

# Georgia Department of Public Safety

## Policy Manual

<b>SUBJECT</b> <b>CANINE PROGRAMS</b>	<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> <b>25.07</b>
<b>DISTRIBUTION</b> <b>ALL EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>REVISED DATE</b> <b>4/29/2026</b>
	<b>POLICY REVIEWED</b> <b>4/29/2026</b>

### 25.07.1 Purpose

The Georgia Department of Public Safety recognizes that a Canine Program adds value to law enforcement. The purpose of this policy is to outline the Department's Canine Program, including the process of qualifications, selections, training, supervision, equipment, care, use, and activation.

### 25.07.2 Policy

It is the policy of the Georgia Department of Public Safety to provide support to its members and other law enforcement agencies with reliable, highly trained Canine Teams, which can assist varying law enforcement missions throughout the State of Georgia.

### 25.07.3 Titles, Definitions, Chain of Command

For this policy, the following titles and definitions apply:

- A. The Georgia State Patrol Field Operations South Adjutant ("South Adjutant") shall be the limited appointing authority for the Canine Unit.
- B. The Troop K Commander shall be the manager of the Canine Unit, have responsibility for the overall standards and procedures associated with the Canine Unit and Canine Program, and shall report to the South Adjutant.
- C. Canine Team - consists of a DPS sworn member trained and certified as a handler ("Canine Handler" or "Handler") and canine, certified to Departmental standards.
- D. Canine Unit – consists of all designated Canine Teams within the Canine Program.
- E. Canine Supervisor – NCOs or commissioned officers recommended by the Troop K Commander and approved by the South Adjutant.
- F. Canine Training Coordinator – a certified Canine Training Instructor who serves as the training manager for the Canine Program, and who shall be a sworn member recommended by the Troop K Commander and approved by the South Adjutant. The Canine Training Coordinator shall be responsible for scheduling and documenting internal training sessions, the maintenance of the training facilities, and training aids.
- G. Canine Training Instructor – shall be appointed by the Canine Training Coordinator, with approval of the South Adjutant, and shall complete a departmental-approved canine training certification course within 18 months of appointment.

- H. Single Purpose Canines – the Department’s canines trained in a single Discipline (e.g. narcotics detection or explosive detection).
- I. Dual Purpose Canines – the Department’s canines trained in two or more Disciplines (e.g. tracking and narcotics detection).
- J. SWAT Canines- the Department’s canines specifically selected, trained and equipped to work in support of and in conjunction with tactical teams.
- K. Discipline – the area of training and skills of the Department’s canines, whether Single or Dual-Purpose Canines.

#### **25.07.4 Canine Disciplines**

Law Enforcement canines are primarily trained in the Disciplines of tracking, searching, and detector work, but there are many other services they can render. The following are some of the viable uses for trained, designated Department canines:

- A. Tracking – This Discipline is to follow human scent for purposes to include, but not limited to, fugitive apprehension, or search and rescue. For example, if it is known where a wanted or missing person walked, the canine can be placed on this track and will generally follow it.
- B. Building Search – This Discipline is to follow direct scent in the search of a building.
- C. Area Search – This Discipline is for search by airborne scent where no track can be established. This may include but is not limited to a search for missing or lost persons, or fugitives.
- D. Property Search – This Discipline is for search of any article with human scent on it. Generally, the canine does not have to smell the person who handled the article before searching for it.
- E. Observation Posts & Security – This Discipline is for maintaining security of outside perimeters at disasters or other areas to keep out unauthorized persons. Visibility of the canines during daylight serves as deterrence. Night use provides for detection of human scent and noises.
- F. Chase and Hold – This Discipline is for chase of a fleeing person on command of the Handler, and to hold the subject until the Handler arrives and orders the subject released.
- G. Handler and Canine Protection – Canines shall only be used for personal defense in situations where the likelihood of serious injury is imminent to the Handler, other members, other Departmental canine, or the subject canine.
- H. Crowd Control – Only the Public Safety Commissioner or his designee shall authorize requests for the use of canines for crowd control.
- I. Patrol – Selected canines may be used on patrol. However, the Handler shall carefully consider the weather, which could adversely affect the canine's health or ability to work.
- J. Narcotics Detection – Selected canines are trained to locate controlled substances such as hashish, heroin, cocaine, crack, and methamphetamine.

