

OFFICE DIRECTIVE
OPS-58 K-9 POLICY

Rev. 23-15

K-9 Officer

58-1 Purpose

- A. To establish a policy regarding the training, deployment, care and maintenance of the Ford County Sheriff's Canine and Office Canine Handler. The canine and handler are commonly referred to as "Police Service Dog Team" and shall be utilized for various purposes to include, but is not limited to, drug detection and tracking.

58-2 Policy

- A. It is the Policy of the Ford County Sheriff's Office that only a properly trained and certified Police Officer will be designated as "K-9" handler and only a properly trained and certified canine will be utilized as a Police Canine. Only after these requirements have been met can the Police Service Dog Team be created and utilized by this Department.

58-3 Duties and Responsibilities

- A. First and foremost, the Officer assigned as Canine Handler is a Patrol Officer. Normal Patrol, calls for service and initial investigations are still handled by the K-9 Officer as well as other duties that the Police Service Dog Team will perform. The Police Service Dog Team shall be responsible for any drug detection and tracking that may arise through normal or unusual circumstances or even call outs.

58-4 Procedure

- A. The Ford County Sheriff's Office Service Dog Team is a Patrol Unit that is utilized in a regular patrol capacity as well as through a call out process.
 - 1. Drug Detection
 - a. Officers that wish to call out the K-9 on any "drug detection" must first have reasonable suspicion that there is either some type of drug on the person or persons in the vehicle or inside the vehicle itself.
 - b. The Police Service Dog Team is available on a 24 hour, on call basis.
 - c. The Police Service Dog Team can only be called out after the Sheriff, or designee has been notified of the situation and gives approval.
 - d. The Officer, once approval has been given by the Sheriff, or designee, shall call the K-9 handler and advise the situation.
 - e. When called out the K-9 handler will call on duty and immediately be in route to the incident scene. Once the Police Service Dog Team arrives on scene, patrol officers are to ensure they allow the K-9 handler to work the dog the way he/she has been trained without interference. Police Service Dogs shall not normally be handled or given commands by anyone other than the assigned handler.

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- f. Once the Police Service Dog Team has completed the search of the person(s) and or vehicle the K-9 will then clear from the scene and then go off duty.

2. Tracking

- a. When a trained Ford County Service Dog is available for tracking, they may be used with approval from the Sheriff, or designee, to track missing persons or criminal suspects. They may also be used to locate evidence that may have been abandoned or hidden in a specified open area. Such searches are subject to the following conditions and limitations:
 - i. When Officers are pursuing a suspect, and contact with the suspect is lost, the Officer, prior to summoning a Police Service Dog Team, should:
 - Stop and pinpoint the location where the suspect was last seen;
 - Shut off engines of vehicles in the area if possible;
 - make sure windows are in the up/closed position along with vehicle doors;
 - avoid vehicle or foot movement in the area where the suspect or subject was last seen.
 - b. A Police Service Dog used for tracking persons should remain on a leash of sufficient length to provide a reasonable measure of safety to the subject of the search without compromising the dog's tracking abilities and make sure of the K-9's safety.
 - c. On-scene supervisory personnel should:
 - i. Secure the perimeter to be searched.
 - ii. Secure the integrity of the area to be searched by keeping all personnel out of the area.
 - iii. Protect all items of clothing that will be used for scent from being handled.
 - iv. Contact the Sheriff to advise of the situation.

3. Training

- a. The Ford County Sheriff Office K-9 Handler and K-9 will be allowed time for continuous training. The amount of training will be set and determined by the Ford County Sheriff and the K-9 Handler. However, if State or Federal Statutes dictate that a Police Service Dog Team has to have a minimum or set number of hours than those standards will apply and will be followed.

4. Use and Maintenance

- a. Ford County Sheriff Office Police Service Dog shall not be used for breeding, participation in shows, field trials, exhibitions, or other demonstrations, or for on duty or off duty employment unless authorized by the Ford County Sheriff.
- b. The assigned K-9 handler will maintain their Police Service Dog in both on duty and off duty in a safe controlled manner. Ford County Sheriff Office Police Service Dog should not be allowed to run loose unless engaged in authorized training or exercise.
- c. The Ford County Sheriff Office shall provide the Police Service Dog Officer with proper housing for the canine.
- d. The Police Service Dog handler is personally responsible for the daily care and feeding of their Police Service Dog to include:

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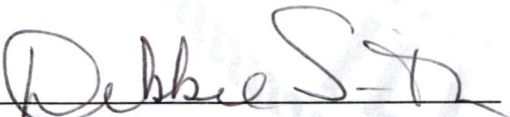
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- i. Maintenance and cleaning of the kennel and yard area where the Police Service Dog is housed;
- ii. Provision of food, water, and general diet maintenance as prescribed by the Ford County Sheriff Office Vet Clinic;
- iii. Grooming on a daily basis or more often as required by weather, working conditions or other factors;
- iv. Daily exercise and General medical attention and maintenance of health care records.
- e. When the handler is unable to perform these related duties due to illness, injury or leave, another police service dog handler may be assigned, temporarily, care for the dog; or the dog may be housed in a departmentally approved kennel.
- f. Teasing, agitating or roughhousing with the Ford County Sheriff's Office Service Dog is strictly prohibited, unless performed as part of a training exercise.
- g. Handlers should not permit anyone to pet or hug their Police Service Dog without their prior permission and immediate supervision. Should a civilian express a desire to do so, he/she should be informed that the Police Service Dog is a serious working dog and that they can be dangerous if improperly approached.
- h. A Police Service Dog handler may take possession of his/her dog where the dog is retired from duty or retired due to injury.

NOTE: Federal law provides that the Police Service Dog Officer be allotted 3.5 hours per week for maintenance of the Police Service Dog. This time will be adjusted accordingly to the Federal Guidelines. 30 minutes per day for 7 days would allow the handler to achieve the required 3.5 hours. This time frame cannot under Federal Law be waived.

Adopted by the Ford County Board at its regular meeting held on January 9, 2023.


Debbie Smith
Ford County Board Chairman

Attest:


Amy Frederick
Ford County Clerk & Recorder