

**ORLANDO POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE  
1129.7, USE OF POLICE CANINES**

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POLICY:

It is the policy of the Orlando Police Department to use police-trained canines when needed for search deployment, criminal apprehension, officer protection, and detecting narcotics and explosives.

PROCEDURES:

**1. USE AND DEPLOYMENT**

Any sworn member may request the assistance of an Orlando Police K-9 team. The canine handler will be responsible for the best tactical application and deployment of the canine in all instances. The canine handler shall be in control of the call once the police-trained K-9 is deployed. Always keeping safety in mind, officers should utilize police-trained K-9s to conduct searches when available.

1.1 DEPLOYMENT

Deployment is defined as any time a police-trained canine is used to locate a misdemeanor or felony suspect and/or used to detect explosives or narcotics.

Police-trained canines may be used for tracking, searching buildings, searching fields, searching for evidence, apprehending felons, protecting officers, and detecting narcotics and explosives.

When police-trained canines are being utilized for tracking, searching buildings and fields, or searching for evidence, it shall be the responsibility of the initial responding officer to ensure that the scene remains uncontaminated by pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic. It shall further be his or her responsibility to establish a cordon of the area and direct the K-9 team to the last known location of the offender or evidence.

Prior to searching buildings, the initial responding officer will attempt to contact a representative having control over the property to obtain a verbal indication that no one is authorized to be in or on the premises and prosecution is desired. **(NOTE: This is to ensure the safety of persons who may rightfully be in the search area and is not intended to seek permission for the deployment of police-trained canines.)**

Uniformed officers will enter the area or building being searched by a canine only when requested by the canine handler or when it becomes apparent that the canine handler needs assistance and is incapable of summoning it. Others needing access to the area (e.g., OFD or medical personnel) shall be permitted entry into the cordon area as deemed necessary by the canine handler and/or the initial responding unit.

Police-trained canines will not normally be used to search a residence/house/apartment.

Police-trained canines will not normally be used to search a structure known to contain a barricaded gunman, but may be deployed to assist SWAT Team members at the direction of the SWAT Team commander.

In any and all high-risk situations, as with any department resource, the use of K-9 may be authorized by the High Risk Incident Commander.

## 1.2 CRIMINAL APPREHENSION

Apprehend is defined as any time a police-trained canine is used to physically seize a felony suspect in order to make an arrest.

The police-trained canine will be released only in cases involving a suspected felony.

Prior to deployment of a police-trained canine for the purpose of criminal apprehension, members shall provide the canine handler with sufficient reasonable suspicion to lead him to believe that a felony crime has been committed and the person being sought is the perpetrator.

In those cases where the police-trained canine has been released to apprehend a subject, the officers on the scene shall refrain from becoming involved in the pursuit unless directed to do so by the canine handler.

After any apprehension, a request for medical assistance shall be made by any officer as soon as possible. The canine handler shall ensure that Communications has been notified and the request has been made.

The initial responding officer shall complete an Incident Offense Report and an Arrest Affidavit (a charge of resisting with/without violence shall be included, when appropriate). A Response to Resistance SHIELD report must be completed by a supervisor any time a subject is physically apprehended by a canine. A CSI shall take photos any time a subject is physically apprehended by a police-trained canine. These photos will be maintained by them according to their standard policies regarding crime scene photos.

A K-9 team may also be deployed by a commander to apprehend persons at any scene where containment is essential. These scenes may involve persons who are not known to have committed a felony crime but pose an imminent danger to officers, members of the public, or themselves.

No member shall give a police canine warning unless they are an active police canine handler.

## 1.3 OFFICER PROTECTION

The police-trained canine may be summoned to assist officers whose safety is directly in jeopardy. Police-trained canines may be used to defend police officers and others from imminent danger at the hands of an assailant. The canine may defend themselves when attacked.

## 1.4 NARCOTICS DETECTION

Any sworn member may request the assistance of a K-9 narcotics detection team upon establishing sufficient information to reasonably suspect that illegal narcotics are within the search area.

The narcotics detection canine will not be used to search for narcotics concealed on or about any person. The police-trained canine will not be used to conduct a search for narcotics believed discarded by a subject taking flight.

Unless probable cause has already been established to believe narcotics are within an enclosed area (building, house), a narcotics detection canine will not be utilized within the enclosure without the express consent of the person having a privacy interest in the area to be searched.

Police-trained narcotics-detection canines may be utilized for authorized traffic roadblock operations. The police-trained canine may be escorted around the exterior of a vehicle during the roadblock procedure. All occupants of the vehicle must be advised to keep all parts of their bodies within the vehicle during the canine sweep. A police-trained canine cannot be used to detain a motorist beyond the time necessary to meet the roadblock/checkpoint objectives.

(driver's license check, safety equipment check, etc.) unless reasonable suspicion or probable cause to detain has already been established. A narcotics-detection canine alert to a motor vehicle constitutes probable cause to search the vehicle.

#### 1.5 EXPLOSIVES DETECTION

Any sworn member may request the assistance of an explosive-detection canine team. The use of the team should not be restricted to bomb threats, but may also be used in sweeps or security checks of areas where a threat potentially exists. The explosive-detection K-9 team should not be called, however, for the purpose of checking out a suspicious package or found device.