- K. Explosives Detection – Selected canines are trained to locate numerous types of explosives and explosives materials.
- L. SWAT/Tactical – Selected canines are trained as forward locators, deployed for the purpose of apprehending an armed subject or a subject that poses a risk of imminent danger to himself/herself or others.

## **25.07.5 Procedures**

### **A. Organization**

1. To ensure proper representation and coverage, the Canine Unit shall be comprised of sworn members located in strategic positions throughout the State.
2. All Canine Teams will report to their respective Chain of Command with the following exception that Canine Supervisors shall be the primary contact persons for canine for canine-related questions and issues and shall act as liaisons between the Troop K Commander and field supervisors, including but not limited to NCOs of GSP, CVE, and Capitol Police.
3. Canine Handlers shall perform their canine duties in addition to their regular duties.
4. The Troop K Commander shall have the following responsibilities:
  - a. Provide the South Adjutant with a current listing of active Canine Teams, their capabilities, and their locations within the state.
  - b. Schedule and assign assistance for dignitary security details and requests from other law enforcement agencies. He/she shall notify the South Adjutant and affected field supervisors in advance of such assignments.
  - c. Investigate and make recommendations to the South Adjutant concerning incidents where a Department canine has caused injury to a person or animal, or damaged personal property.
  - d. Receive requests through GEMA for canine use and coordinate with GEMA for law enforcement purposes.
5. Canine Handler Responsibilities:
  - a. Canine Teams are normally on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week for searches.
  - b. The Canine Handler shall notify the Troop K Commander through his/her Canine Supervisor via email whenever the Handler is unavailable to respond to searches (e.g., on annual or sick leave). The notification message shall include how long the Canine Handler will be unavailable.
  - c. The Canine Handler shall transport the canine in a Department-issued crate and Canine Vehicle when on duty.

### **B. Processes for Handler Selection, Qualification, and Removal**

1. When a position as a Canine Handler becomes available:

- a. The South Adjutant shall announce the vacancy via Human Resources;
- b. A member shall submit a resume and application to Human Resources.
- c. Applicants must pass a physical fitness evaluation administered by DPS Canine members which includes a 1.5-mile run, sit-ups, push-ups (to Cooper Standards), and an obstacle course. All aspects of the evaluation must be passed to continue to the interview process.
- d. Interviews will be conducted by an interview panel consisting of the Troop K Commander, Canine Training Coordinator, Troop/Region/Unit Commander from the assignment area or their designee, and a member of the Human Resources Division.
- e. The interview panel shall provide the South Adjutant with a recommendation based on the results of the interview procedure; and
- f. The selection of a suitable candidate(s) shall be approved by the South Adjutant.

C. Minimum Requirements for Handler

- 1. To be eligible for selection as a Canine Handler, the applicant shall:
  - a. Be an active, sworn member within the Department of Public Safety for a minimum of eighteen months;
  - b. Have received a "met expectations" rating or higher on up to the last three previous annual performance appraisals;
  - c. Have no adverse action within the previous year;
  - d. Be a non-smoker or agree to not smoke in the Canine Vehicle or in the presence of the canine;
  - e. Have excellent written communication skills, and be very proficient in record keeping;
  - f. Pass a physical fitness evaluation administered by DPS Canine members, and
  - g. Have an appropriate living situation, which must include the following:
    - 1) Residing in a single-family residence.
    - 2) Suitable location to construct a kennel to Department standards.
    - 3) Support of spouse/family. Note: Serving as a Canine Handler should be a family decision which recognizes the Disciplines involved and the impact that the canine will have on a Handler's family. To be successful, the Canine Program requires the entire family's full cooperation, as the canine will become a part of the family's life. Family members are to be made fully aware of the requirements of this Program.
    - 4) No family member with allergies to or phobias regarding canines.

- 5) No restrictive neighborhood covenants/regulations prohibiting either the subject canine breed or maintaining a kennel on premises. If an applicant lives in a restricted community or rental property with any such restrictions, then specific written permission must be obtained from the homeowner's association or landlord prior to sheltering the canine at such premises.

