

## Canines

### 309.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes guidelines for the use of canines to augment law enforcement services in the community, including but not limited to locating individuals and contraband and apprehending criminal offenders.

### 309.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Talbot County Sheriff's Office that teams of handlers and canines meet and maintain the appropriate proficiency to effectively and reasonably carry out legitimate law enforcement objectives.

[See attachment: TCSO K-9 Manual.pdf](#)

### 309.3 ASSIGNMENT

The canine teams shall be assigned to assist and supplement the Operations Division. Canine teams should function primarily in assisting or cover assignments. However, they may be assigned by the Shift Sergeant to other functions, such as routine calls for service, based on the current needs of the Office.

Canine teams should not be assigned to handle matters that will take them out of service for extended periods of time unless absolutely necessary and only with the approval of the Shift Sergeant.

Canine teams may be assigned to a variety of duties within the Talbot County Sheriff's Office. Assignments may include: patrol duties, street interdiction drug unit, school resource/DARE activities and the Talbot County Narcotics Task Force. Based on specific training of each canine, teams will be tasked with narcotics detection, trailing and tracking, article searches, patrol dogs functions and demonstrations.

### 309.4 CANINE COORDINATOR

The canine coordinator shall be appointed by and is directly responsible to the Operations Commander or the authorized designee.

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

- (a) Reviewing all canine use reports to ensure compliance with policy and to identify training issues and other needs of the program.
- (b) Maintaining a liaison with the vendor kennel.
- (c) Maintaining a liaison with command staff and functional supervisors.
- (d) Maintaining a liaison with other agency canine coordinators.
- (e) Maintaining accurate records to document canine activities.

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- (f) Recommending and overseeing the procurement of equipment and services for the teams of handlers and canines.
- (g) Scheduling all canine-related activities.
- (h) Ensuring the canine teams are scheduled for regular training to maximize their capabilities.

### **309.5 REQUESTS FOR CANINE TEAMS**

Operations Division members are encouraged to request the use of a canine. Requests for a canine team from office units outside of the Operations Division shall be reviewed by the Shift Sergeant.

#### **309.5.1 OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUEST**

All requests for canine assistance from outside agencies must be approved by the Shift Sergeant and are subject to the following:

- (a) Canine teams shall not be used for any assignment that is not consistent with this policy.
- (b) The canine handler shall have the authority to decline a request for any specific assignment that he/she deems unsuitable.
- (c) Calling out off-duty canine teams is discouraged.
- (d) It shall be the responsibility of the canine handler to coordinate operations with agency personnel in order to minimize the risk of unintended injury.
- (e) It shall be the responsibility of the canine handler to complete all necessary reports or as directed.

#### **309.5.2 PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION**

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 coordinator is responsible for obtaining resources and coordinating involvement in the demonstration to include proper safety protocols. Canine handlers shall not demonstrate any apprehension work unless authorized to do so by the canine coordinator.

### **309.6 APPREHENSION GUIDELINES**

A canine may be used to locate and apprehend a suspect if the canine handler reasonably believes that the individual has committed, is committing, or is threatening to commit any serious offense and if any of the following conditions exist:

- (a) There is a reasonable belief the suspect poses an imminent threat of violence or serious harm to the public, any deputy or the handler.
- (b) The suspect is physically resisting or threatening to resist arrest and the use of a canine reasonably appears to be necessary to overcome such resistance.
- (c) The suspect is believed to be concealed in an area where entry by other than the canine would pose a threat to the safety of deputies or the public.

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It is recognized that situations may arise that do not fall within the provisions set forth in this policy. Such events require consideration of the totality of the circumstances and the use of an objective reasonableness standard applied to the decision to use a canine.

Absent a reasonable belief that a suspect has committed, is committing, or is threatening to commit a serious offense, mere flight from a pursuing deputy, without any of the above conditions, shall not serve as the basis for the use of a canine to apprehend a suspect.

Use of a canine to locate and apprehend a suspect wanted for a lesser criminal offense than those identified above requires approval from the Shift Sergeant. Absent a change in circumstances that presents an imminent threat to deputies, the canine, or the public, such canine use should be conducted on-leash or under conditions that minimize the likelihood the canine will bite or otherwise injure the individual.

In all applications, once the suspect has been located and no longer reasonably appears to present a threat or risk of escape, the handler should secure the canine as soon as it becomes reasonably practicable.

If the canine has apprehended the suspect with a secure bite, and the handler believes that the suspect no longer poses a threat, the handler should promptly command the canine to release the suspect.

### 309.6.1 PREPARATION FOR DEPLOYMENT

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

- (a) The nature and seriousness of the suspected offense.
- (b) Whether violence or weapons were used or are anticipated.
- (c) The degree of resistance or threatened resistance, if any, the suspect has shown.
- (d) The suspect's known or perceived age.
- (e) The potential for injury to deputies or the public caused by the suspect if the canine is not utilized.
- (f) Any potential danger to the public and/or other deputies at the scene if the canine is released.
- (g) The potential for the suspect to escape or flee if the canine is not utilized.

As circumstances permit, the canine handler should make every reasonable effort to communicate and coordinate with other involved members to minimize the risk of unintended injury.

It is the canine handler's responsibility to evaluate each situation and determine whether the use of a canine is appropriate and reasonable. The canine handler shall have the authority to decline the use of the canine whenever he/she deems deployment is unsuitable.

A supervisor who is sufficiently apprised of the situation may prohibit deploying the canine.

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Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor, assisting members should take direction from the handler in order to minimize interference with the canine.

### **309.6.2 WARNINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Unless it would increase the risk of injury or escape, a clearly audible warning announcing that a canine will be used if the suspect does not surrender should be made prior to releasing a canine. The handler should allow reasonable time for a suspect to surrender and should quiet the canine momentarily to listen for any verbal response to the warning. If feasible, other members should be in a location opposite the warning to verify that the announcement could be heard. If available, warnings given in other languages should be used as necessary.

If a warning is not to be given, the canine handler, when practicable, should first advise the supervisor of his/her decision before releasing the canine. In the event of an apprehension, the handler shall document in any related report how the warning was given and, if none was given, the reasons why.

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

Handlers should document canine deployments in a canine use report. Whenever a canine deployment results in a bite or causes injury to an intended suspect, a supervisor should be promptly notified and the injuries documented in the canine use report. The injured person shall be promptly treated by Emergency Medical Services personnel and, if appropriate, transported to an appropriate medical facility for further treatment. The deployment and injuries should also be included in any related incident or arrest report.

Any unintended bite or injury caused by a canine, whether on- or off-duty, shall be promptly reported to the canine coordinator. Unintended bites or injuries caused by a canine should be documented in an administrative report, not in a canine use report.