It shall be the responsibility of the initial responding officer to relay pertinent information to the canine handler and to ensure that all safety precautions as established by Department policy are in effect prior to the search.

### **2. INCAPACITATED CANINE HANDLER**

In the event of an accident or injury that renders a canine handler incapable of controlling his canine, any available canine handler (on duty or off duty) will be summoned to take charge of the canine. (Canine handlers from other jurisdictions may also be utilized if a Department handler is not readily available.) In any event where a canine handler is injured, the Special Patrol Section Commander will immediately be notified by the on-duty watch commander. If time is critical to render aid to the injured canine handler, appropriate measures, with the approval of the watch commander, may be taken to neutralize the canine.

### **3. EXTRA-JURISDICTIONAL REQUESTS FOR CANINE**

Requests for canine assistance from other local law enforcement agencies shall be approved by the on-duty watch commander or the Special Patrol Section Commander. Prior to authorizing such assistance, a determination shall be made that the intended use of the K-9 team is within Orlando Police Department guidelines.

Requests from this agency for canine assistance from another agency shall be authorized by the on-duty watch commander.

### **4. GENERAL DIRECTIVES**

K-9 teams in an off-duty status may be called back into service by the on-duty watch commander or the Special Patrol Section Commander as deemed necessary.

### **5. TRAINING NARCOTICS**

OPD K-9s are trained in the detection of cocaine, hydrochloride, cocaine freebase, cannabis, heroin, methamphetamine, and MDMA.

#### 5.1 ACQUISITION

The Department will acquire Schedule I and Schedule II drugs in their most unadulterated form. The procedure for acquiring narcotics, as set forth by the Drug Enforcement Agency, will be strictly adhered to. Only the unit supervisor or (in his or her absence) the section commander will be authorized to obtain such substances on behalf of the Department.

The needed narcotics will be obtained from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Special Testing and Research Laboratory.

## 5.2 HANDLING

When a fresh supply of narcotics is received, they shall be removed from their sealed packages, weighed into smaller quantities, and placed into several different containers for training purposes. Each container will be labeled with a control number that can be cross-referenced against the log sheet that details the type and quantity of drug in the container. Each certified narcotics detection handler will be issued a variety of aids and retain a copy of the log sheet.

The initial transfer of the drugs into the training containers shall be accomplished at the direction of the K-9 supervisor and be witnessed by one other member of the unit. Under no circumstances will the drugs be removed from the training containers. The containers must remain under the control of a K-9 Unit member during training exercises.

All narcotics training aids (narcotics containers) will be kept in the K-9 Unit supervisor's office safe. Each handler authorized to train with the narcotics training aids will be issued a key to the safe. Handlers will sign out the narcotics training aids by aid number. Once training is complete, the handler will sign the narcotic training aids back in and place them into the safe. All narcotics training aid containers will be returned to the safe by the end of the handler's tour of duty.

The Special Enforcement Division K-9 handler(s), along with the Patrol Tac K-9 handler(s), fall under this policy and storage procedures. The Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI) K-9 handlers will follow this policy, but their narcotics training aids will be stored in the safe located at the Orlando Police Department substation within the Orlando International Airport. The MBI assigned personnel will follow current MBI guidelines.

## 5.3 ACCIDENTS INVOLVING LOSS OF NARCOTICS

Drug training shall be conducted in locations and under circumstances that offer reasonable control over the narcotics at all times. Should anything occur during training where there is any loss, destruction of the narcotics, or packaging has been compromised, a crime scene investigator will be summoned to photograph the scene if one exists. The K-9 Unit supervisor will be notified as soon as possible.

An information report will be completed by the handler to document the circumstances surrounding the accident. The case number from this report will be placed in the right hand column of the log sheet next to the controlled container for future reference. The container involved in the accident will be submitted to the Property and Evidence Section for disposal. Guidelines regarding the submission of drugs for disposal will be adhered to. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the Special Operations Section Commander as soon as possible.

## 5.4 INVENTORY

All training drugs under the control of the K-9 Unit will be inventoried and accounted for semi-annually at the direction of the unit supervisor. Such accountability will be documented in the log, and all discrepancies noted will be brought to the immediate attention of the Special Patrol Section Commander.

## 5.5 DISPOSAL

The narcotics and training containers shall be scheduled for replacement, as determined to be appropriated, by the K-9 Unit supervisor. At that time, the outdated supply, in their containers, shall be collected. Each container of narcotics will be weighed and valtox tested. Upon qualitative and quantitative analysis, the narcotics will be submitted to the Property and Evidence Section and labeled for destruction in accordance with current policy. Discrepancies will be brought to the attention of the Special Patrol Section Commander.

# **6. AUDITS AND INSPECTIONS**

K-9 Unit members are accountable for all narcotics within their control. Accountability is verified through the following inspections, inventories, and audits:

- a. A semi-annual inspection will be conducted by the K-9 supervisor to determine adherence to procedures used for the issuance and disposition of narcotics used for canine training.

- b. Unannounced inventory of narcotics used for K-9 training will be conducted by the Training/Accreditation and Inspections Section. These audits will document the security, storage, and accountability of issued training narcotics when not in use.