2. The Handler applicant shall agree to the following:

- a. Provide suitable housing for the canine at his/her residence;
- b. Properly train and care for the canine;
- c. Pass a quarterly physical fitness evaluation administered by DPS Canine members. If the handler fails any aspect of the evaluation, they will be retested within 60 days. If the handler has two failures within a 12-month period, they will lose their handler status and be removed from the team. The Troop K Commander holds the discretion to wave this requirement based on duty-specific needs.
- d. Recognize that the position requires unusual and extended working hours;
- e. Recognize that a canine with certain Disciplines, including but not limited to Tracking, requires the Handler's awareness of and attention to his/her designated canine while in the presence of non-members, non-Handlers, or persons unfamiliar with the subject canine;
- f. Recognize that there is inherent potential for damage to personal property from the canine that could result in the potential for personal liability;
- g. Recognize that the Handler's primary responsibility is to perform the duties of a Georgia State Patrol Trooper/State Officer unless assigned to specific canine duties;
- h. Participate in demonstrations, appearances and public speaking engagements with the canine as required, and
- i. Accept the assignment for a minimum of three years.

D. Handler Removal

There are several factors that influence the decision to remove a member from the Canine Unit. They may include, but are not limited to:

1. Any formal disciplinary action;
2. The failure of the member to attend and complete required training;
3. Two physical fitness test failures within a 12-month period;
4. A failure to obtain at least "met expectations" on the members' most recent performance appraisal;
5. Failure to maintain the canine to minimum established standards of health, maintenance, and certifications;
6. Unsatisfactory job performance;

7. Failure to respond to a call for service;
8. Determination by the South Adjutant that removal is in the best interest of the Department; and
9. Voluntary removal after the member submits a written request to the South Adjutant advising of the effective date of inactive status.

E. Training

1. The member is required to successfully complete a Department-approved Canine Handler certification class within 18 months of initial assignment to the Canine Unit. All training classes shall be POST certified or equivalent.
2. The Canine Handler is required to complete ongoing training for proficiency, as required by the Department.
  - a. Canine Teams shall attend a minimum of 16 hours of in-service training per month unless temporarily waived by the Troop K Commander. Dual-Purpose Canine teams shall attend an additional 16 hours of in-service training per month unless temporarily waived by the Troop K Commander. Advanced Canine Handler courses and seminars recommended by the Canine Training Coordinator and pre-approved by the appropriate chain of command may also be required. Additional training sessions may be required if the Canine Team is not performing to established standards.
  - b. Canine Handlers may request additional maintenance training when they believe it would be beneficial; however, such additional training must be pre-approved in writing by the Canine Training Coordinator.
  - c. All such training shall be properly documented on the canine's training records.
3. Only members who have completed the required selection process and initial training are authorized to handle Department canines on a routine basis.
4. Canine Handlers shall maintain the proficiency of their assigned canine. Training sessions shall be used to optimize performance, correct deficiencies, practice specific training objectives, and complete other assignments as directed by the Troop K Commander.
5. Canine Teams with a Discipline for detection may be issued surrogate odors to be used for training aids. Surrogate odor scents shall be stored in airtight containers according to manufacturer directions. A separate container shall be used for each specific odor. Actual controlled substances may be used during coordinated training sessions with the approval of the Canine Training Coordinator or Canine Training Instructor. The Troop K Commander, Canine Supervisors, Canine Training Coordinator, or Canine Training Instructors are authorized to possess controlled substances for the purpose of narcotics training and shall abide by DEA guidelines for obtaining the proper license for handling and transporting of such substances. Controlled substances to be used as training aids shall be maintained and stored according to the DEA guidelines. Controlled substances shall not be stored in a patrol vehicle any longer than necessary to transport the items to or from a training location. Any member who loses or has damaged/destroyed training aids shall immediately report the matter through the Chain of Command to the South Adjutant.

6. The use of explosive training aids consisting of different odors, sizes, and amounts and set in various environments is vital in maintaining the effectiveness of Canine Teams with the Discipline for explosive detection. Explosives training aids could be hazardous to public safety. Surrogate odors may be issued as explosive training aids. Even those training aids that are relatively inert or safe, by their very nature, are perceived to be dangerous by those not familiar with their limitations. Subsequently, it is important careful handling and tracking procedures for training aids are always followed. Any member who loses or has damaged/destroyed training aids shall immediately report the matter through the Chain of Command to the South Adjutant.
7. Canine Teams with the Discipline for explosive detection will work with area Bomb Squads to maintain an effective training plan to include scenarios. The teams will work closely with Bomb Squads during training and actual events.
8. Canine Teams with the Discipline for Tracking or Chase and Hold will use training exercises and scenarios which shall include, but may not be limited to, the canine's orientation to a human, while simultaneously utilizing protective methods and equipment for decoys and other individuals involved in the training.