If an individual alleges an injury, either visible or not visible, a supervisor shall be notified 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 office evidence procedures. The photographs shall be retained until the criminal proceeding is completed and the time for any related civil proceeding has expired.

The canine coordinator shall complete the Maryland Animal-Bite Report and Rabies Quarantine Agreement Form and make it available to the local health officer within 24 hours (COMAR 10.06.02.05).

### **309.7 NON-APPREHENSION GUIDELINES**

Properly trained canines may be used to track or search for non-criminals (e.g., lost children, individuals who may be disoriented or in need of medical attention). The canine handler is responsible for determining the canine's suitability for such assignments based on the conditions and the particular abilities of the canine. When the canine is deployed in a search or other non-apprehension operation, the following guidelines apply:

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- (a) Absent a change in circumstances that presents an imminent threat to deputies, the canine, or the public, such applications should be conducted on-leash or under conditions that minimize the likelihood the canine will bite or otherwise injure the individual, if located.
- (b) Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor, assisting members should take direction from the handler in order to minimize interference with the canine.
- (c) Throughout the deployment, the handler should periodically give verbal assurances that the canine will not bite or hurt the individual and encourage the individual to make him/herself known.
- (d) Once the individual has been located, the handler should place the canine in a down-stay or otherwise secure it as soon as reasonably practicable.

### 309.7.1 ARTICLE DETECTION

A canine trained to find objects or property related to a person or crime may be used to locate or identify articles. A canine search should be conducted in a manner that minimizes the likelihood of unintended bites or injuries.

### 309.7.2 CONTROLLED DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE DETECTION

A canine trained in the detection of controlled dangerous substances (CDS) may be used in accordance with current law and under certain circumstances, including:

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

A CDS-detection trained canine will not be used to search a person for CDS unless the canine is trained to passively indicate the presence of CDS.

### 309.7.3 BOMB/EXPLOSIVE DETECTION

Because of the high risk of danger to the public and deputies when a bomb or other explosive device is suspected, the use of a canine team trained in explosive detection may be considered. When available, an explosive-detection canine team may be used in accordance with current law and under certain circumstances, including:

- (a) Assisting in the search of a building, structure, area, vehicle, or article where an actual or suspected explosive device has been reported or located.
- (b) Assisting with searches at transportation facilities and vehicles (e.g., buses, airplanes, trains).
- (c) Preventive searches at special events, VIP visits, official buildings, and other restricted areas. Searches of individuals should remain minimally intrusive and shall be strictly limited to the purpose of detecting explosives.
- (d) Assisting in the search of scenes where an explosion has occurred and an explosive device or secondary explosive device is suspected.

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At no time will an explosive-detection trained canine be used to render a suspected device safe or clear.

### **309.8 HANDLER SELECTION**

The minimum qualifications for the assignment of canine handler include:

- (a) A deputy who is currently off probation.
- (b) Residing in an adequately fenced single-family residence (minimum 5-foot-high fence with locking gates).
- (c) A garage that can be secured and can accommodate a canine vehicle.
- (d) Living within 30 minutes travel time from the Talbot County limits.
- (e) Agreeing to be assigned to the position for a minimum of three years.

### **309.9 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, affection, and living conditions.

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 office equipment under his/her control in a clean and serviceable condition.
- (c) When not in service, the handler shall maintain the canine vehicle in a locked garage, away from public view.
- (d) When a handler is off-duty for an extended number of days, the assigned canine vehicle should be stored at the Talbot County Sheriff's Office facility.
- (e) Handlers shall permit the canine coordinator to conduct spontaneous on-site inspections of affected areas of their homes as well as their canine vehicles to verify that conditions and equipment conform to this policy.
- (f) 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.
- (g) When off-duty, the canine shall be in a kennel provided by the County at the home of the handler. When a canine is kenneled at the handler's home, the gate shall be secured with a lock. When off-duty, the canine may be let out of the kennel while under the direct control of the handler.
- (h) The canine should be permitted to socialize in the home with the handler's family for short periods of time and under the direct supervision of the handler.
- (i) Under no circumstances will the canine be lodged at another location unless approved by the canine coordinator or Shift Sergeant.

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- (j) 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 Shift Sergeant.
- (k) 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.

### 309.9.1 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 canine. The handler shall also ensure that the unattended vehicle remains inhabitable for the canine.

### 309.10 HANDLER COMPENSATION

The canine handler shall be available for call-out under conditions specified by the canine coordinator.

The canine handler shall be compensated for time spent in the care, feeding, grooming, and other needs of the canine in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and according to the terms of the collective bargaining agreement or memorandum of understanding between the handler and the County (29 USC § 207).

### 309.11 CANINE INJURY AND MEDICAL CARE

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 coordinator or Shift Sergeant as soon as practicable and appropriately documented.

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

### 309.12 TRAINING

Before assignment in the field, each canine team shall be trained and certified to meet current nationally recognized standards or other recognized and approved certification standards. Cross-trained canine teams or those canine teams trained exclusively for the detection of CDS and/or explosives also shall be trained and certified to meet current nationally recognized standards or other recognized and approved certification standards established for their particular skills.

The canine coordinator shall be responsible for scheduling periodic training for all office members in order to familiarize them with how to conduct themselves in the presence of office canines. Because canines may be exposed to dangerous substances such as opioids, as resources are

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available, the canine coordinator should also schedule periodic training for the canine handlers about the risks of exposure and treatment for it.

All canine training shall be conducted while on-duty unless otherwise approved by the canine coordinator or Shift Sergeant.

### 309.12.1 CONTINUED TRAINING

Each canine team shall thereafter be recertified to a current nationally recognized standard or other recognized and approved certification standards on an annual basis. Additional training considerations are as follows:

- (a) Canine teams should receive training as defined in the current contract with the Talbot County Sheriff's Office canine training provider.
- (b) Canine handlers are encouraged to engage in additional training with approval of the canine coordinator.
- (c) 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 the Office.

### 309.12.2 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. When reasonably practicable, pending successful certification, the canine handler shall be temporarily reassigned to regular patrol duties.

### 309.12.3 TRAINING RECORDS

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

### 309.12.4 TRAINING AIDS

Training aids are required to effectively train and maintain the skills of canines. Deputies possessing, using, or transporting controlled dangerous substances or explosives for canine training purposes must comply with federal and state requirements. Alternatively, the Talbot County Sheriff's Office may work with outside trainers with the applicable licenses or permits.

