

AGENDA ITEM # 23December 16, 1997

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Discuss and take appropriate action on proposed road construction projects.

A work session will be held on proposed road construction projects at 2:00 p.m. on January 6, 1998.

AGENDA ITEM # 24December 16, 1997

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Consider adopting the K-9 policy and procedure manual.

Lieutenant Nora Maxey of the Williamson County Sheriff's Department addressed the court and answered all questions.

Moved: Judge Doerfler

Seconded: Commissioner Boatright

Motion: To adopt the K-9 Policy and Procedure manual.

Vote: Motion carried 4 - 0 with Commissioner Mehevec absent from the dais  
< Clerk copy here >

## ***Williamson County Sheriff's Department***



### **Patrol, Tracking & Narcotics**

### **K-9 Program**

### **Policies and Procedures Manual**

Ed Richards, Sheriff

*approved 12.16-97*  
*John C. Doerfler*

Richard Elliott, Chief Deputy

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## **II. Introduction**

The use of the patrol canine is a legitimate tool in law enforcement. Although their greatest value lies in the deterring effect of their presence, the use of canines in making or maintaining an arrest is authorized when the circumstances of a case justify such use. In this connection, call members of the department must bear in mind that the use of canines in making or maintaining an arrest constitutes the use of force or an implied threat of the use of force. Therefore, it is imperative that the canine handler be fully cognizant of ~~all~~ the facts and circumstances surrounding the situation before a decision is made to use a canine for other than deterrent patrol.

The canine handler must be constantly alert to the fact that a police officer may only use that amount of force which is necessary to make or maintain an arrest and, in determining the degree of force to be used, must take into consideration all the circumstances known to him.

The principal advantages of a patrol canine unit include:

1. Psychological effect of dogs in preventing disorderly behavior on the part of crowds.
2. Psychological effect on potential criminals in deterring criminal activity and reducing crime.
3. Aid to police officers in detecting the presence of and capturing suspects particularly at night; in routine patrol; and in searching such areas as alleys, back yards, enclosed premises, large fields and wooded areas.
4. Protection of officers.
5. Favorable effect on police public relations.

## **III. Quality Statement**

The Williamson County Sheriff's Department, herein known as "the department", has consciously set standards for its Patrol K-9 Team, which it believes to be among the most demanding in the state.

Program quality control and adherence to standards will be assured, as practicable, through officer and K-9 selection, standardized operating procedures (S.O.P.'s), regular and specialized training and Department policy.

Throughout the program, standards have been set consistently higher than may be found in other law enforcement agencies. Through these high standards, the Department sincerely hopes to provide a Patrol K-9 program which meets or exceeds the "acceptable level of care" or "reasonable person" tests as expected in the State of Texas.

It is the goal of the Department to utilize the K-9 program as a tool to meet its purpose by providing service, protection and law enforcement in a cost effective in a cost effective manner, for persons in Williamson County.

#### **IV. Declaration of Minimum Force**

The Williamson County Sheriff's Department views the use of the Patrol K-9 in approved applications, to be minimal force to be utilized by the K-9 Officer when making a lawful arrest, when compared with the alternative use of physical force, approved devices or an approved weapon.

The used of the Patrol K-9 is also viewed by the Department as yielding the maximum level of officer safety when compared with a physical altercation with a suspect.

The Department also believes that, in virtually all cases, the use of the patrol K-9 to be safer to innocent third-parties, than the use of an approved weapon.

#### **V. Authorized Use of the Patrol K-9**

The use of the patrol K-9 is authorized the these general areas:

1. In lieu of deadly force.
2. In the apprehension of felony suspects.
3. To protect the officer/handler.

Examples where the use of the Patrol K-9 is authorized include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The felony suspect is running from the handler or other police personnel and the powers of arrest are present.
2. To protect the handler, other officer or member of the public from harm at the hands of the suspect.
3. To apprehend a suspect who is violent or armed in some manner.

4. The dog, during a search or track, finds the suspect before the handler spots the suspect and orders the suspect from hiding.
5. The suspect refuses to come out of a building after being warned that a police dog would be used.
6. The suspect is hiding and refuses to come out when told to do so and the dog is used to bring him out.