#### F. Certification

1. Canine Teams shall maintain an annual inter-departmental certification based on established guidelines for that team's required skills. The annual certification shall be administered by the Canine Training Coordinator.
2. Canine Teams must maintain an annual certification by at least one nationally or internationally recognized certifying agency (*i.e.* PSP, NAPWDA, NNDDA, USPCA, etc.) or, by an approved vendor. The Department shall not endorse one certifying agency or vendor, any of which must be pre-authorized by the Department. Copies of certification documents shall be provided to the Canine Training Coordinator.
3. Canine teams trained in certain Disciplines that require additional certifications, such as explosive detection, shall obtain those certifications as required.
4. Canine Teams that fail a certification trial shall notify the Troop K Commander through their Chain of Command within 24 hours. The Troop K Commander shall arrange for remedial training through the Canine Training Coordinator. The Canine Team shall be required to re-certify with the failing agency/vendor within 30 days. It shall not be permissible to seek certification through another agency/vendor to circumvent the certification process unless there is probable cause to believe that the original certification trial was handled inappropriately. Should the Canine Team fail the second attempt at re-certification, the Troop K Commander will evaluate the situation and may recommend that the canine be removed or reassigned to another Canine Handler in accordance with Section D. of this policy. The Troop K Commander shall investigate any allegations of misconduct in the certification process.
5. Expenses incurred for certification procedures shall be processed in accordance with the Department's purchasing guidelines.

#### G. Canine Selection

1. The canines for the Canine Unit may come from donations or purchases.

2. Canines shall be evaluated for fitness in police work, including emotionally, physically and demonstrating traits needed for specific training (e.g. Discipline for detection will be passive-alert and source-oriented).
3. Various breeds may be used, but it is recognized that certain breeds may perform better in a designated role than another. The Troop K Commander may work with vendors and Handlers to select the best canine candidate for a particular Discipline or Disciplines.
4. Canine candidates shall be pre-screened for illness and genetic deficiencies by a qualified veterinarian prior to acquisition by the Department.
5. Department canines shall not be used for breeding purposes without the consent of the Troop K Commander. All female Department canines shall be spayed at their appropriate life cycle. Neutering male canines may affect their internal drive and will be done only upon a determination that it is in the best interest of the canine and approved by the Troop K Commander.
6. Any canine nominated for donation to the Department of Public Safety shall be subject to the pre-screening requirements. If the canine is not being donated directly from a vendor, then the Troop K Commander, shall have the canine evaluated prior to submission of the donation request to the Board of Public Safety.
7. With express authorization by the Commissioner on a case-by-case basis, the Department of Public Safety shall return any canine to a vendor, within contract limits, for replacement or refund if that canine is deemed to be un-serviceable.

#### H. Canine Use

1. Canine Teams shall be used in accordance with State and Federal Laws.
2. If possible, the following circumstances should determine the deployment of a Canine Team with the Discipline for Narcotics Detection:
  - a. When probable cause has been established from a search incident to an arrest.
  - b. When probable cause has been established to execute a search warrant.
  - c. A legal traffic stop has been made and consent to search has been given to an officer to search and utilize a narcotics canine.
  - d. When reasonable, articulable suspicion exists to justify a free air sniff of an area, vehicle, or building/storage locker.
  - e. When probable cause has been established for a search warrant through the use of a canine. Note: A positive canine alert may be used to establish probable cause for a search warrant and its execution.
3. When a canine with the Discipline for Narcotics Detection is used to sniff currency for the purpose of identifying the presence of narcotics or narcotic odor, the following standard procedures should apply, if possible:
  - a. Currency sniffs should be conducted at the location where the money is discovered.
  - b. A minimum of three paper bags or similar containers will be used.

