

Hamden Police Department

General Orders

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Section: Patrol Division

Rescinds: August 01, 2005

Title: Canine Units/Explosive K-9 Team

Approved By: Police Commission

Approval Date:

Purpose

To establish guidelines for the proper management and control of the Department's canine units, as well as the use of police canine units from other agencies during daily and specialized operations.

Policy

The Hamden Police Department will utilize Departmental and regional police agencies canine units when it is felt that their use will aid in the apprehension of wanted persons, escaped persons, search and rescue operations, and seizure of contraband, explosive detection and other needs of the Department. The Department will only use canine units which have been properly trained and certified to perform police/canine duties

Organization

Definition

A canine team is comprised of a police officer/handler and a specially trained canine working as a team. The canine is considered part of the police officer/handler's equipment and should accompany the police officer/handler wherever he/she is engaged in police service activities.

Selection

The following are minimum qualifications for the position of police officer/handler candidate:

1. A candidate must have a minimum of three years law enforcement experience.
2. A candidate must have a good work record.
3. A candidate should not have a sustained complaint for using excessive force.
4. A candidate should not exhibit abusive use of sick time.

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5. A candidate must possess a genuine interest in dogs. The candidate's spouse/c habitants must be able to fully accept the program and the handler's commitment to the program.
6. A candidate must be in good physical and mental health and be able to handle rigorous training.
7. A candidate must be able to provide the canine with suitable living quarters at his/her home and to properly care for the animal's daily needs.
8. The candidate must be willing to work shifts mainly at night.

Training

The canine team will be trained and certified by a recognized certifying agency prior to being assigned to street duty.

After certification the team(s) shall participate in monthly in-service training,¹ as approved by the department. Each K-9 team must successfully complete annual certification.

Each K-9 team shall be required to participate in monthly training and shall maintain a training activity log for supervisor review. A canine incident report shall be completed for each K-9 use.

The explosives detection canine team, (EDC), will conduct a minimum of eight, (8) hours of in-service training in the area of explosives detection per month. This training should be conducted by the K-9 unit supervisor whenever possible and approval of training with an outside agency should be approved by the K-9 supervisor and Patrol Division Captain.²

The EDC team will be certified by recognized certifying agency³. This certification will be conducted annually and will be maintained as long as the team is together.

All certification documents and in-service training records will be forwarded to the Training Division.

Canine Care and Maintenance

1. Each K-9 handler is solely responsible for the daily care of his/her canine.
2. Each K-9 handler will provide food, water and general diet maintenance as prescribed by the Department's authorized veterinarian.

¹ One day a month removed

² Changed from Patrol Division Deputy Chief

³ Changed from North American Police Work Dog Association

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3. Each K-9 handler will ensure the proper grooming of the canine on a daily basis.
4. Each K-9 handler is responsible for the general health of the canine, and for the maintenance of the canine health records.
5. Each K-9 handler will ensure each canine receives medical examinations and rabies vaccinations annually.

Procedures

Chain of Command

The canine units will be assigned a supervisor and will report directly to that person.

The supervisor in charge will be responsible for the overall performance and integrity of the units.

In the event the unit supervisor is not available, units will report to the shift supervisor.

Utilization

Normally the canine units will be assigned to the Patrol Division.

K-9 units will be used at the discretion of the handler and any supervisor using sound judgment and with the primary concern being for the safety of the public.

Canine units will only be used to apprehend suspects when there is a reasonable belief that the officer will encounter resistance from the suspect or to locate a suspect attempting to elude capture.

The handler has the authority to decline an assignment if the handler reasonably believes the assignment is not operationally sound and is contrary to the team's training and experience. This does not permit the handler to decline an assignment which doesn't involve the use of the canine itself.

Examples of appropriate uses for the canine units are:

1. Building searches
2. Preventive patrol
3. Vehicle searches
4. Search and rescue operations
5. Trailing/Tracking
6. Felony Arrests
7. Drug detection

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8. Community relations programs
9. Unusual occurrences
10. Explosives detection
11. Crowd control

Shift supervisor may authorize the use of the canine units to protect life and/or property during civil disorder.

Under crowd control situations canine units shall be deployed under the following guidelines:

1. The canine units must allow open avenues of escape to the crowd.
2. Canines will be restrained on a leash no longer than six feet attached to a collar.
3. Canines will not be unleashed and sent into crowds.