## **VI. Authorized Use of the Tracking K-9**

### **VI. Authorized Use of the Tracking K-9**

When a canine team is called to perform a trailing function, the canine handler is in charge of that part of the operation that requires the use of the canine. The canine handler confers with the on scene supervisor to determine the best possible approach to the situation and the search. Several basic procedures are followed by officers that perceive that they will need a canine team to perform a trailing assignment. Those procedures include, but are not limited to:

- turn off patrol units engines upon arrival at the scene due to vehicle exhaust fumes may hinder the canine's ability to smell for a short time.
- if a suspect/ lost or missing person is to be trailed, secure a perimeter around the area that the person is supposed to be located.
- try not to contaminate the area to be trailed since the suspect/ lost or missing persons scent can be destroyed by other persons or officers scent entering the trailing area.
- locate the place where suspect/ lost or missing persons was last seen and preserve that location as the place to start the trail.
- if a scent article is found that the suspect/ lost or missing person has handled recently, the article should be picked up with a gauze pad and placed into an evidence bag and given to canine handler upon his arrival.
- do not approach the canine team immediately upon their arrival allowing the canine team to prepare properly for the task at hand.

- provide the canine team with all known information at the time.
- the canine team enters the area with at least one backup officer trailing behind the handler providing cover and protection for the canine team. The number of backup officers may be more, depending on the situation. The handler will determine whether a shotgun is to be taken on the track.
- all tracks will be done on at most a fifteen (15) foot lead .
- when a suspect is encountered and surrenders, the suspect is taken into custody by the backup officer.
- the handler will determine when to abandon the track.
- the canine handler is responsible for approving or disapproving any reports written which are related to the canine teams.

## **VII. Authorized Use of the Narcotics K-9**

Illegal drug trafficking in Texas has become so pervasive that it is considered to be one of the most critical crime problems in the state. This problems compounded by the fact that Texas shares a common border with Mexico that stretches approximately 1,248 miles. Along this border, there are twenty-two international ports of entry. The state also has 624 miles of coastline ,that offers smugglers a safe haven to bring in there illegal drug cargo. Once marijuana ,cocaine, and heroin are smuggled into this country , either through or between ports of entry, the illegal drug cargo is often concealed in passenger and commercial vehicles and transported on Texas highways to cities like SanAntonio ,Dallas, and Houston. The addition of a quality narcotic detector canine program will greatly assist in this effort, and provide the Sheriffs Department with a valuable asset in the " War on Drugs."

### **Responsibilities of Narcotic Detector Canine Handler**

1. Maintains a reliable detection capability through ongoing proficiency training.
2. Ensures the canine is kept in good physical condition.
3. Provides training to personnel regarding safe conduct around the canine, as well as appropriate operational uses of the canine.

4. Maintains in good condition all canine related equipment, including canine vehicle.
5. Presents training problems for the canine on a daily basis when possible.
6. Records all training and working activity of the canine and submits this information as appropriate.
7. Maintains training aids in a secure location when not in use.
8. Attends the yearly recertification with NNDDA or Texas K-9 Association. Both certifications are recommended.
9. Ensures all searches with the canine are in compliance with the law and / or policies and procedures.
10. Attends training courses and meetings regarding narcotic canines.
11. Ensures canine receives all required Vaccinations.
12. Complies with Department policy concerning canines.

#### Personnel Guidelines

1. Department personnel shall not provoke, tease, harass, or abuse the canine.
2. Department personnel shall not reach into a canine unit with the canine inside except in emergency situations.
3. Department personnel shall not attempt to feed the canine or retrieve objects from the canine.

4. Department personnel other than the canine handler shall not give commands to the canine except in emergency situations.
5. Department personnel shall not engage in any activity which could be perceived by the canine as an assault upon the handler.
6. Department personnel shall not approach or pet the canine without the consent of the handler and only when the handler is present.
7. When the canine team is utilized in a specific tactical situation/ search, department personnel shall heed the directions of the canine handler as it relates to the canine. The handler shall make the final decision regarding utilization of the canine based upon the safety of the canine and everyone involved.

**Canine Bite and injury Procedures.** All canine bites and injuries to canines, trainers, or anyone else having contact with the canine must be reported immediately to the canine handlers supervisor.