- c. Suspected contaminated money will be placed in one container.
  - d. All containers will be configured so they are similar in shape and size.
  - e. The location of the contaminated money will be unknown to the Canine Handler prior to the sniff.
4. The following should apply, if possible, for deployment of a Canine Team with the Discipline for Explosives Detection:
- a. When conducting an explosives search, unnecessary people shall be removed from the area. A bomb technician or designated spotter will assist the Canine Team with the search. A Canine Team will not enter or search without the assistance of a spotter or observer.
  - b. When practical, a Consent to Search form shall be completed and signed by the owner or property custodian prior to the search. A Consent to Search form may not be necessary for searches of state property.
  - c. When conducting an explosives search where a specific detonation time has been given, the Canine Team will withdraw to a safe area one half-hour before the indicated detonation time and should not re-enter the search area sooner than one-half hour after the detonation or detonation time, whichever comes first.
  - d. Depending on the information available to the Handler, the final decision relating to the timing of the search rests with the Handler, including but not limited to when to act and/or reenter the area to be searched.
  - e. Canine Teams with the Discipline for Explosives Detection are appropriate for searching buildings, vehicles, baggage, packages, aircraft, etc., during threats, protection details, or other routine or general sweeps, but are not to be used to assess, examine, or clear items already identified as suspicious, a suspected explosive item, or possible improvised explosive device. In instances where an item is already identified as suspicious, a Bomb Technician shall be called and an Explosive Detection Canine Team should be used to provide a sweep of the surrounding areas and command post vicinity for secondary devices.
5. There exists the potential for the use of force when a Canine Team is performing their duty, particularly for the Discipline of Chase and Hold. However, the canine is not considered a deadly weapon and the deployment of the canine is not considered lethal force. The Department's Use of Force policy (10.01) shall otherwise serve as the established policy governing use of force by canine.
6. Canine Teams with the Discipline for Tracking should use the following procedures, if possible:
- a. The Handler should contact the requesting party to obtain all pertinent information regarding the circumstances.
  - b. The Handler should become familiar with the search area and any perimeter that has been established.
  - c. The Handler, when practicable, should designate a minimum of one cover officer to accompany the tracking canine.

- d. The Canine Team or the cover officer should ensure that they have some form of communications with the perimeter officers.

7. Warning and Announcements:

- a. A verbal warning should be issued before initiating a canine action unless it would otherwise increase the risk of injury or escape
- b. To the extent possible, the warning should include but is not limited to the following:
  - 1) Identification of the Canine Handler as a police canine officer; and
  - 2) Orders to the suspect (e.g., come out now, stop, show me your hands now, speak to me now, etc.).
- c. Whenever possible for the Disciplines of Chase and Hold, or Search of buildings, the Canine Handler shall advise all others present or responding to the scene that he/she is unleashing a canine.
- d. When searching buildings, Canine Handlers should give warnings on each level of multi-level structures, at major corridors, and in complex hallways that may have prevented a suspect from hearing the initial canine warnings prior to deployment or in any situation the Handler feels it may be necessary.

I. Activation

- 1. Canine Teams shall be authorized for assignment during normal operations, with consideration for the closest available Canine Team and due regard for response time. If an on-duty Canine Team with applicable Discipline(s) is unavailable or response time is unacceptable, the assignment of the closest Canine Team or off-duty Team with applicable capabilities may be authorized. The use of a Canine Team shall take into consideration the following:
  - a. The need for an immediate response;
  - b. The duty status of Handlers; and
  - c. Any other exigent circumstances.
- 2. Canine Teams may be activated for incidents that fall within their specific Discipline for the following categories:
  - a. Searches for Contraband, Narcotics, or People  

Sworn members of the Department may request activation of a Canine Team when they reasonably suspect that a vehicle, building, or area may contain contraband, illegal narcotics, suspect(s), missing person(s) or articles related to the missing person.
  - b. Emergency Situations  

Sworn members of the Department may request activation of a Canine Team to assist in the resolution of an immediate or ongoing situation, including but not limited to the following:

- 1) Area building, or property searches;
  - 2) Pursuits;
  - 3) Bomb Threats;
  - 4) Tracking;
  - 5) Search and Rescue;
  - 6) Security;
  - 7) SWAT/Tactical; and
  - 8) Observation Posts.
3. Authority to Activate
- a. Activation of Canine Teams should be authorized by the Team's Canine Supervisor or a Post NCO for the subject territory.
  - b. In the instance of any dispute between a field supervisor and the Canine Supervisor(s) concerning the authorization or denial of a Canine Unit response, the Troop K Commander or Troop Commander for the subject territory shall have final authority.