### 309.12.5 CONTROLLED DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE TRAINING AIDS

Deputies acting in the performance of their official duties may possess or transfer controlled dangerous substances for the purpose of CDS-detection canine training in compliance with state and federal laws and in compliance with applicable state requirements (21 USC § 823(f)).

The Sheriff or the authorized designee may authorize a member to seek a court order to allow controlled dangerous substances seized by the Talbot County Sheriff's Office to be possessed by the member or a CDS-detection canine trainer who is working under the direction of this office for training purposes, provided the controlled dangerous substances are no longer needed as criminal evidence.

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As an alternative, the Sheriff or the authorized designee may request CDS-detection training aids from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

These procedures are not required if the canine handler uses commercially available synthetic substances that are not controlled dangerous substances.

### 309.12.6 CONTROLLED DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE PROCEDURES

Due to the responsibilities and liabilities involved with possessing readily usable amounts of controlled dangerous substances and the ever-present danger of the canine's accidental ingestion of these controlled dangerous substances, the following procedures shall be strictly followed:

- (a) All controlled dangerous substance training samples shall be weighed and tested prior to dispensing to the individual canine handler or trainer.
- (b) The weight and test results shall be recorded and maintained by this office.
- (c) Any person possessing controlled dangerous substance training samples pursuant to court order or DEA registration shall maintain custody and control of the controlled dangerous substances and shall keep records regarding any loss of, or damage to, those controlled dangerous substances.
- (d) All controlled dangerous substance training samples will be inspected, weighed and tested quarterly. The results of the quarterly testing shall be recorded and maintained by the canine coordinator with a copy forwarded to the dispensing agency.
- (e) All controlled dangerous substance training samples will be stored in locked, airtight and watertight cases at all times, except during training. The locked cases shall be secured in the trunk of the canine handler's assigned patrol vehicle during transport and stored in an appropriate locked container. There are no exceptions to this procedure.
- (f) The canine coordinator shall periodically inspect every controlled dangerous substance training sample for damage or tampering and take any appropriate action.
- (g) Any unusable controlled dangerous substance training samples shall be returned to the Criminal Investigation Division or to the dispensing agency.
- (h) All controlled dangerous substance training samples shall be returned to the dispensing agency upon the conclusion of the training or upon demand by the dispensing agency.

### 309.12.7 EXPLOSIVE TRAINING AIDS

Deputies may possess, transport, store, or use explosives or destructive devices in compliance with state and federal laws (18 USC § 842; 27 CFR 555.41).

Explosive training aids designed specifically for canine teams should be used whenever feasible. Due to the safety concerns in the handling and transportation of explosives, inert or non-hazardous training aids should be employed whenever feasible. The use of explosives or destructive devices for training aids by canine teams is subject to the following:

- (a) All explosive training aids, when not in use, shall be properly stored in a secure facility appropriate for the type of materials.

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- (b) An inventory ledger shall be maintained to document the type and quantity of explosive training aids that are stored.
- (c) The canine coordinator shall be responsible for verifying the explosive training aids on hand against the inventory ledger once each quarter.
- (d) Only members of the canine team shall have access to the explosive training aids storage facility.
- (e) A primary and secondary custodian will be designated to minimize the possibility of loss of explosive training aids during and after the training. Generally, the handler will be designated as the primary custodian while the trainer or authorized second person on-scene will be designated as the secondary custodian.
- (f) Any lost or damaged explosive training aids shall be promptly reported to the canine coordinator, who will determine if any further action will be necessary. Any loss of explosives will be reported to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

### **309.13 LICENSING**

Canines and their handlers shall be licensed with the Maryland State Police prior to being used for law enforcement operations. The handler ID card should be carried by the handler whenever the canine is performing any law enforcement-related function. The canine ID tag shall be attached to the canine's collar and kept on the licensed canine at all times, except when the canine is confined in a kennel or is under the personal charge of the licensed handler. Any change in a canine's handler requires notification to the Maryland State Police (Md. Code PS § 2-313).

Missing ID cards and ID tags shall be replaced as soon as practicable.

## Attachments

## **TCSO K-9 Manual.pdf**



**TALBOT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
K-9 HANDBOOK**

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose

The K9 handler must be prepared to deal with a wide range of problems that test patience, ingenuity, character, and knowledge as a law enforcement officer and handler. The handler is expected to use excellent judgment and common sense at all times. Every handler is entitled to all the guidance and assistance possible, and the policies and procedures contained herein have been established for this purpose.

This manual provides a reference source for handlers, supervisors, and commanders. It is intended to aid the coordination of intra-departmental activity and provide a basis for uniformity. This manual is not designed to discourage the initiative of the handlers, but offers guidance in the form of official policies and procedures in operational and managerial functions. For the purpose of this manual, the reader is informed that the terms of “handler” and “team” will always mean K-9 handler and K-9 team.

## CHAPTER 2

### MISSION, ORGANIZATION, DEPLOYMENT

#### SECTION I

##### Mission

The K-9 Unit is an important and valuable component of the Talbot County Sheriff's Office law enforcement strategy. The Talbot County Sheriff's Office is committed to maintaining an efficient K-9 Unit to support its enforcement programs.

**The mission of the K-9 Unit** is to enhance the effectiveness of the Talbot County Sheriff's Office enforcement programs, as well as support the community's efforts to deter drug usage, while drawing upon the capabilities of specially trained teams.

## **SECTION II**

### **Support**

The primary function of the K-9 Unit is to support the Talbot County Sheriff's Office law enforcement programs. Personnel should be familiar with the Talbot County Sheriff's Office's enforcement objectives and be committed to their success. The support capabilities of the K-9 Unit are derived from the unique abilities of the canine and the special training given to handlers.

## **SECTION III**

### **Assignment**

Selected K-9 personnel will be assigned to the Talbot County Sheriff's Office Patrol Unit, with oversight provided by the Assistant Patrol Commander. As part of his duties, the Assistant Patrol Commander will designate a first-line supervisor as the K-9 Unit Supervisor. The K-9 Unit Supervisor will coordinate training and activities for the K-9 Teams, will evaluate the regional training to assure the quality of the training sessions and that the training is being conducted according to established policies, and any other assignments deemed essential by the Assistant Patrol Commander.

## **SECTION IV**

### **Objective**

Enforcement objectives should be established based upon the resources available, with the goal of preventing/detecting criminal activity and solving local crime problems.

The K-9 Unit Supervisor is responsible for working with all units within the Talbot County Sheriff's Office to ensure the program objectives are met, and that individual team performance complements the Talbot County Sheriff's Office missions and standards.