1. Provide all necessary first aid and arrange for any necessary medical attention for the victim.
2. Contact first-line supervisor immediately. The first-line supervisor will conduct an investigation into the incident.
3. The handler will prepare a detailed written memorandum explaining the incident.
4. Written statements from the victim and any witness shall be obtained.
5. Photos will be taken of the injured area as well as full body photos of the victim are to be taken.
6. Copies of victims medical records shall be obtained, if possible.



7. If a victim is a department employee, all necessary Workers Compensations forms shall be completed.

Damage as a result of Canine Action. When conducting canine searches, care should be taken to prevent damage to the property of any involved person. Should damage occur, the canine handler shall:

1. Notify his/ her immediate supervisor who shall investigate the incident.
2. Photograph the damage area and take statements from witnesses.
3. Complete incident report regarding damage.

#### Utilization of Drug Detector Canines

1. To ensure maximum effectiveness, the canine should be worked as long as he maintains his/her interest in a detection operation.
2. Detector canine are particularly useful and should be fully utilized to search passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles, buildings and premises.
3. A detector canine should never be restricted to any one activity.
4. Departments canine will not be used to search an area or a vehicle that has already been searched by another agencies canine.
5. Department canines will not be used to examine persons for narcotics. However, if a canine breaks the search pattern in obvious pursuit of an airborne narcotic odor that leads to a person, the canine should be allowed to proceed but stopped short of making physical contact with a person.

### **VIII. Selection of Handlers**

Handlers must possess a valid license as a peace officer in the State of Texas as issued by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE). Handlers must participate in the required TCLEOSE in-service training to maintain their peace officer license. Additionally, handlers are encouraged to earn Intermediate and Advanced Peace Officer Proficiency Certificates as issued by TCLEOSE.

The Patrol K-9 Team functions as a single officer with his canine partner. Subsequently the K-9 Officer/Handler must also have two years patrol experience with at least one of those years serving under Williamson County Sheriff's Department.

Additional considerations for Handler selection should be sued in maximizing the potential success of the officer in his new role. The following criteria \* should be considered:

1. A fenced yard or suitable kennel is required.
2. Does the Officer own or rent?
3. Residence living conditions?
4. If married, does the spouse agree?
5. Officers history of "excessive force"?
6. Officer's public speaking ability?
7. Compatibility between Officer and dog.
8. Prior experience as a dog handler.
9. Officer self initiative and work ethic.

\*Criteria is not ranked by order of importance.

### **IX. Training**

#### **1. Patrol K-9 Training Director**

A Patrol K-9 Training Director (also referred to as the K-9 Unit Training Director) will be designated by the department. If a suitable candidate is not available within the department, a Training Director will be selected from outside the department.

The major functions associated with the K-9 Unit Training Director include but are not limited to, the training and development of the K-9 Unit, review of training documentation, the review and approval of

performance criteria for both the performance of the Officer/Dog Team and the tactical application and deployment of the team, and the regular evaluation of the K-9 Team. The function of the K-9 Training Director may be modified as needed, based on the professional judgment of the Training Director and the needs of the Department. Additionally, the K-9 Training Director has the authority to make recommendations to the Chief Deputy or the Sheriff that a K-9 Team be placed out-of-service or undergo remedial training if he/she determines that performance is sub-standard.

The Patrol K-9 Training Director will be selected based upon experience and accomplishments in the areas of dog training with special emphasis on police service dogs and law enforcement program development.

## **2. Team Certification**

The Williamson County Sheriff's Department recognizes three (3) levels of Department Dog/Officer K-9 Team proficiency; Basic, Intermediate and Advanced.

### **(1) Basic Proficiency**

All Dog/Officer K-9 Teams must obtain a department approved basic certification before being allowed to participate in field operations.

The Department considers the successful completion of a Department approved certification course such as that offered by Law Enforcement Training Specialists to meet this requirement.

### **(2) Intermediate Proficiency**

Intermediate Team Certification represents training above that of basic certification, yet not completing advanced certification. This training will include, but not be limited to, Dog/Officer Team proficiency resulting from formal instruction and field experience gained after basic certification. Training should include, but not be limited to, off leash obedience, consistent response to verbal commands, building/area searches, increased tracking complexity, additional training in suspect apprehension, etc.

The Department considers the successful completion of a Department approved certification course such as Intermediate Certification training offered by Law Enforcement Training Specialists to meet this requirement.