Canine teams shall not be deployed under the following circumstances:

1. The canine will not be directed to intentionally search for controlled substances on an individual's body unless permitted by CT General Statute.⁴
2. Under normal circumstances a canine will not be used to apprehend a person suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, if no other crime has been committed unless such person poses a significant threat to the safety of the handler, community or other officers.
3. Under normal circumstances a canine will not be used to apprehend a mentally disturbed person if no other crime has been committed, unless such person poses a significant threat to the safety of the handler, community or other officers.

Calling Out of the Canine Units

A request for the use of the canine units shall be made by the shift supervisor.

If the canine units are not on duty, the shift supervisor will make the decision to call out the canine unit.

1. A canine call list will be established and posted for access by the Headquarters supervisor.⁵ The list will have the home telephone number, cell phone number and any other location information on the handler. The list will also establish who the last unit

⁴ Added unless permitted by CT General Statute.

⁵ Replaced Central Communications

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was called out. The Headquarters supervisor ⁶will work the list on a rotating based on the collective bargaining agreement.

2. If the handler to be called out cannot be contacted then the next handler is to be called. In the event that no Hamden canine handler can be contacted, the Headquarters supervisor may contact an outside agency for a canine team.

When contemplating the use of a canine unit, every effort should be made to avoid contamination of the scene by human scent. Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorized entry into the scene by civilians and by officers not directly involved in the investigation.

After a perimeter has been established, those officers inside the perimeter will turn off their vehicles. Carbon monoxide interferes with the canine's ability to track scents.

The canine handler will upon arrival coordinate efforts of the team with on scene police personnel regarding the search effort.

Rules for departmental personnel with regards to canine units

Departmental personnel will not provoke, tease or abuse the canine.

Departmental personnel will not approach the canine without the consent and presence of the handler.

Departmental personnel will not feed or give commands to any of the canines.

Department personnel will not attempt to show to anyone or try to remove a canine from the police vehicle.

Any violations of the above will be investigated and may lead to disciplinary charges against the employee involved.

Use of Force

The use of specially trained police canines for law enforcement responsibilities constitutes a real of force. The handler may only use that degree of force that or implied use is reasonable to apprehend or secure a suspect, protect him/herself, protect another officers and/or civilians as governed by G.O.1, Sec. 5 and G.O.1, Sec. 6. The handler will file the appropriate reports as required by the above General Orders.

⁶ Replaced Central Communications

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The use of canines may be considered for, but not limited to, the following situations:

1. Protection and safety of the handler, other officers and civilians
2. A fleeing felony suspect after the appropriate warning has been given.
3. Handlers will not normally unleash and send the canine pursue misdemeanor violations.
4. Suspects who are hiding and refuse to come out after repeated warnings, whether or not the suspects are visible to the handler or not.

The handler and other officers will adhere to the following levels of force when protecting the canine:

1. The use of **LESS LETHAL PHYSICAL FORCE** may be used to protect the canine from an assault or attempted assault.
2. The use of **DEADLY PHYSICAL FORCE** will not be used to protect the life of the canine. Officers must remember that the canine is a piece of equipment utilized by the handler. The handler may use the canine as cover in preventing the infliction of serious physical injury or the use of deadly physical force against him/herself, another officer and/or civilian.

Canine Warning

The canine warning may consist of the following:

- “This is the Hamden Police Canine Unit surrender yourself immediately or I will release the police dog.”

The handler will deliver a series of warnings to ensure that the suspect has had ample warning that the canine will be used to apprehend him/her. The warning also protects innocent people in the area.

The canine warning should not be given when in the opinion of the handler doing so would cause undue risk to the canine team’s presence and intention.

At **NO** time will the canine team’s handler use his/her canine to affect the arrest of a person who cannot escape or resist the officer, nor to intimidate, coerce or frighten the suspect.

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Canine Bites

Whenever a canine bites an individual, whether or not the canine was acting in the line of duty, the handler will:

1. Notify the shift supervisor.
2. Examine the affected area to determine the seriousness of the bite(s) or injury.
3. Obtain medical treatment for the injured person. Medical personnel shall examine the affected area irrespective of the perceived seriousness of the bite or injury.
4. Color photographs should be taken of the injured person showing the injury, affected body areas and face, (for identification purposes).
5. Reports of all canine bites will be made no matter what the circumstances are surrounding the bite.
6. The handler is responsible for completing a supplemental report to the original case for which the canine unit was used.
7. A canine Use of Force/bite report will be completed.

The bite incident will be investigated by the shift supervisor on whose shift the bite occurred.

The supervisor will complete and file a separate report with the Office of the Chief.