K-9 resources should be deployed to maximize the benefits of their special capabilities and training. Supervisors should consider this before assigning personnel to routine patrol duties if manpower is sufficient. K-9 personnel must be skilled in patrol techniques, crime prevention, traffic and criminal enforcement, and they are expected to perform well in these general areas of responsibility.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **K-9 STAFF AND WORKING HOURS**

To facilitate development and implementation of effective countywide K-9 enforcement programs, the K-9 Unit Supervisor or his/her designee will:

- Be responsible for the daily administration of the program;
- Develop and implement K-9 enforcement programs;
- Administer the K-9 applicant selection program;
- Maintain the K-9 Policy & Procedures Manual and revise as necessary;
- Maintain the K-9 filing system;
- Compile work schedules for K-9 Unit
- Write reports as required;
- Conduct/assign administrative investigations into injuries inflicted by TCSO's canines;
- Develop equipment budget item requests;
- Maintain equipment inventory;
- Coordinate K-9 manpower needs Countywide;
- Promote the goals of the TCSO;
- Respond to the scene of major incidents involving K-9 personnel for control and direction;
- Provide/assign personnel to public demonstrations of K-9 capabilities;
- Answer public inquiries;

- Counsel subordinates as necessary;
- Acts as a liaison with allied police agencies;
- Compile statistical reports regarding K-9 performance;
- Review and maintain statistical reports from field K-9 personnel;
- Recommend new/replacement teams;
- Procure training equipment;
- Investigate complaints against K-9 personnel when required;
- Coordinate CDS procurement for K-9 training;
- Facilitate field K-9 training and provide necessary training aids and equipment;
- Develop/administer in-service training and re-certification programs and standards;
- Ensure field K-9 training meets Department standards;
- Procure canines for the K-9 program;
- License Department-owned canines;
- Review Search Reports and identify problem areas with field teams;
- Implement and maintain Quality Assurance Program for K-9 deployment reports.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

**SECTION I**

**Records**

In order to maintain consistency in the submittal of forms, all monthly K-9 forms will be submitted to the K-9 Unit Supervisor by the fifth of each month.

**K-9 Activity Summary:** This form will be submitted daily by each handler through K9Track online when there is a K-9 deployment.

**K-9 Use Report:** This reporting system will be completed through Interact RMS as an Incident Report. This will be completed after each deployment.

**K-9 Track:** This internet based reporting/stat keeping system will be completed with each Incident Report for K-9 Scan.

A monthly membership for each team is required (\$6 per year.)

This report system is located at [www.k9track.com](http://www.k9track.com).

## **SECTION II**

### **General**

In addition to the Talbot County Sheriff's Office general filing system, the K-9 Staff will maintain a unique filing system.

Bite Reports: Each time a Talbot County Sheriff's Office canine causes an injury or bite, the K9 handler will immediately notify the Assistant Patrol Commander or his designee. If a bite is inflicted, the local county health department bite report will be completed, if required by the county where the bite occurred. A copy of this form will be forwarded to the K-9 Supervisor for inclusion in the canine's medical records. Each bite or other canine-related injury will be documented by detailed report thru the chain of command, directed to the Sheriff. Detailed photos of the injury will also be included. An administrative investigation of the incident will be conducted at the direction of the Assistant Patrol Commander. Additionally, the handler will photograph the clothing (where a bite may have been inflicted) of any person(s)/victim(s) bitten.

## **SECTION III**

### **Field K-9 Training Report Booklet**

Following the monthly field K-9 training, each handler will complete the appropriate K-9 training session report. The original will be completed and signed by the instructor and forwarded to the handler to make notes. The session report will then be placed in the designated file for each K-9.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **PROFICIENCY STANDARDS**

The success or failure of any K-9 program is dependent upon the quality of the teams selected as well as the performance of assigned tasks given to the K-9 team. To ensure all teams are adequately trained without the imposition of unnecessary civil liability, the Talbot County Sheriff's Office has established minimum standards of proficiency and certification for all teams.

# **SECTION I**

## **Training**

In order for the Talbot County Sheriff's Office to certify a team as capable of detecting drugs, the team must successfully complete a CDS detection course with a minimum 90% proficiency rating. Upon completion of this program, the dog will be proficient in detecting the odors of methamphetamine, marijuana, heroin, cocaine, black tar heroin, and Ecstasy. The handler will have mastered search techniques and will be proficient at searching vehicles, baggage, buildings and contaminated U.S. Currency. Handlers will be given instruction in drug interdiction, drug identification, hidden compartments, masking odors, packaging, cutting agents, deception cues, Talbot County Sheriff's Office CDS detection policy, legal issues, case law, laws of arrest and search and seizure.

Upon completion of the basic training program, all teams will be evaluated monthly. Each team must demonstrate its proficiency at detecting various CDS, search techniques, and must maintain the minimum passing proficiency rating of 90%.

During tracking training, which includes parts of patrol, K-9 teams will perform tracks at various distance. Each track should contain a right turn, a left turn, and over 3 different surface types, if applicable. The track shall be set for 30 minutes with a cross track set.

In addition, patrol dogs shall train in obedience, aggression control, bitework, amongst other scenarios that a K-9 team may face in the field.

## **SECTION II**

### **Certification**

The following certifications have been adopted by the Talbot County Sheriff's Office K9 Unit. Each of the following certification tests are designed to determine the proficiency of the working dog teams in each phase of police work for canines.

#### **CDS Detection Dog:**

Certification Odors-: Marijuana; Cocaine; Heroin; Black Tar Heroin; Ecstasy, and Methamphetamine. Number of hides: 17. Must achieve a passing grade of 90 percent (only 1 false). Testing areas: At least three: Building; Vehicles; and Boxes

**Tracking Dog:** Each track should contain a right turn, a left turn, and over 3 different surface types, if applicable. The track shall be set for 30 minutes with a cross track set.

**Patrol Dog:** Obediance, Aggression Control (Re-call,) Verbal Outs, and Bite

#### **Certification Validity:**

Upon successful completion of each test, the trainer(s) will approve and sign-off on the certification test sheet that the K-9 Team has successfully passed the Initial K-9 Team Certification. The handler and dog will be considered a "team" and it is the team who will be certified. If the dog changes handlers, a new team exists and the team will need to be certified.

All pre-trained canines will be evaluated for determination of training suitability by the Assistant Patrol Commander or his designee.

## SECTION III

### **Outside Agency Training**

In general, Talbot County Sheriff's Office handlers will not attend any outside canine training sessions without the express approval of the Assistant Patrol Commander or his designee.