### **(3) Advanced Proficiency**

The advance team certification represents a fully proficient Dog/Officer team resulting from the significant formal instruction and field experience gained after basic and intermediate certification. The ability of the dog to consistently heel off-lead next to the Officer in any situation and at any speed is included in the exam. Additionally, the officer while running, must be able to control his dog while a suspect is fleeing, send his dog, and consistently recall the dog before apprehension. Any field scenario which would be realistically found in the K-9 Team's response area may be included in the Advanced Certification examination.

The Department considers the successful completion of a Department approved certification course such as Advanced Certification training offered by Law Enforcement Training Specialists to meet this requirement.

### 3. Re-certification

all dog/Officer K-9 Teams must re-certify annually at their current level of certification (basic, intermediate or advanced). K-9 Teams may increase their certification level from basic to intermediate and then to advanced at any time.

### 4. In-Service Training

Each handler shall ensure optimum performance from his police service dog by conducting an ongoing physical and proficiency training program. Each handler should conduct training sessions at least weekly with emphasis on searching, obedience control or other special areas.

In order to maintain a high level of proficiency, the Patrol K-9 Training Director shall conduct a periodic evaluation quarterly. The evaluation shall include all appropriate categories. A failure will most likely identify a training need which will become the primary focus of training. Any failure will be re-tested within one month. Continued failure will result in formalized remedial training and may require removal from deployment. The K-9 Unit Training Director may spontaneously test a team in any category at any time.

### 5. Training Documentation

Each handler will establish and maintain a Training Log to document significant training activities and proficiency certification. Entries in the

Training Log will be predominantly in narrative form using the S.O.A.P. format as follows:

- Subjective (S) - An entry which broadly defines the subject of the training session.
- Objective (O) - The specific goal of the training session with a description of the proposed training technique.
- Assessment (A) - An evaluation of how the dog performed in comparison of the Objective.
- Plan (P) - The development of goals for the next training session which incorporates the new information learned in the training session just ended.

The Training Log also includes copies of certification forms, evaluations by the K-9 Unit Training Director and any other pertinent information.

Regular K-9 training will be documented as a part of the established work documentation / log process. Specific K-9 training forms may also be established by the Department.

## 6. Departmental Orientation and Training

The Patrol K-9 program is an integral component of Department patrol activities. Subsequently, all officers who are likely to interface with the Patrol K-9 Team in the field shall attend initial in-service training which includes operational and safety considerations of the Team. Training shall include both comprehensive demonstrations and building searches incorporating the use of officer/students in the search team. Patrol officers, especially field supervisors, will receive instruction in the strategy and tactics of Patrol K-9 Team deployment.

In-service training and continuing education will be provided department members and outside agencies as required.

## X. Tactical Standard Operating Procedures

### **1. Patrol K-9 Team - Routine Patrol Activities**

Patrol K-9 Teams shall be deployed at strategic times and locations that provide optimal response throughout Williamson County.

In general K-9 Teams should be assigned as "roving" units by the shift supervisor. On-duty K-9 teams shall respond to crimes in progress within the County without specific dispatch and shall assist patrol unit in potentially violent situations.

As a general rule, Patrol K-9 Teams should not be assigned to "report-type" calls of a non-emergency nature unless so authorized by the shift supervisor during unusually high complaint periods.

The shift supervisor may establish the order of assignment priority for the for the K-9 Team when multiple calls occur.

Tactical use and application of the Patrol K-9 Team shall be at the discretion of their individual K-9 Officer/Handler, using their Patrol K-9 when feasible (exception - crowd control).

### **2. Patrol K-9 Team - Utilization**

Utilization of the Patrol K-9 represents a highly cost effective police tool by utilizing the canine's acute olfactory and hearing senses, speed, agility and strength in the location and apprehension of criminals and for the mere psychological deterrence of their presence.

In general the Patrol K-9 Team should be requested when the involvement of the Team would improve the proficiency, the efficiency, or the safety of the police operation.

The decision to utilize the Patrol K-9 Team for suspect apprehension shall be made mutually by the K-9 Officer/Handler and the person in charge of the scene.

### **3. Patrol K-9 Team - Call Out (Williamson County Sheriff's Department)**

The Patrol K-9 Team is available when off-duty. During the hours that the Patrol K-9 Team is on an on-call status, the shift supervisor should obtain the following information in order to evaluate the appropriateness of a request and help brief the Patrol K-9 Officer/Handler:

- a) What is the situation?

