



Rhode Island State Police General Order – 103A

<i>Section:</i>	Law Enforcement Operations – Special operations
<i>Article:</i>	103 – Canine Operations
<i>Title:</i>	Canine Policy
<i>Special Instructions:</i>	

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the management of Rhode Island State Police canines and their use in field operations.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. CANINE - A dog specially trained for police work.
- B. CANINE HANDLER - A sworn member specially trained and assigned as a dog officer.
- C. CANINE COORDINATOR - The Unit Supervisor of the Canine Unit.

III. POLICY

4.1.1.4a Because of the superior sense of smell and hearing, and a potential for aggressiveness, the trained Rhode Island State Police canines require adherence to procedures that properly control their potential use of force and channel their specialized capabilities into legally acceptable crime prevention and control activities.

IV. PROVISIONS

- A. CANINE COORDINATOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
 - 1. Shall be responsible for ensuring that all administrative and operational policies and procedures of the Canine Unit are followed.
 - 2. Shall coordinate the activities of all other canine handlers.

3. Shall ensure that canine handlers provide for the routine care, cleaning, and maintenance of their respective canines.
4. Shall ensure that all medical care and maintenance relating to the canines' well-being is properly administered.
5. Shall ensure that canine vehicles and equipment are properly cleaned and maintained.
6. Shall establish training programs for all canine handlers.
7. Shall ensure that all canine teams are competent, certified, and properly utilized.
8. Shall ensure that all activity reports, monthly handler reports, public speaking reports, canine veterinarian reports, etc., are completed in a timely fashion.
9. Shall prepare a report compiling all Canine Unit activities for inclusion in the Division's Annual Report.
10. Shall report directly to the Operations Officer on all administrative matters relating to the Canine Unit.

B. UTILIZATION

41.1.4b

1. Canine teams will be available on a 24-hour, on-call basis to handle the following responsibilities, depending on each individual canine's capability and training, but not limited to:
 - a. Conducting building searches for hiding offenders;
 - b. Assisting in the arrest of dangerous and violent offenders;
 - c. Preventing the escape of serious offenders;
 - d. Protecting the public and Division members from death or serious injury;
 - e. Tracking suspects;
 - f. Locating lost or missing persons;

- f. Locating lost or missing persons;
 - g. Locating criminal evidence or hidden instrumentalities;
 - h. Locating cadavers;
 - i. Detecting the presence of concealed narcotics, explosives or arson related accelerants;
 - j. Promoting public safety through seminars and demonstrations.
2. Canines will not be handled or given commands by anyone other than their assigned handler, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
3. The Canine Coordinator, or in his absence, the senior canine handler shall be notified of all canine assistance requests.

41.1.4c

4. Requests by Division members for canine assistance will be made through the Patrol Commander/Assistant Patrol Commander/Night Executive Officer of the area barracks to the Canine Coordinator or designee. Once the Canine Coordinator or designee is notified of the request for canine assistance, he/she shall be responsible for determining whether to dispatch a canine team to the area.

12.1.2c

- a. Once at the scene, the canine handler shall be responsible for recommending to the on-scene superior officer whether the situation justifies canine use and the appropriate tactical measures that should be taken. If the superior officer disagrees with the canine handler, the District Commander will be notified. If time does not allow, the canine handler's decision will stand. Said canine handler assumes full responsibility.

41.1.4c

5. All outside agency requests for the use of Division canine teams shall be referred to the appropriate District Commander during normal working hours. After duty hours, outside agency requests for canine services shall be referred to the Officer-in-Charge / Night Executive Officer, who shall make the necessary determination, then advise the appropriate District Commander during normal business hours on the next working day.

4.1.1.4d

C. CANINE UNIT QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

1. Handler Selection:
 - a. A minimum of two consecutive years experience as a member of the uniform branch;
 - b. A satisfactory work performance record;
 - c. Ability to pass designated physical, mental, or emotional tests;
 - d. Willingness to train and be trained;
 - e. Willingness to accept orders as given and carry them out;
 - f. Willingness to remain with the Canine Unit for four years;
 - g. Willingness to care for and train the animal;
 - h. Willingness to accept assignments that promote the most useful coverage to the Division.
 - i. Willingness to immediately withdraw from the Canine Unit, without prejudice, when so asked.
2. The District Commanders, Operations Officer, or designee, Canine Coordinator and senior canine handler will select canine handlers after conducting a selection process that includes an agency-wide announcement of anticipated openings, oral board interviews, reviews of the candidates' past performance evaluations (up to the last three years), and interviews with the candidates' current supervisor.
3. All Rhode Island State Police canines will meet established certification requirements according to professionally accepted standards. Untrained or non-certified canines will not be used.
4. New canine handlers will complete the prescribed canine

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training course and successfully meet all course requirements.

5. All canine handlers will complete the prescribed minimum maintenance training, subsequent to actual use in field operations.

D. PROCUREMENT OF CANINES

1. All canines must be approved by the Division and Canine Coordinator.
2. All canines used in the Unit will be adopted by the Division on the prescribed "Adoption Form."