**All teams with less than one-year experience will not participate in competitions.** Experienced teams may participate with the Assistant Patrol Commander's approval. The requirements within this section do not supersede the Talbot County Sheriff's Office policies and procedures.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **K-9 IN-SERVICE TRAINING**

#### **SECTION I**

##### **Monthly Maintenance**

Each team will be required to attend monthly maintenance training. The training will be held under the direction and supervision of designated discipline specific K-9 instructors. Current Instruction is through Trainer Andy Larimore (Centreville Police Department) and Master Trainer JC Richardson (Wicomico County Sheriff's Office.)

K-9 Teams will routinely train based on the following schedule:

**CDS - 2 days monthly (16 Hours)**

**PATROL/TRACKING- 2 days monthly (16 Hours)**

Field K-9 instructors will be responsible for selecting the location of the training site and will notify the handlers of training dates, times, and location. Any handler having court or another special assignment on a scheduled training date will notify the following personnel:

- The regularly assigned field instructor, in order to anticipate and adjust the training schedule; and
- The K-9 Unit Supervisor or his designee
- K-9 training will not be cancelled or postponed without the Assistant Patrol Commander or his designee's approval.

Travel time will be included in the training schedule when feasible. All handlers assigned to the training will report to the training site on time.

The handler will be responsible for documenting initial and maintenance training. The original copy of this report will be signed by the instructor(s) and forwarded to the K-9 Unit as part of the training booklet. A copy of this report may be kept by the handler for his/her training records.

Training of dog teams by the individual handler without authorization of the Assistant Patrol Commander or his designee will not be permitted. A handler who is experiencing a problem with his or her dog will notify the K-9 Unit Supervisor or his designee in writing detailing the nature of the problem. The K-9 Unit Supervisor or his designee will determine if the problem can be corrected through field training or if necessary, will schedule additional intensive retraining for the team. **No one will decoy for any purpose without proper certification from an approved decoy school. No exceptions.**

## **SECTION II**

### **K-9 Training Schedule Conflicts**

The monthly in-service CDS detection training is of utmost importance, and must be maintained to ensure the programs integrity and to maintain maximum proficiency of agency K-9 teams. Every effort will be made to comply with the training schedules. Leave, court, and work schedules will be adjusted to accommodate attendance. Handlers will make every effort to not schedule vehicle repairs, veterinary appointments, or make other conflicting assignments on training dates. Court will be scheduled, when possible, for dates other than those designated for K-9 training.

Any K-9 Teams failing to complete all monthly in-service training will notify the K-9 Unit Supervisor or his designee. Any team that has been inactive for 45 consecutive days will be required to be evaluated by the appropriate field instructor before returning to their K-9 assignment. In the interim, the team will be suspended from performing discipline-specific activity until reinstated by the K-9 Unit Supervisor or his designee.

## CHAPTER 7

### CDS TRAINING AIDS ACCOUNTABILITY

**CDS** - In general, the Talbot County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit will obtain CDS training aids from the Criminal Investigation Division Commander or his designee. The K-9 Unit supervisor will have control over the training aids. If the training aid is damaged or spilled, the K-9 Unit supervisor will notify the Criminal Investigations Commander immediately.

During field training the instructor or handler placing the training aids in the field will be responsible for recovery of the aids once the training sessions are completed. A second handler will verify that each training aid has been recovered.

# **CHAPTER 8**

## **USE OF K-9 UNIT TEAM**

### **SECTION I**

#### **Use of CDS K-9**

The primary mission of the drug detection dog team will be supporting Talbot County Sheriff's Office personnel in drug interdiction enforcement. The goal of the program is to increase the number of criminal apprehensions and drug interdictions on the highways and public transportation systems throughout Talbot County. In addition to special training in CDS detection, all handlers will receive training in search and seizure laws, drug courier trends, basis, and reasonable articulable suspicion as it relates to vehicle scans and drug identification.

When the handler is requested to utilize the Drug Detection Dog to scan or search a vehicle, the handler will ensure that a basis for the stop exists prior to conducting the K-9 scan. The handler will request a back-up law enforcement officer prior to conducting a scan or search if possible. The occupants will be directed to the back-up officer vehicle away from the traveled portion of the highway, and escorted and observed by the back-up officer(s) if possible.

The handler will then conduct the scan of the exterior of the vehicle with the canine. If a K-9 gives a positive alert to the presence of CDS, a search of the vehicle will be conducted. Whenever there is insufficient probable cause to search a vehicle, or the handler is uncertain of the sufficiency of probable cause, consent may be requested from the owner or person in control of the vehicle using TCSO “Consent to Search and Seize” Form. Refusal to consent to a search cannot be used by the officer as an element of probable cause to search or arrest.

K-9 personnel will arrest for narcotic or other criminal violations arising out of stops initiated by them, and may handle the arrest pursuant to established procedures. Personnel will be responsible for court appearances, vehicle storage, and all reporting procedures associated with their criminal arrests. When a handler is requested to conduct a vehicle scan for another police officer/department, the handler will first ascertain if there is enough time for the handler to arrive without delaying the violator.

The courts have ruled that an illegal detention is **any** time that is not devoted to the business of the traffic stop unless reasonable articulable suspicion exists. The handler is responsible for obtaining and evaluating the circumstances and the basis or reasonable articulable suspicion evolving from the traffic stop from the stopping police officer. Based upon the information the handler receives from the

stopping police officer, the handler will decide whether to scan the vehicle or not. This decision will be based upon the K-9 handler's knowledge of case law.

If the requesting police officer has determined probable cause to search the vehicle has been established, the handler will not perform a scan. Where the police officer has conducted the initial search based upon probable cause and can articulate a possible hidden compartment, a scan may be performed.

CDS handlers may be assigned to selected traffic enforcement assignments such as speed enforcement and specific saturation patrols as necessary. Handlers will conduct these scans as they would any routine traffic stop and in accordance with Talbot County Sheriff's Office policy. Sheriff's Deputies and handlers, while conducting drug interdiction enforcement, will be strictly accountable to adhere to the Talbot County Sheriff's Office policy forbidding race-based profiling.

All scans performed by handlers will be conducted in a professional manner, with proper regard for the safety of the K-9 team and the public in general.

## **SECTION II**

### **People Scans**

Scans of people can be done if done in accordance to MD and US law.

Scans of people are at the discretion of the handler. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, at no time will any Talbot County Sheriff's Office K-9 handler enter a public or private school to conduct K-9 scans of any student or employee. Scans can be conducted on the parking lots of the schools and normally will only be performed after a letter of request (on school board letterhead) has been received by Talbot County Sheriff's Office.