- b) What is the possibility the suspect is armed?
- c) Is there a reasonable possibility that the suspect is contained?
- d) What charges will be filed against the suspect if apprehended?

#### 4. Patrol K-9 Team - Outside Agency Requests

Requests for a Williamson County Sheriff's Department Patrol K-9 Team shall be directed to the on-duty shift supervisor who will approve the dispatch or call-out of the K-9 Team based upon Department policy and any conflicting requests for service.

A shift supervisor or other member of Williamson County Sheriff's Department management will accompany the Patrol K-9 Team to the person in charge or command post of the requesting agency.

The Patrol K-9 Officer/Handler, along with the member of the Williamson County Sheriff's Department management shall authorize the use of the canine for suspect apprehension. It is the responsibility of the K-9 Officer/Handler to explain the capabilities of the K-9 Team to the requesting agency representative in charge.

In circumstance where the use of the Patrol K-9 Team is denied, the decision shall be as a result of a mutual agreement between the Patrol K-9 Officer/Handler the Williamson County Sheriff's Department member of management and the highest ranking supervisor of the requesting agency at the scene.

#### 5. Patrol K-9 Team - Searches for Criminal Suspects in Buildings and Outside Areas

The actions of the first arriving Patrol Units are critical in determining the success of the Patrol K-9 Team. When a suspect has fled the scene, department members should not pursue unless a reasonable chance of success exists. Otherwise, the initial action of first arriving units should be to confine the suspect by securing doorways, cordoning areas or by maintaining visual contact with the suspect until back-up units arrive to contain the suspect. Once the suspect is contained, Officers should avoid contaminating or disturbing the search area in order to maximize the efficiency of the Patrol K-9 Team.

Upon request the Patrol K-9 Team will immediately respond to the search location and the K-9 Officer/Handler will report to the person in charge or

the command post and obtain all pertinent facts relating to the search request.

Upon receipt of this information, the K-9 Officer/Handler shall determine if the search meets appropriate Department criteria and advise the person in charge of the requirements to properly conduct the search. If the K-9 Officer/Handler believes that the use of his dog would not be proper or if the request conflicts with Department policy, the Officer/Handler shall so advise the person in charge of the scene. If the person in charge insists on the use of the dog, the Sheriff or his designee shall be summoned to resolve the situation.

Once it is agreed that the utilization of the Patrol K-9 Team is appropriate, the K-9 Officer/Handler shall analyze the situation in conjunction with the person in charge to determine the most effective way to conduct the search.

The K-9 Officer/Handler has the primary responsibility of directing the search team. Although he will not be responsible for the individual actions of the search team officers, there are several factors he should consider to ensure a successful search.

Usually, the officers handling the original call or incident will comprise the search team. This ensures continuity and increases involvement with K-9 searches over a broader range of field officers. However, with a more serious crime and resultant search, the handler should attempt, with the assistance of the person in charge, to have the most experienced officers available assigned to the search team.

Searches are considered pre-planned activities when felony suspects are involved. As such, the K-9 Officer/Handler shall wear protective body armor. In searches where the suspect is believed to be armed, the K-9 Officer/Handler shall ensure that body armor is worn by all search team members.

The use of a shotgun by search team officers shall be at the discretion of the K-9 handler. In searches where the search team will be in close proximity to the Patrol K-9 Team, the use of a shotgun by the search team is discouraged.

Prior to initiating the search, the search team shall be informed by the handler of a general search pattern and plan. The information should include the following points:

1. The search is off-lead.



2. It is the handler's job to watch the dog work and look for the dog's indication.
3. It is the search team's / back-up officer's job to cover the handler, maintain secured areas, cover unsecured areas until the search team is ready to search them and provide a tactical advantage when actually apprehending the suspect.
4. The search team is to stay with the handler.
5. The search team officers should follow the directions issued by the handler.
6. In case of altercation between the dog and the suspect, or the handler and the suspect, search team officers shall maintain an advantageous position and do nothing until directed to do so by the handler.
7. If at any time the dog shows interest in an officer, the officer should stand still.
8. Once the suspect is located and the dog is recalled, it will be the search team officers' responsibility to control the suspect.