1. Written statements are to be obtained from any witnesses to the incident and from the bite victim, if possible.
2. A copy of the medical report should be obtained if possible.
3. A medical release form should be obtained from the victim if possible.

Response to Injured Canine Handler

If the canine handler is injured, other officers should **NOT** approach the injured handler if the canine is unsecured. The canine should be lured into the canine unit vehicle or other police vehicle.

If this fails then contact in order:

1. Hamden Police Canine Handler
2. Spouse or parent of handler
3. Any K-9 unit in the area

The Hamden Police Department Animal Control Officer may also be utilized to snare and control the canine.

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The canine will not be destroyed unless it possesses a serious threat of serious physical injury to officers or innocent civilians.

1. This decision will be made by the senior supervisor at the scene, **BUT ONLY** after all other efforts have failed.
2. If the canine must be destroyed it will be done in accordance with G.O.1, Sec. 5.

Injured Canine

If the canine is injured the following will be done:

1. The handler will determine the extent of the injury to the canine and the effect the injury will have on the canine's ability to continue with its duties.
2. The handler will notify the shift supervisor about the injury.
3. The handler will make necessary arrangements for proper medical care of the canine with the Department's authorized veterinarian.
4. The handler will file the appropriate departmental reports documenting the injury.

Mutual Aid

A ranking officer from an outside police agency can make a request for assistance for the Department's canine unit. The Chief of Police or designee shall have the authority to approve the request for mutual aid. Although the judgment of authorized officers shall prevail in each individual situation, it is recommended that a canine unit be dispatched to assist for any request from an outside police agency.

It will be the responsibility of the handler to file the appropriate incident reports narrating the actions taken by the canine unit.

Use of Outside Police Agency Canine Units

The Hamden Police Department will only use outside police canine units which are trained and certified when the Department's units are not available.

The supervisor in charge of the investigation may request outside canine units.

The canine officer from the outside agency will have direct authority and control over his/her canine. The canine officer will adhere to the policies and procedures of his/her department with regard to canine use. The canine officer will use the canine in a manner which is consistent with the training received concerning police canine operations.

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When a canine unit is in use during an investigation, a Hamden Police Department officer will accompany the unit at all times. The officer shall follow the canine units instructions at all times.

The Hamden Police Officer will note the use and results of the canine unit on the proper Hamden reporting forms.

Any seized contraband will be turned over to the investigating officers as soon as possible to maintain the proper chain of evidence.

Explosives K-9 Team (EDC) Procedures

Any information received by the Hamden Police Department pertaining to explosives, guns, terrorist activities and or explosives ordinance intelligence should be turned over to the canine unit supervisor who will ensure that the EDC handler is notified and maintains a copy of same.

Once a bomb threat is received by the Hamden Police Department and/or Communications Division, the dispatcher will fill out the appropriate "bomb threat response list" and the appropriate person will transport this list to the scene.

Radio Communications

All responding units will cease radio communications within a half-mile radius of the scene.

The Patrol Supervisor shall secure and maintain a perimeter of the area.

Command Authority over Operation

When the EDC team is activated, they will respond to the scene and upon arrival will be given command authority in relation to the working of the canine and the security of the area. Any department requesting mutual aid services will give the same consideration.

Evacuation of the Area

The area will be evacuated before the EDC team conducts a search. If the secured area is not evacuated, the EDC team will not conduct a search. The only exception shall be a twenty-four hour inpatient facility or where exigent circumstances exist.

No one shall accompany the EDC team into a secured area without the direction of the EDC handler or K-9 unit supervisor.

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Once the search is completed and proper information has been communicated to the appropriate individuals, the EDC team will leave the area. If a detonation time is given, the EDC team will not enter the secured area no later than thirty minutes after the detonation time.

Explosives Searches

The utilization of the Hamden Police Explosives Detection canine team is authorized when the threat has occurred within the jurisdiction of the Hamden Police Department or when mutual aid is requested by another agency. Any mutual aid requests must be approved by the shift commander prior to deployment. The EDC team is available to respond 24 hours a day.

The EDC team will consist of a passive explosive canine and handler. The EDC will indicate in a passive manner such as sitting.

When the EDC team is searching for explosives the handler will not turn on any lights or open any boxes.

When the EDC team has alerted on an explosive, the handler will then remove the canine and himself from the location immediately and advise the incident commander of the alert.

The incident commander will then call the bomb squad. Once the bomb squad has arrived, the handler will tell them the location of the alert and any other information needed.