J. Emergency Control of Canine

Should a Canine Handler be injured or incapacitated to the extent they cannot give commands to the canine and the canine prevents assistance being given to the Canine Handler, the following procedures shall be used, if possible:

1. Open the rear door of the Canine Handler's patrol vehicle and give the canine a command to load into the vehicle. If the Handler's vehicle is not available, another patrol vehicle may be used.
2. Call another experienced law enforcement Canine Handler to the scene to assist.
3. If the Discipline is Chase and Hold, attempt to use the protective sleeve in the trunk of the Canine Handler's patrol vehicle to move the canine into the rear of the vehicle.
4. Call the local animal control and advise them of the circumstances. Request the use of a catch pole or tranquilizer gun if required.
5. Use of deadly force against a canine that is protecting its Handler shall only be used as a means of last resort, and only if failure to immediately act would reasonably be expected to result in serious injury or death to the Handler.

K. Conditions and Limitations of Use

1. To minimize the risk of injury to the canine, Canine Handlers initiating a vehicle pursuit should relinquish the primary role to the first marked Department of Public Safety unit that arrives, if practicable. The same consideration should be given prior to a Canine Vehicle being used for the Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT) maneuver.

2. The safety of the public and the performance of the canine are priorities of each Canine Handler.
3. Canines shall not be left unattended in a way they may have contact with the public or be placed in danger.
4. While on routine patrol, canines shall remain in the caged area of the Department's Canine Vehicle. Canines shall not ride in the front seat area of the vehicle.
5. Unless exigent circumstances require it, the canine shall not be allowed or encouraged to jump on or be permitted on the exterior of any Departmental vehicle.
6. Under normal circumstances, only the Canine Handler shall feed, handle, exercise or give commands to their assigned canine.
7. Canines shall not enter restaurants or other business establishments unless duty related and under control of the Canine Handler.
8. Canines shall be kept in locked kennels except when under direct supervision and control of the assigned Canine Handler or their reasonably-appointed designee.
9. Canines shall not be allowed off-lead in a non-work environment when non-family members are present in the area. Canine Handlers should exercise extreme caution when any non-law enforcement personnel are present around the canine.
10. The Canine Handler shall not demonstrate the canine's abilities except at authorized demonstrations.
11. The Canine Handler shall always maintain strict control and security of the canine.
12. Under no circumstances shall the Canine Handler allow another Department member or citizen to intentionally tease or agitate their assigned canine except during authorized training sessions by qualified personnel participating in the training.

L. Limitations of Use

The use of Departmental canines for Outside Employment, as defined by DPS policy, is prohibited. However, with specific approval of the Georgia State Patrol Field Operations North or South Adjutant and the Troop K Commander, a Handler may utilize his/her assigned canine while working approved Outside Employment details. Should a law enforcement action requiring the use of the canine become necessary and the Discipline matches the situation (e.g., bomb threat and Discipline for explosives detection), the Handler may deploy the canine. In an instance such as this, the Handler should have his/her actions documented on the CAD through the respective Communications Center.

M. Canine-Inflicted Injury

1. The Canine Handler and a Department supervisor shall examine all alleged injuries inflicted by a canine on any person (including the Canine Handler) or animal. Medical attention shall be provided immediately to any injured person.

2. The Canine Handler shall make color photographs of all alleged injuries, regardless of the suspected nature of the injuries, or whether medical treatment by qualified personnel has already occurred.
3. The Canine Handler shall complete an incident report explaining the circumstances for any incident.
4. The Director of Legal Services shall be notified of any alleged injury within 48-hours and furnished a copy of the Incident Report and all supporting information immediately upon completion.

N. Care of Canines

Canines entrusted to a Canine Handler are the sole responsibility of the Canine Handler for care, feeding, grooming, cleanliness, training and maintenance for meeting performance standards. Payment of services discussed below shall be processed through the Department's budget procedures.

