



Kern County Sheriff's Office

Policies and Procedures

TITLE: SHERIFF'S CANINE HANDLER SELECTION		NO: Q-900	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
REFERENCE:			
EFFECTIVE: March 1, 2021	REVIEWED:	REVISED:	UPDATED:

POLICY

Selection of canine handlers will be accomplished from a list of deputy sheriff volunteers, after having shown the skills, abilities and qualifications for such a position. Canine Handler selection will be in accordance with the Sheriff's Office Policies and Procedures Manual and K.L.E.A. M.O.U.

DIRECTIVE 1. CANINE HANDLER QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants for the position of Canine Handler must:

- Have a minimum of two (2) years experience in field patrol immediately prior to application
- Have a residence where a large dog can be housed and a yard with at least a five (5) foot fence.
 1. In the event of a rental or lease, be able to provide written authorization from the property owner to kennel the canine at the residence
- Post selection, successfully complete the Basic Handler and Explosive Material Detection OR Narcotic Detector Canine Course
- Be physically and emotionally prepared to perform the duties of a canine handler
- Be willing to devote the time necessary, in addition to regularly assigned duties to perform canine specific duties including, but not limited to:
 1. Call outs
 2. Canine training
 3. Canine demonstrations
 4. Routine care, grooming and medical checkups as required
- Maintain their residence in a manner, which does not bring discredit to the Sheriff's Office or the Canine Section. Agree to inspection for suitability with reasonable prior notice
- Maintain their canine and canine related equipment in a neat, clean, and functioning condition
- If currently in a Sheriff's Program (i.e. FTO, SID, etc.), request that the respective Program Manager forward a letter to the Canine Program Manager, stating that they

have fulfilled their obligation to the respective program and are leaving in good standing

DIRECTIVE 2. SELECTION PROCESS

Those interested in becoming a canine handler will be asked to complete the application process, which will consist of:

- Completion and submission of the Special Assignment Application within the time limits specified on the Special Assignment Announcement
- Preparation and submission of a resume, which should include:
 1. Experience
 2. Related training
 3. Prior assignments
 4. Interest in program
 5. Number and ages of children
 6. Number and types of other pets
- Completion of an oral assessment process, designed to examine the applicant's ability to handle a canine, knowledge of canine subject matter and overall qualifications for the position. The oral assessment panel will review Sheriff's Office files including, but not limited to:
 1. Personnel files
 2. Internal Affairs Files
 3. Employee Performance Reports
 4. Time sheets
 5. Traffic accident reports
 6. A sampling of Crime or Incident Reports prepared by the applicant
- Though not required for final selection, it is recommended the applicant participate in several formal Canine Training Exercises prior to the oral assessment
- Successful completion of a physical agility performance test which is designed to assess the candidate's physical abilities to perform work required of a canine handler.
- The applicant will need to be prepared for scenario-based testing with the approval of the Canine Coordinator.
- From the oral assessment process/review of files, physical agility test and scenario performance, applicants will be ranked for selection.
- If selected for canine training, the applicant must successfully complete the Basic Handler School and Explosive Detection or Narcotic Detector Canine Training Course. Failure to successfully complete the required training will result in de-selection as a canine handler.

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DIRECTIVE 3. SHIFT ASSIGNMENT

Canine team assignments will be made based on the Sheriff’s Office need for a canine. Available shifts will be filled based on seniority. Seniority is determined by time in rank, as described in the K.L.E.A. M.O.U., Article X-Shift Bids/Schedules.

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