E. MEDICAL REPORTS AND RECORDS

1. Each canine will be health certified by a veterinarian prior to acceptance into the Canine Unit.
2. Only Division-approved veterinarians shall administer to Division canines, unless an emergency situation arises. The Canine Coordinator or designee shall maintain a listing of all Division-approved veterinarians.
3. Each canine will be given an annual physical each year, to include all necessary shots and heartworm check.
4. Whenever a canine is treated by a veterinarian, a record of such treatment will be maintained by the handler.

F. BITES AND INJURIES

1. The use of specially trained Rhode Island State Police canine constitutes a real or implied use of force. A sworn Division member may only use such force as reasonably necessary to overcome the physical resistance of the person being arrested. No greater restraint than is necessary shall be used for the detention of any person, and no unnecessary or unreasonable force shall be used in making an arrest.
2. Whenever a Division canine bites or otherwise injures someone, whether on or off-duty, the following procedures will apply:

- a. Immediately render first-aid or medical attention;
 - b. Examine the affected area and determine the seriousness of the bite or injury, and ascertain if the person will need future medical attention (tetanus shot);
 - c. Request that the Patrol Commander/Assistant Patrol Commander of the area barracks respond and investigate;
 - d. Photograph the person(s):
 - i. Photograph the injured area;
 - ii. Photograph the entire body, depicting no further injury;
 - iii. Take three sets of photographs.
 - e. Take written statements from all witnesses;
 - f. Take a written statement from the victim;
 - g. Obtain a copy of the attending physician's report; and,
 - h. File the appropriate Use of Force report and Incident report.
3. The Canine Coordinator shall maintain a record of all the bites and injuries caused by Division canines.

G. CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF CANINE AND EQUIPMENT

41.1.4e

1. Canine handlers are responsible for the daily care, maintenance, and training of the assigned canine. Such care includes:
 - a. Canines will be groomed daily, dependent on weather and work conditions;
 - b. Provisions for food, water, and general diet maintenance as prescribed by the Canine Coordinator or veterinarian;

- c. General medical attention and maintenance of health care records;
- d. Daily on-duty exercise under the direct control of the handler.

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- 2. Canine handlers are also responsible for maintaining their assigned vehicle(s) and related equipment in a clean and proper manner. Equipment may include, but not be limited to, tracking harnesses, body bite suits, bite sleeves, muzzles, scent tubes, kennels, GPS unit and other training instruments.
 - a. All equipment will be approved for use or purchased by the Canine Coordinator;
 - b. Assigned vehicles will be vacuumed and cleaned regularly;
 - c. Maintenance and cleaning of the kennel and yard area where the canine is housed.
- 3. If the canine handler is unable to perform his or her prescribed job-related duties due to illness, injury, or extended vacation:
 - a. The canine may be housed at a suitable kennel, with another canine handler overseeing its care and maintenance.
- 4. Except for illness, injury, or extended vacation, the canine will remain in the care and custody of its assigned handler, both on and off duty.
- 5. No member will tease or agitate any canine, unless performed as part of a training exercise.

H. FIELD OFFICERS

- 1. Personnel will not pet a canine, except with the permission and in the presence of the canine handler.
- 2. Whenever a canine is used in a tactical situation, members

2. Whenever a canine is used in a tactical situation, members will heed the direction of the canine handler.
3. No commands will be given to a canine by anyone other than the assigned canine handler, except in emergency situations.
4. No member will enter a canine cruiser, except with the permission of and in the presence of the canine handler.

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I. EXPENSES FOR HANDLERS

1. The Division will provide the following canine services, at no expense, to the handler:
 - a. Food (under contract);
 - b. Equipment used for work and training;
 - c. Medical expenses for injuries sustained in an "ON-DUTY" capacity;
 - d. Medicine prescribed by a Division-authorized veterinarian; and,
 - e. Medical expenses for any illness until it is determined that the illness will render the canine unfit for the program.
2. Handlers will be required to provide the following services at their own expense:
 - a. A local canine license;

J. RETIREMENT

1. When a canine is retired from service, the canine will become the sole property of the handler, who will assume all future responsibilities for that dog, including liabilities.
2. When a canine is retired from service, the canine shall no longer be the recipient of Division obligations, as previously set forth. However, a retired canine, retained in service solely for narcotic detection, shall receive the benefits previously set forth.

K. USE OF THE PATROL CANINE TEAM

1. CROWD CONTROL

- a. Canine handlers should be dispatched to all hazardous or violent situations (e.g., gang fights, barricaded persons, hijackings, unruly disturbances, prowler complaints, etc.).
- b. Canine teams may be used for crowd control, the protection of life and property, during riotous situations, or for any other unauthorized tumultuous gathering which cannot be controlled by other means. They should be available at the scene, but should only be utilized with the specific approval of the respective District Commander.
- c. Whenever a canine team is used to control or move a large crowd, at least two canine teams should be utilized if at all possible.
- d. There should be at least one member assigned, per canine team, to affect arrests, if any.
- e. Canine teams may be utilized for controlling riots or civil disorders.
 - i. Canines will be on lead during all crowd control situations, unless extenuating circumstances exist.
 - ii. Canines will be used for crowd control at peaceful demonstrations, unless otherwise directed.
- f. No offensive actions should be taken, except to guard against imminent loss of life or serious bodily injury.

2. [REDACTED]

- a. A primary use of [REDACTED] buildings and related structures where searches by [REDACTED]