Before beginning a search where the handler believe that innocent persons may be present, or has reason to believe that the suspect has no weapon, a verbal warning similar to the following shall be given in a loud voice by the handler:

"ATTENTION IN THE \_\_\_\_\_ (building, woods, field, etc.). THIS IS THE POLICE. THE \_\_\_\_\_ (building, woods, field, etc.) IS COMPLETELY SURROUNDED. YOU HAVE NO CHANCE OF ESCAPE. WE ARE GOING TO USE A POLICE DOG TO FIND YOU. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY YOU WILL BE BITTEN BY THE DOG. IF YOU SURRENDER NOW THE DOG WILL NOT BE USED. YOU HAVE ONE MINUTE."

The K-9 Team may, in extreme circumstances, be requested at the scene where a suspect is barricaded, is known to be armed, or has just committed an aggravated assault utilizing a weapon. In these cases, the Handler in conjunction with the field supervisor, should modify the verbal warning to delete the reference to the K-9.

The intention of deleting the reference to the dog is to maintain the element of surprise and thereby maximize tactical advantage, and to minimize the chance of the suspect using the weapon to kill or injure the

K-9, In these extremely dangerous scenarios where the crime is severe, the suspect poses an immediate threat to peace officers, and the suspect is actively resisting arrest, a verbal warning similar to the following shall be given in a loud voice by the handler:

"ATTENTION IN THE \_\_\_\_\_ (building, woods, field, etc.). THIS IS THE POLICE. THE \_\_\_\_\_ (building, woods, field, etc.) IS COMPLETELY SURROUNDED. YOU HAVE NO CHANCE OF ESCAPE. IF YOU SURRENDER NOW YOU WILL NOT BE HARMED. YOU HAVE ONE MINUTE."

When it is determined that a suspect is Spanish speaking the warning shall be given only by an officer who is fluent in Spanish.

If the dog alerts on a suspect's location but has not physically contacted the suspect, the handler should take a position of cover and call the dog back, if possible. Appropriate arrest and control tactics shall then be utilized to apprehend the suspect as safely as possible.

If during a search the officers are confronted by a suspect who the officers believe to be armed, the patrol dog may be used as a tactical tool to divert the suspect's attention. The purpose in such a tactic is to reduce the possibility of the use of deadly force.

In situations where the suspect is both armed and barricaded, tactical consideration should be given to the incorporation of a special team (i.e., SWAT) by the person in charge. A purposeful dialogue between the person in charge, the supervisor of any special team, and the Patrol K-9 Officer/Handler should take place to assure that a plan is developed which will most efficiently and safely result in the extraction of the suspect.

#### 6. Patrol K-9 Team - Spontaneous Use

Due to their high visibility and availability while on patrol, the Patrol K-9 Unit can easily become involved in many different tactical / Patrol situations where the spontaneous use of the Patrol K-9 may occur.

Specifically, in cases where the handler is physically jeopardized, the dog is trained to immediately engage the suspect in order to protect his human partner.

The K-9 Officer/Handler may also choose to utilize the Patrol K-9 for apprehension at the termination points of vehicular and foot pursuits.

## 7. Patrol K-9 Team - Crowd Control

The canine patrol is a very important asset in most civil-disturbance situations. The presence of dog-handler teams is especially effective during nighttime patrolling when full advantage can be taken of the dog's keener perception and alertness. After a violent action has subsided, the canine patrol is very valuable in prevention reforming of crowds, maintaining normal traffic flow and re-establishing the police presence. The psychological effect and benefits of aggressive canine patrolling activities during and immediately following a riot, far outweighs occasional public resentment as to their use and at the same time they conserve police manpower.

At the scene of riots, imminent riots, or other unruly public disturbances canine may be dispatched upon approval by the Sheriff or his representative for deployment and use by and at the discretion of the official in charge at the scene where the circumstances justify such action. Canine shall not be used for crowd control or deterrent effect at the scene of peaceful demonstrations.

## **XI. Documentation of Utilization**

### 1. Use of Force Report

Cases where a patrol dog bites a suspect will be investigated and documented in accordance with the Department's general procedure for the use of force.

### 2. Activity Report

Documentation of the utilization of the Patrol K-9 Team will be performed by the Officer/Handler in order to prepare statistics and other management reports.