1. Canines shall be groomed, inspected and handled daily.
2. The canine's kennel shall be cleaned daily and maintained in a sanitary condition.
3. Canine food, supplies, and equipment shall be secured by the Canine Handler as needed using approved Departmental purchasing procedures. Supervisory approval must be obtained for any expenses exceeding established spending guidelines. Approved purchases may also be made utilizing the respective Post/Unit/Section Purchasing Card.
4. The Canine Handler shall obtain the service of a local veterinarian as needed. Any expense involving veterinary services must be processed according to departmental guidelines.
5. The Canine Handler is responsible for the acquisition of the rabies tags, upkeep of vaccinations, and compliance with all state, county, and city ordinances regarding licensing of their canines. The records will be maintained in the canine's diary. The Department's purchasing procedures will be used for the required fees.
6. Kennel Boarding may be authorized for non-aggressive canines if a Canine Handler would be unable to provide adequate care for his or her assigned canine for an extended period, including leave for vacation or illness. A request for kennel boarding must be pre-approved in writing by the Troop K Commander through the Canine Supervisor. Law enforcement kennel boarding will be utilized if available. Civilian kennels will only be used for non-aggressive canines and must meet minimum state certification standards. Aggressive canines or canines with Discipline(s) of tracking or chase and hold should be kenneled with another Handler or at an approved law enforcement facility.
7. Adult family members or other qualified adults may provide short term care for a Department canine in the Handler's absence only after being properly instructed by the member on correct handling procedures, and with prior arrangements approved through the Troop K Commander. The selected adult person shall not allow the canine off-lead or out of its kennel area unless absolutely necessary. Special consideration should be given before selecting any adult person to act in this capacity as any such selection carries an inordinate amount of personal responsibility.

8. In an emergency medical situation, the Canine Handler or designee shall ensure that the canine receives immediate medical attention. After medical attention has been rendered to the canine, the Canine Handler shall forward a memorandum, through the chain of command to the South Adjutant, describing the incident that caused the need for emergency medical attention. If treatment would exceed established spending limits, verbal supervisory approval shall be received before services are rendered, if practical.
9. The Canine Handler shall be responsible for the administration of any medication as prescribed by the veterinarian after the canine has been released from the veterinary establishment.
10. Canine medical examinations shall be conducted annually or as needed should an injury or illness occur.
11. The handler shall ensure their assigned canine always wears a soft collar with identification tags. The identification tag shall include the canine's name and 24-hour communication phone number for the Troop C Communications Center.
12. Members assigned the responsibility of Canine Handler are scheduled an additional 14 hours during each 28-day roster for the responsibilities associated with the health, maintenance, handling and grooming of their canines. These hours shall be recorded on the appropriate activity/time sheets every Sunday on a 4/3/4/3 basis. The time shall be carried under the "OTHER NON-ENFORCEMENT HOURS" area.
13. Exercising and training of canines shall be conducted with the canine on lead unless the Handler determines that there are no risks present with having their canine off lead. The Handler shall take into consideration the presence of any other animals or persons in the area, and the possibility of their canine escaping their control before allowing them off lead. Portable warning signs should be posted in the exercise/training area warning that a police working dog is present in the area.
14. Handlers are responsible for cleaning and properly discarding any mess caused by their canines, including feces dropped in public areas or on private property.

O. Required Equipment

1. Canine Vehicles:
  - a. Canine Handlers shall be assigned a patrol vehicle furnished and dedicated for canine transport and patrol ("Canine Vehicle").
  - b. When the Canine Vehicle is not available, a Department patrol vehicle shall be furnished except for extenuating circumstances.
  - c. A Canine Vehicle must be locked, secured, and at a safe interior temperature when the canine is left in the vehicle and the Handler is not present.
  - d. Canine Vehicles shall display a uniform canine warning sign, shall be maintained in a clean and healthy condition for the canine, and are subject to routine inspections by the Canine Supervisors.

- e. Mechanical problems of Canine Vehicles shall be addressed as soon as possible. Prolonged or recurring mechanical problems shall be brought to the attention of the Fleet Manager. If the Canine Vehicle cannot be repaired to a satisfactory state, the Fleet Manager should arrange for a replacement vehicle as soon as practicable to preserve the safety of the canine. No canine should be transported in a vehicle that is known to have a clogged catalytic converter or defective temperature monitoring system.
2. Each canine handler shall be issued the following equipment:
    - a. Lead of appropriate length;
    - b. Collar/harness as appropriate for duty assignment and trained Discipline(s);
    - c. Kennel for the Canine Handler's residence (Note: the kennel shall remain the property of the Department and shall be kept clean and always disinfected. The kennel will be subject to on-site inspections);
    - d. Optional kennel for the assigned Post;
    - e. Grooming/care equipment;
    - f. Patrol vehicle equipment to include Vehicle Kennel, splash resistant water bowl, temperature monitoring system, tinted windows, a bail-out system for patrol dogs (where applicable), and
    - g. Training aids and other equipment as deemed necessary.

