervisor shall be responsible for scheduling K-9 Unit maintenance training. Such training will meet the minimum requirements of the assigned training group.
- C. K-9 Unit officers are encouraged to perform self-initiated training while on-duty as patrol activities allow. K-9 officers will notify the Street Supervisor and Dispatch personnel of their participation in on-duty training within the city, and its specific location. The Street Supervisor will interrupt a K-9 Team from training activities only when necessary
- D. Failure by a K-9 Team to achieve the minimum training requirements will be grounds for an administrative review of the team's certification status, which may result in the withdrawal of its certification
- E. Copies of all training documentation shall be maintained by the K-9 officer. K-9 Supervisors shall review all training documentation quarterly. Copies of course completion certificates or certifications shall be forwarded to the Lieutenant in charge of the Academy.

## 19. Care of Police Canine

- A. The K-9 officer is responsible for the health and welfare of his canine, both on and off-duty. Exceptions require the approval of the Chief of Police. [41.1.4 (c)]
- B. The following provisions will be followed in regards to canine care:
  - 1. The department will pay for veterinary care



2. Medical examinations will be conducted every year or as needed. The K-9 officer is responsible for scheduling annual or non-routine medical exam. The K-9 supervisor shall be notified for the annual medical examination. If it is determined by the K-9 officer that the canine should be taken to the veterinarian for non-routine care, the Street Supervisor and K-9 Unit Supervisor shall be notified as soon as practicable.
3. Any illness or injury of a non-emergency nature shall be reported to the K-9 Unit Supervisor and a CAD entry made
4. In an emergency situation, the K-9 officer shall ensure that the canine receives immediate medical attention and shall submit an incident report to the Street Supervisor describing the incident
5. The K-9 officer will be responsible for administering any medication prescribed by a veterinarian
6. When a police canine is contained within department vehicles, the engine will be kept running whenever necessary to maintain proper heating and cooling of the interior
7. The K-9 officer is responsible for daily grooming and checks of his/her canine. The canine's home kennel and vehicle will be kept clean and sanitary
8. The department will provide a food allowance for all canines. Police canines will be regularly fed at a time that allows for appropriate time between feeding and going on-duty
9. Canines will be licensed in accordance with state and local laws. It is the K-9 officer's responsibility to apply and acquire a license from the city, at no cost.
10. The Department shall absorb the cost of kenneling the canine during the K9 Officer's vacation time, if the Officer will be away from his/her home.

## **20. K-9 Equipment**

- A. The Somerville Police Department shall properly equip the K-9 Unit. Included but not limited are the following, if applicable: [41.1.4(d)]
  1. An appropriate "bite sleeve" for use in training events and demonstrations
  2. Muzzles and harnesses for each canine
  3. Leashes and runs of different lengths
  4. Choke collar, electric collar, harness, combs, nail clippers, ear and teeth cleaning supplies and associated training aids.
- B. K-9 officers are responsible for the condition of issued equipment and ensuring it is kept in good working condition. Any damage, malfunction, or loss of K-9 equipment will be

reported to the K-9 Unit Supervisor as soon as practicable. All requests for supplies and/or equipment shall require approval by the Chief of Police. Requests shall be submitted in writing to the Supervisor in charge of the K-9 Unit.

## **21. Records**

**A.** K-9 officers shall maintain accurate and up-to-date records in the following areas:

- 1.** Training
- 2.** Medical and health (such as up to date vaccination)
- 3.** Performance and activity via a log. A K-9 Deployment report must be filed in the NIBRIS after each deployment of the K-9 Unit. This will include but not limited to the following: tracking a person, area search for a person or evidence, building search, suspect apprehension, detection of narcotics if applicable, detection of explosive device if applicable, etc.
- 4.** Expenses
- 5.** Copies of all K-9 related incident/arrest reports
- 6.** Records of dog License