## **XII. Guidelines for all Law Enforcement Personnel**

1. Canines are trained to protect their handler; anyone making a threatening move or gesture toward a handler risks the possibility of injury. The dog will react without command in such a situation. Even gestures such as a pat on the back or a boisterous greeting could cause the dog to react in an aggressive manner. When approaching a canine and his handler, do so in a natural and normal manner. Don't walk up behind the handler, especially if the canine is the only one aware of your approach.

2. Under no circumstances should dogs be agitated by anyone. If a dog is tied or alone in a vehicle, it is normal for him to act in an aggressive manner when approached by a stranger. Police personnel are no exception. Ignore the dog and continue about your business.
3. If you see that a dog is alone and acting in an unusual manner because of sickness or injury, locate and notify the handler. DO NOT try to correct the problem yourself.

### **XIII. Procedure for Officer/Handler Injury and K-9 Injury**

Due to the inherent danger of many calls answered by K-9 Units, the possibility of officer/handler injury exists. Providing medical and back-up assistance to the injured officer/handler is complicated due to the natural desire of the K-9 to protect the handler/partner.

The objective of arriving back-up units should be to recognize the presence of the K-9 and take appropriate steps to secure the K-9 without injury to the assisting officers or the dog.

A leash is always present attached to the cage of the Officer/Handlers vehicle. Additionally, a protective "bite jacket" is always present in the rear cargo area of the K-9 Officer/Handlers vehicle when the K-9 is on-duty.

#### **A. Officer/Handler Injury**

If the K-9 is secured in the patrol vehicle, handle the officer injury as appropriate.

If the K-9 is present, the first attempt should be for an officer, known by the dog, to call the dog. This activity should be conducted by a single officer, to reduce the confusion of multiple officers approaching the dog. If successful, the officer should leash the dog and place the dog in the K-9 vehicle.

If the dog acts aggressively towards the officer, the most effective way to control the dog will be to approach the dog wearing the "bite-jacket". Slowly approach the dog and allow the dog to bite the jacket on the arm. The officer should walk to the K-9 Unit with the dog biting the jacket, remove the jacket and place the jacket inside of the K-9 Unit. The dog should

follow the jacket, without letting go, into the K-9 Unit where the dog can be secured.

If officers on the scene are uncomfortable with wearing the "bite-jacket" or if additional K-9 expertise is required, a K-9 Handler with the Williamson County Sheriff's Department should immediately be requested via dispatch. His response should be requested as "emergency" or "non-emergency" as conditions on the scene warrant.

#### B. K-9 Injury

In addition to representing significant financial investment and training time, the Police K-9 is the partner of the Officer/Handler. If injured, emergency veterinary care should be immediately obtained by the officer-in-charge.

The Department Veterinarian is:

Anderson Mill Vet Clinic  
13542 Highway 183 North  
Austin, Texas

Telephone: 258-4163

The doctor should be advised via dispatch of the type and extent of injuries so that preparation may be made for emergency medicine/surgery.

AGENDA ITEM # 25

December 16, 1997

Consider approving the use of a portion of the land around the Maintenance Facility for a physical agility course and K-9 obstacle course for training purposes.

Lieutenant Nora Maxey stated the Williamson County Sheriff's Department has been using the Round Rock Police Department facility but would like to build their own. The facility would require approximately two acres.

Moved: Judge Doerfler

Seconded: Commissioner Boatright

Motion: To approve the use of a portion of land for a physical agility course and K-9 obstacle course for training purposes for the Williamson County Sheriff's Department with Commissioners Court to allocate the space.

Vote: Motion carried 4 - 0 with Commissioner Mehevec absent from the dais  
< Clerk copy here >

To: Commissioners Court

From: Lt. Nora Maxey

Ref.: K-9 Policy, Obstacle Course, and Physical Agility Course

Date: December 8, 1997

1. It is requested that the Court adopt the attached K-9 policy and Procedure. The policy has been reviewed and approved by the County Attorneys Office.
2. The possibility of utilizing a portion of land around the Maintenance Facility for a Physical Agility Course and K-9 Obstacle Course has been discussed with Commissioner Boatright and Judge Doerfler. It is requested that this be consider and approved by the Court. The obstacle course will be utilized for training purposes.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Thanks

  
Nora Maxey

↑  
approved 12-16-97  
John C. Doerfler