Canine Handlers will be responsible for the care and maintenance of all equipment issued to them for training and control of the canine.

P. Assignment of Handlers and Reassignment of Canines

1. The duration of a Handler's assignment to the Canine Unit shall be limited to the working life of their assigned canine. A Handler's continued assignment to the Canine Unit beyond the working life of an assigned canine shall only be allowed with the written recommendation of the Troop K Commander to the South Adjutant.
2. In the event a Handler leaves the Canine Unit for reasons including but not limited to promotion, change in assignment, or retirement from the Department, the canine may be reassigned to a new Handler. The South Adjutant, with the recommendation of the Troop K Commander, will consider the likelihood of the canine's future abilities and make determinations which are most beneficial for the Department.

Q. Canine Team Deactivation and Reactivation

1. A Canine Team's failure to participate, perform adequately, or successfully complete the required monthly maintenance, in-training, or annual certifications may result in the Canine Team being removed from service or the Handler being removed from the Canine Unit.
2. Unsatisfactory performance of the Handler or canine found during initial training, maintenance training, evaluations, or certifications shall be reviewed with the appropriate Canine Supervisor(s) and the Canine Training Coordinator.

3. The Troop K Commander may recommend removal of a Canine Team from active service if a severe deficiency is identified. Severe deficiencies may include, but is not be limited to any one of the following:
  - a. Canine does not respond to training.
  - b. Aggressive behavior or temperament displayed toward Departmental personnel or the public.
  - c. Any medical or genetic problems preventing the canine from physically performing his/her trained tasks.
  - d. The capabilities of the canine are hindered by the relationship or rapport with its Handler.
4. A deactivated Canine Team shall be allowed a reasonable period of time to be brought back up to established standards.

#### R. Retirement of Canines

1. Canines shall be retired from service upon exceeding their useful life as state property, at which time they shall be considered of no value to the Department.
2. Recommendations for retirement may be initiated by the Handler, Troop K Commander, Canine Training Coordinator, or veterinarian. Recommendations shall, with proper supporting documentation, be forwarded through channels to the Commissioner for final action.
3. Upon the retirement from service of Department canines due to age or other reasons, the Handler shall be provided with the option of adoption of the canine. Should the Handler decline, disposition of the animal shall be at the discretion of the Commissioner. In determining placement of the canine, preference shall be given to homes over placement in animal shelters or other temporary housing.
4. Canines shall not be destroyed upon retirement from service unless necessary due to medical conditions or if required by law.

#### S. Death of a Canine

1. The death of a canine while on active-duty status will be reported through channels to the South Adjutant and a copy of the notice forwarded to the Troop K Commander.
2. Any suspicious or special circumstances shall be properly investigated by the Department.
3. Line of Duty deaths shall receive the special recognition that such a sacrifice shall warrant.
4. For Line of Duty deaths, the canine remains shall be respectfully interred at a location to be determined by the Handler with approval of the Troop K Commander. Internment on State property may be authorized if requested.

#### T. Reports

The following reports shall be completed as required and filed in the appropriate location:

1. A Canine Deployment Report shall be completed each time a canine conducts, makes, or performs an actual Search, Track, Chase and Hold, Detection, arrest, community contact, or demonstration. The original report shall be maintained by the Canine Handler in a permanent diary.
2. A Canine Training Record shall be completed each time a canine completes a training session. A copy of this training record shall be maintained by the Canine Handler in a permanent diary.
3. An Incident Report and a Use of Force Report shall be completed each time there is a bite situation arising from an attempt to control a suspect. Copies of these forms shall be maintained by the Canine Handler in a permanent diary. A copy of this report shall be forwarded to the Troop K Commander through the chain of command.
4. The Troop K Commander or his or her designee shall conduct a review of any canine use of force. The findings of any such critique shall be forwarded to the South Adjutant.
5. All canine activity will be recorded in a designated Records Management System for the Canine Program.
6. Certification Records shall be maintained in a permanent diary.
7. The Troop K Commander or his or her designee shall conduct an inspection of the Canine Team diary at least annually.
8. The Troop K Commander will prepare an annual activity report to be forwarded through channels to the Commissioner.
9. All records pertaining to a canine will be maintained by the current Canine Handler. When a canine is assigned a new Handler, a photocopy of all existing records will be transferred to the new Handler.
10. All canine records shall be retained in compliance with the Department's Records Retention Schedule.