## **SECTION III**

### **Currency Scans**

Drug detection teams have the capability to scan currency for the odor of CDS. If the K-9 alerts to the currency, it may be seized when certain guidelines have been followed prior to the scan. During investigative questioning, if the police officer develops probable cause or has reasonable articulable suspicion to believe the currency is associated with drug trafficking, and the currency is discovered without the presence of any suspected CDS, the currency can be scanned. Generally, scans should not be conducted when currency is present with CDS. To prevent contamination of the currency by the investigating police officer(s) and/or handlers, the currency will be placed in a clear poly-pouch evidence envelope utilizing fresh surgical gloves. Gloves used to search compartments; premises, vehicles, and/or prisoners will not be used to handle the currency.

If for any reason a scan cannot be performed immediately, the poly-pouch evidence envelope will be sealed until the scan can be performed. The currency will be stored at a location within the agencies temporary currency storage area not previously contaminated by any CDS. This storage area will be determined by each police agency. The scan should be conducted prior to the end of the police officer'(s) tour of duty, but no later than 72 hours after the seizure.

The on-scene handler will review the circumstances of the seizure with the investigating police officer(s) to determine if the investigation permits or allows a scan, and if the currency handling procedures were followed.

Handlers should make every effort to ensure the area in which the suspected currency is being hidden is free from contamination. This can be accomplished by a K-9 scan of the area, prior to the placement of the suspected currency.

## **SECTION IV**

### **Procedures For Search of Vehicles With Locks and Security Seals**

As part of their duties, CDS search teams assigned drug interdiction duty will conduct scans of commercial vehicles. Should the dog alert to a vehicle or combination of vehicles, a search may be conducted. Many vehicles will be locked and protected by means of a metal security seal. If a dog alerts and the vehicle or container is locked or sealed, and the operator refuses to cooperate, the locks and seal may be broken and the vehicle searched. Strict adherence to procedures contained in this section concerning the search of vehicles with locks and security seals will be maintained.

Before searching a locked or sealed vehicle, the handler will review the cargo manifest to determine the identity of the load, consignee, shipping agent, and vehicle owner. If a vehicle is identified as containing a hazardous or radioactive material, it should not be opened, but be allowed to proceed. The handler will then notify the local point-of-destination police agency of the alert by the dog for their appropriate action.

Locks and seals to be broken will be inspected and their serial numbers or the absence thereof recorded. The number will be matched against the seal/serial number of the documents carried by the driver. Discrepancies will be noted for future investigation as appropriate. If a seal is identified as a U.S. Customs Service Seal, then U.S. Customs must be notified and verbal authorization to break the seal must be obtained. This will be done by telephoning **U.S. Customs Service.**

Locks and seals may be broken and the vehicle may be searched by the canine when probable cause has been established. After the search, the vehicle will be resealed with a flex cuff. After resealing the vehicle, the handler will indicate on the vehicle's cargo manifest the date, time, location, and the name of the person breaking and resealing the load. The notation, "Load opened for inspection of contents by \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ date and \_\_\_\_\_ time," will be clearly written on the manifest. After the search, the handler will notify the consignee by telephone of the action taken, unless evidence indicates the involvement of the consignee.

K-9 Unit personnel who initiate a vehicle search will report all enforcement actions to the appropriate chain of command.

## CHAPTER 9

### USE OF A PATROL DOG

#### SECTION I

##### Function

The primary task of the K-9 team is the search and apprehension of criminals. A K-9 may be used to apprehend an individual if the K-9 handler reasonably believes that the individual has either committed or is about to commit any offense **and** if any of the following conditions exists:

- 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 and the use of the canine reasonably appears to be necessary to overcome the resistance.
- The individual is believed to be concealed in an area where entry by anyone other than the police patrol dog would pose a threat to the safety of Deputies or the public.

Situations may arise which do not fall within the provisions set forth in this policy. In any such case, a standard of objective reasonableness, in view of the totality of the circumstances, will be used to review the decision to use a canine.

Without the presence of one or more of the above conditions, mere flight from a pursuing Deputy will not serve as good cause for the use of the K-9 to apprehend the individual; unless the individual is a fleeing felon.

## **SECTION II**

### **Preperation**

In preparing to use the K-9 to search for or apprehend any individual, the handler and/or Supervisor on scene will carefully consider all pertinent information reasonably available at the time. This information will include, but is not limited to the following:

- The individual's estimated age.
- The nature and severity of the suspected offense.
- Any potential danger to the public and/or other Deputies at the scene if the canine is released off- lead. Under no circumstances should a canine be released off-lead for apprehension purposes in a crowded area or when other persons are in or near the path of the fleeing suspect. Additionally, particular attention should be given to the potential for injury to the handler and the canine by vehicular traffic on nearby roadways.
- The degree of resistance, if any, the individual has shown.
- The potential for escape or flight if the K-9 is not used.
- The potential for injury to Deputies or the public caused by the individual if the K-9 is not used.

A handler has the ultimate authority not to deploy the K-9. The handler will evaluate each situation and determine if the use of the K-9 is technically feasible. Generally, the decision to deploy the K-9 will remain with the handler. However, a Supervisor who is sufficiently apprized of the situation may decide not to deploy the K-9.

## SECTION III

### Suspect Injury and Documentation

On building, area/woods, and trail searches, the K-9 handler will be in charge of the search area and will deploy and/or direct other personnel to aid him/her on the search.

In the event that the canine handler affects an arrest, **and** the suspect is injured, whether from the use of physical force or the use of the K-9, the handler will immediately notify the Shift Supervisor. The Shift Supervisor will ensure the required reports are completed:

- Incident Report
- Use of Force Report
- Detailed Report
- Criminal Investigative Report (If applicable)
- Photographs of the canine involved-injuries: full body and facial.

The K-9 Supervisor will include comments regarding the deployment of the K-9, and if required will address any issues that should be handled through maintenance training. If applicable, areas of concern will be identified and corrective action taken, either through the maintenance training or through administrative punishment as determined by the Sheriff and/or the K-9 Supervisor.

The handler will use, and/or permit the K-9 to use only that amount of force that is necessary to apprehend and render safe, a fleeing, hiding, and/or combative individual.

## **SECTION IV**

### **Announcement**

A K-9 patrol team will not be used to apprehend a person suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol or a person believed to be suffering from a psychological condition if no crime has been committed. No K-9 will be committed until a proper announcement has been given in a loud and clear voice, such as "Police K-9, come out or you will be bit". A public address system in a building or from a patrol vehicle can assist in this announcement. This will allow innocent persons the chance to exit the area and allow the suspect the opportunity to surrender. A reasonable amount of time will be given to allow persons to comply with this warning prior to releasing the K-9 off-lead. The warning will be repeated on each level of a multi-level structure (including private residences) and/or as the search progresses through a large or divided building.

