

Canine Narcotic Detection Program

308.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes guidelines for the use of canines to assist in the search for and seizure of narcotic contraband.

308.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the San Diego County Probation Department that teams of handlers and canines meet and maintain the appropriate proficiency to effectively and reasonably carry out legitimate narcotic detection and seizure objectives.

308.3 ASSIGNMENT

Canine Narcotic Detection Teams should be assigned to assist and supplement efforts to search for and detect narcotics in all divisions of the Department, including Institutional Services, providing the Department enhanced means of proactively and reactively assisting in the search and seizure of narcotic contraband. The Probation Canine Narcotic Detection Team responds to call-outs and routinely conducts random searches/sweeps at the Youth Transition Campus and East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility and may be called to visit other sites and participate in authorized field operations. The canine handler may attend special events, provide presentations/displays, and public demonstrations of the canine's capabilities throughout the community as deemed appropriate by the handler and the Division Chief.

Canine Narcotic Detection Teams generally should not be assigned to handle routine matters that will take them out of service for extended periods of time, and then only with the approval of the Division Chief.

308.4 CANINE COORDINATOR

The canine coordinator shall be directly responsible to the Division Chief 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.
- (f) Recommending and overseeing the procurement of equipment and services for the teams of handlers and canines.
- (g) Scheduling all canine-related activities.

San Diego County Probation Department

Administrative Services Policy Manual

Canine Narcotic Detection Program

- (h) Ensuring the canine teams are scheduled for regular training to maximize their capabilities.

308.5 REQUESTS FOR CANINE NARCOTIC DETECTION TEAMS

Institutions and field staff are encouraged to request the use of a canine via their chain of command for routine searches and/or anytime narcotic activity by an adult or youth on community supervision or youth in custody is suspected. Requests for a Canine Narcotic Detection Team shall be reviewed by the Division Chief.

308.5.1 OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUEST

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

- (a) Canine Narcotic Detection 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 the handler deems unsuitable.
- (c) Calling out off-duty Canine Narcotic Detection 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.

308.5.2 PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION

All public requests for a Canine Narcotic Detection Team shall be reviewed and, if appropriate, approved by the canine coordinator prior to making any resource commitment. The Division Chief is responsible for obtaining resources and coordinating involvement in the demonstration to include proper safety protocols.

308.6 BITES AND INJURIES GUIDELINES

308.6.1 REPORTING BITES AND INJURIES

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.

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 department evidence procedures. The photographs shall be retained until any criminal proceeding is completed and the time for any related civil proceeding has expired.

308.7 NARCOTICS DETECTION GUIDELINES

San Diego County Probation Department

Administrative Services Policy Manual

Canine Narcotic Detection Program

308.7.1 NARCOTICS DETECTION

A canine trained in narcotics detection may be used in accordance with current law and under certain circumstances, including:

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

A narcotics-detection trained canine will not be used to search a person for narcotics.

308.8 HANDLER SELECTION

The minimum qualifications for the assignment of canine handler include:

- (a) Probation Peace Officer Status per PC 830.5
- (b) One (1) year of experience as a sworn probation officer.
- (c) Must have successfully completed probationary period.
- (d) General knowledge of Probation Department policies and procedures, including those applicable to Institutional Services, field supervision, operations, and safety protocols.
- (e) Basic knowledge of and ability to ensure the canine is properly cared for 24 hours a day and secured when not working, including during periods of extended absence.
- (f) Willingness to attend and successfully complete the Basic Narcotic Scent Detection Academy and attend and track monthly mandatory canine training.
- (g) Proven ability to establish positive inter-personal relationships with fellow staff members, law enforcement personnel, community partners, and the public.
- (h) Sound judgement, decision making, and patience.
- (i) Ability to work independently and as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- (j) Ability to work with minimal supervision.
- (k) Must maintain professional demeanor in a variety of work environments.
- (l) Applicants must be willing to work flexible or non-traditional hours.
- (m) Maintain a residence with adequate yard space to accommodate a kennel, 6'X12' in size with a cement slab or other hard immovable base and roof.
- (n) Yard space must be secured with appropriate fencing, a minimum of six feet high.
- (o) Ability to keep family pets separate from assigned County-owned canine.
- (p) Ability to operate and store a take home vehicle per department policy and procedure.