When there is a reasonable belief that the suspect speaks a language other than English, an officer or other individual fluent in that language should be summoned to the scene if available and exigency of the situation permits.

A K-9 will not normally be handled or given commands by anyone other than the assigned handler. Only under emergency conditions will another handler command the K-9.

## **SECTION V**

### **After Bite Procedures**

Whenever a police K-9 has bitten or scratched an individual or is alleged to have done so, whether on-duty or off-duty, the handler will:

- If no arrest is made, offer to the individual to provide medical attention and treatment by qualified medical professionals.
- If an arrest is made, provide the individual with medical attention in accordance with TCSO policy on transporting and processing prisoners. If possible, the medical personnel will be summoned to the scene of the incident.
- A subject's refusal to accept medical treatment will be documented in writing. If possible, the Deputy will obtain a copy of the refusal so that it may be placed in the case file.
- When possible, the K-9 handler will take color photographs of the affected area before and following medical treatment. The photographs will be documented and included in the case file. If the subject alleges an injury that is not visible, the location of the alleged injury will be photographed and the K-9 Supervisor notified.

- The Shift Supervisor and the K-9 Supervisor will be notified of the incident. It will be the Shift Supervisor's responsibility to notify the Assistant Patrol Commander for notification up the chain of command.
- The handler will complete the required reports according to TCSO policy and submit them for approval prior to securing.
- It will be the responsibility of the K-9 handler to complete and document the necessary post-bite interviews. The purpose of the interviews is to prevent false accusations and statements that may arise in the future.
- A K-9 involved in a bite will be taken to the Sheriff's Office veterinarian within 14 days of the incident for medical clearance. A copy of the documentation will be provided to the K-9 Supervisor to be placed in the case file and the K-9 file maintained by the Patrol/Operations Commander.

## **SECTION VI**

### **Crowd Control**

A canine team may respond as backup for, but will not deploy the canine for crowd control at a peaceful demonstration. A canine team may be used upon approval of the on-scene supervisor to protect life or property during a riot or other major unlawful assembly after an order to disperse has been made and disregarded. In these situations, the canine will:

- Be kept on a short lead at all times in order to protect individuals from serious injury.
- The handler will not initiate any offensive action, unless to guard against imminent loss of life, serious bodily injury, or substantial property damage.

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **USE OF A TRACKING DOG (SINGLE PURPOSE)**

#### **SECTION I**

##### **Purpose**

Talbot County Sheriff's Office single purpose tracking team will be utilized for the purpose of locating and indicating people who are missing or have made their escape on foot. Talbot County Sheriff's Office K-9 handlers will make the final decision on whether to deploy considering the mission and its details, while applying Talbot County Sheriff's Office K-9 policy to all situations.

## **SECTION II**

### **Suspect Tracking**

Before starting a suspect track, a minimum of two (2) law enforcement officers will be designated to accompany the team, with at least one (1) law enforcement officer utilizing a long gun. If no back-up is available a track will NOT be conducted until they are available. K-9 will be worked on-leash for tracking purposes using the appropriate length tracking lead for the environment.

The severity of the crime and also whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the law enforcement officer or others should be considered before making a decision whether to deploy a single purpose tracking K-9 team. (i.e., homicide, armed robbery, carjacking, burglary, kidnapping, escaped prisoner(s), stolen vehicle, high speed pursuits/reckless DUI, motor vehicle accident with serious to life-threatening injuries, assault and battery, etc.). Unless extenuating circumstances exist such as saving the life of an innocent bystander or other law enforcement officer, making the decision to track for the sole purpose of locating and indicating a suspect should be balanced with the threat level and the investment the Talbot County Sheriff's Office has in their K-9 teams. A Patrol K-9 shall and will be used when available.

## **SECTION III**

### **Missing Person Tracking**

Talbot County Sheriff's Office single purpose tracking teams will be available to all members of the department and/or local law enforcement agencies for locating missing persons.

Before starting a missing person track, a minimum of one (1) law enforcement officer will be designated to accompany the team. If no back-up is available a track will NOT be conducted until they are available. K-9s will be worked on-leash for tracking purposes using the appropriate length tracking lead for the environment.

# CHAPTER 11

## PERSONNEL SELECTION

Every Talbot County Sheriff's Office member requesting assignment to the K-9

Unit must:

- Be in acceptable physical condition.
- Have a minimum of meets expectations work appraisal.
- Own your home for caring and housing the dogs. **Apartment occupants will not be accepted.**
- Be willing to erect a department or approved kennel on the property.
- Submit a detailed report requesting assignment of a K-9 to the Patrol/Operations Commander with a recommendation from the employee's supervisor.

Every applicant will undergo an approved selection process to choose the most qualified candidate. An oral interview board will be convened to interview all applicants as part of the selection process.

Following the interview, the interview board will submit their recommendations to the Talbot County Sheriff, detailing a ranking list of personnel. Although the rank listing indicates total score, final selection for K-9 placement will be based on the needs of the Talbot County Sheriff's Office.

## **CHAPTER 12**

### **CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF CANINES**

#### **SECTION I**

##### **Handler Residences**

Dogs will be housed in clean quarters. Quarters, bedding, feed utensils, pans, food storage, and surrounding care will be inspected and cleaned daily by the handlers.

At the discretion of the handler, Sheriff's Office-owned dogs can be housed in a kennel, which will be provided by the office. Personal pets will not be housed in these kennels.

**Department canines are owned by the Talbot County Sheriff's Office.**

They are not personal pets of the handler. If a handler leaves the program for any reason, the dog remains the property of the Talbot County Sheriff's Office unless the animal is released to the handler. Those dogs with A.K.C. registration will be so registered in the name of the Talbot County Sheriff's Office

Feeding will be the responsibility of the handler. Family members will not routinely perform this task. Care must be taken that the dogs are not overfed.

Only the amount of food the dog will eat in a reasonable time will be given.

An average rule of thumb is that a working dog will not eat more than two to four cups of food per day.

All dogs will be kept clean and well groomed at all times. Each handler is allotted one hour each day for maintenance of the dog(s) and equipment. To avoid accidental entanglement when kenneled, all collars will be removed prior to placing the dog(s) in the kennel.

At no time will dogs be permitted to run loose without the direct supervision of the handler. Since these dogs are trained for police work, family members will not routinely handle, exercise, feed, or in any way care for the canine(s).

When allowing the dog to exercise or relieve itself, the handler will never allow the dog out of sight. The handler will be held strictly accountable for any injuries to the dog or persons. During this activity, if anyone enters the area, the handler shall immediately secure the dog in the patrol vehicle or kennel.