Though not required, it is preferred/expected that canine handlers be willing to commit to serving as a canine handler, even with transfer or promotion if deemed appropriate, for the service life of the dog, barring any unforeseen change in circumstances.

San Diego County Probation Department

Administrative Services Policy Manual

Canine Narcotic Detection Program

308.9 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 department equipment under the handler's 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 San Diego County Probation Department facility.
- (e) Handlers shall permit the canine coordinator to conduct spontaneous on-site inspections of affected areas of their homes and 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 San Diego County Probation Department 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 Division Chief.
- (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 Division Chief.
- (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.

308.9.1 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.

San Diego County Probation Department

Administrative Services Policy Manual

Canine Narcotic Detection Program

- (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 habitable for the canine.

308.10 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 and the San Diego County Probation Department (29 USC § 207).

308.11 CANINE INJURY AND MEDICAL CARE

If 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 Division Chief 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.

308.12 TRAINING

Before assignment in the field, each canine team shall be trained and certified to meet current minimum POST guidelines. Canine teams trained exclusively for the detection of narcotics shall be trained and certified to meet current POST guidelines, nationally recognized standards, or other recognized and approved certification standards established for their particular skills.

The canine handler shall be responsible for advising department members and the public on how to conduct themselves in the presence of department canines.

All canine training shall be conducted while on duty unless otherwise approved by the canine coordinator or Division Chief.

308.12.1 CONTINUED TRAINING

Each Canine Narcotic Detection 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 Narcotic Teams should receive 16 hours of training monthly as defined by POST guidelines in addition to training identified in the current contract with the San Diego County Probation Department canine training provider.
- (b) Canine handlers are encouraged to engage in additional training with approval of the canine coordinator.

San Diego County Probation Department

Administrative Services Policy Manual

Canine Narcotic Detection Program

- (c) To ensure that all training is consistent, no handler, trainer, or outside vendor may train to a standard not reviewed and approved by the department.

308.12.2 FAILURE TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE TRAINING

Any Canine Narcotic 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 their regular duties without workload modification.

308.12.3 TRAINING RECORDS

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

308.12.4 TRAINING AIDS

Training aids are required to effectively train and maintain the skills of canines. Officers possessing, using, or transporting controlled substances or explosives for canine training purposes must comply with applicable federal and state requirements. Alternatively, the San Diego County Probation Department may work with outside trainers with the applicable licenses or permits.

308.12.5 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE TRAINING AIDS

Officers acting in the performance of their official duties may possess or transfer controlled substances for the purpose of narcotics-detection canine training in compliance with state and federal laws (21 USC § 823(f); Health and Safety Code § 11367.5).

The Chief Probation Officer or the authorized designee may authorize a member to seek a court order to allow controlled substances seized by the San Diego County Probation Department to be possessed by the member or a narcotics-detection canine trainer who is working under the direction of this department for training purposes, provided the controlled substances are no longer needed as criminal evidence.

As an alternative, the Chief Probation Officer or the authorized designee may request narcotics 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 narcotics.

308.12.6 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE PROCEDURES

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

- (a) All controlled 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 department.

San Diego County Probation Department

Administrative Services Policy Manual

Canine Narcotic Detection Program

- (c) Any person possessing controlled substance training samples pursuant to court order or DEA registration shall maintain custody and control of the controlled substances and shall keep records regarding any loss of, or damage to, those controlled substances.
- (d) All controlled 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 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 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 substance training sample for damage or tampering and take any appropriate action.
- (g) Any unusable controlled substance training samples shall be returned to the Property and Evidence Section or to the dispensing agency.
- (h) All controlled substance training samples shall be returned to the dispensing agency upon the conclusion of the training or upon demand by the dispensing agency.