No other handler will attempt to work, or use another handler's dog, except in emergency situations or while performing kennel duty. In the event a Talbot County Sheriff's Office K-9 is lost, the handler will notify the Assistant Patrol Commander and their immediate supervisor immediately.

In the event a Talbot County Sheriff's dog is killed or injured, the handler will, as soon as possible, notify the K9 supervision and Assistant Patrol Commander. An incident of this type will be further captured in a detailed report and an administrative investigation conducted by the Assistant Patrol Commander.

## SECTION II

### Injury to K-9 or Handler

In the event a handler is injured and cannot take control of the dog, a contingency plan should be developed for a back-up deputy to respond and assume responsibility for the K-9. Any injuries to a Department-owned K-9 will require a veterinarian report. If a K-9 dies unexpectedly, or as a result of injuries, a necropsy will only be performed at the direction of the Sheriff of Talbot County or his designee.

At no time will a police K-9 be punched, kicked, or otherwise mistreated while in the handler's care, to include K-9 training. Any incident of this type will be reported to the Assistant Patrol Commander for an administrative investigation. The K-9 will be removed from the handler and taken to an approved kennel or temporarily given to another certified K-9 handler for its health and welfare.

## **SECTION III**

### **Interim K-9 Care and Maintenance in Absence of K-9 Handler**

In the event of an extended absence of a handler from his/her residence (i.e., vacation or emergency leave), the handler shall notify the K9 supervisor within a timely manner so proper arrangements for the interim care of the K-9 can be made.

## **SECTION IV**

### **Verterinary Service Procedures**

Expenses over \$500 and under \$1000 require the notification and approval of the K-9 Supervisor. All emergency expenditures over \$1000 require the approval of the Assistant Patrol Commander or in his absence, the Patrol Commander. Each handler is issued heartworm preventative, and this medication shall be given in the prescribed dosage, once a month to each Sheriff's Office owned K-9. It will be the responsibility of each handler to obtain this medication from approved resources. TCSO K-9's will be seen by Mid-Shore Veterinary Service at 602 Dutchmans Lane, Easton, MD 21601. It is the handler's responsibility to attend all appointments and to remain up to date on all shots and vaccinations. Copies of all receipts will be turned in to the Administrative Assistant for processing and payment. A copy will be kept in the K-9's file.

## **SECTION V**

### **Service Life of a Police K-9 and Retirement**

Generally, no K-9 should be worked past the age of ten (10). Once the K-9 is no longer productive or their health prevents them from performing their duties satisfactorily, the canine shall be retired. The justification for retirement shall be documented in a detailed report, directed to the Sheriff of Talbot County, distributed thru the chain of command. The intended disposition of the canine shall be articulated in the report. The canine will normally be awarded to the canine handler if the handler wishes to keep the animal. In the event that the handler does not wish to keep the canine, a good home will be found.

## **SECTION VI**

### **Breeding**

All Talbot County Sheriff's Office handlers are prohibited from breeding any dog (s) owned by the Talbot County Sheriff's Office.

**NO EXCEPTIONS.**

## **CHAPTER 13**

### **K-9 VEHICLES**

#### **SECTION I**

#### **Maintenance and Care**

All K-9 vehicles shall be kept reasonably clean and free of odor and hair collection. Each vehicle shall be equipped with an approved cage mounted in the rear of the vehicle in place of the back seat. Wire mesh windows and screens will be placed over both rear door windows when a divider is utilized in place of a cage. Multi-purpose vehicles may be equipped with a double cage in the rear of the vehicle in place of the back seat. All parts of the cage will be secured when the vehicle is left unattended.

Whenever the handler leaves his vehicle unattended, the handler will lock all doors and roll down a rear window not to exceed five inches for ventilation. These measures are necessary to prevent accidental damage to the interior of the vehicle, as well as injury to pedestrians who may pass in close proximity to the vehicle. All handlers will be cognizant of the interior temperature of their vehicles. Proper climate control will be maintained to ensure the safety of the K-9.

All K-9 patrol vehicles will be identified by placing a "CAUTION K-9" decal on the rear windows. Only canines owned by the Talbot County Sheriff's Office are authorized for transport in department vehicles. Any exceptions will require the approval of the Assistant Patrol Commander of his designee.

## **SECTION II**

### **Transport**

All new K-9 vehicles are equipped with a split rear seat, where a section is designed to transport a single prisoner. The other portion of the rear seat is designed to house the K-9 safely separated from the prisoner.

K-9 handlers are permitted to transport single prisoners whether the K-9 is in the vehicle or not. All other transports shall be approved by the Assistant Patrol Commander or his designee, adhering to Talbot County

Sheriff's Office policy and procedures.

## **CHAPTER 14**

### **UNIFORMS**

In general, K-9 personnel will wear the uniform of the day as prescribed by the Sheriff of Talbot County. To include: Issued black BDU pants, issued black short/long sleeve polo style shirt with embroidered badge, rank insignia and issued black ball cap.

Uniform of the day can be switched to patrol uniform due to special assignments, etc.

## **CHAPTER 15**

### **EXPENSES**

#### **SECTION I**

Requests to purchase items, other than veterinary care, must be submitted on a TCSO letterhead, and must have prior approval of the Assistant Patrol Commander. Veterinarian visits, other than annual physicals or emergencies, will require approval from the Assistant Patrol Commander or designee. The original bill will be forwarded from the veterinarian at the time of service rendered, to the Talbot County Sheriff's Office for processing. It will include an itemized listing of the services performed. Individual K-9 elective services exceeding \$500 will require an estimate and prior approval by the Assistant Patrol Commander.

## **CHAPTER 16**

### **K-9 STAFF NOTIFICATION**

Handlers are responsible to immediately notify the Assistant Patrol Commander or his designee of the following incidents:

- The injury or death of a handler, and/or a canine.
- When a canine has been lost.
- When a handler believes the assistance or support of a supervisor is needed.
- Any accidental bites involving a family member or a citizen.

Considering that K-9 provides a support function, the on-scene Talbot County Sheriff's Office commander will be in charge of the operation.

However, individual handler's best know their dog's capabilities and limitations and will make the final decision concerning their use. The Assistant Patrol Commander or his designee will resolve any conflict.

## **CHAPTER 17**

### **CANINE DEMONSTRATIONS**

K-9 handlers may be assigned K-9 demonstrations by the Assistant Patrol Commander. Each handler will be prompt, wearing the approved uniform, and in possession of the appropriate equipment for the demonstration. All uniforms, vehicles, and canines will be neat, clean, and well groomed. During any public demonstrations, no part of the public will participate. All due care will be given to the safety of the public.