



CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE

GENERAL POLICE ORDER



EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 25, 2023	CHAPTER: 1 - Administrative	PAGE: 1 of 4	NUMBER: 1.02.20
SUBJECT: OFFICER SUPPORT DOG			
CHIEF: <i>Dornat A. Drummond, Chief</i>			

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for the use of an officer support dog team assigned to the Employee Assistance Unit (EAU) within the Cleveland Division of Police.

POLICY: **It is the policy of the Cleveland Division of Police** to use Officer Support Dogs to provide emotional support by aiding and comforting officers, first responders, and other Division personnel who may have been exposed to traumatic events or suffer from Cumulative Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In some cases, the support dog may be used for traumatic events in the public.

Presentations educate the public on modern day use of emotional support dogs in law enforcement and help promote positive relations between the community and the Division of Police. All presentations shall be approved by the EAU Officer in Charge (OIC) prior to the presentation.

DEFINITIONS:

Officer Support Dog: A federally registered support dog which has been specifically trained to provide emotional support to members of the Cleveland Division of Police.

Support Dog Handler: A sworn member of the Division of Police who has been trained in the care and handling of the Officer Support Dog.

Support Dog Team: A Support Dog Handler and his/her Officer Support Dog.

Support Dog Bite: A bite to any person or animal caused by the Officer Support Dog.

PROCEDURES:

I. General Guidelines

A. Assignment of Support Dog Team(s):

- A. Support Dog Team(s) are assigned to the Employee Assistance Unit (EAU) and operate under the supervision of the EAU Officer-In-Charge (OIC).
- B. Support Dog Team(s) are able to respond city wide as assigned by the EAU OIC or Chief of Police.
- C. Support Dog Team(s) may be requested by a supervisor through CCS or by calling (216) 623-5678.

PAGE: 2 of 4	SUBJECT: OFFICER SUPPORT DOG	NUMBER: 1.02.20
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- B. Support Dog Handlers are the ultimate authority of training and tasks performed by the Officer Support Dog.
- C. At all times, consideration of the health and safety of the support dog and handler will be the guiding principle utilized to determine the best method of response to provide service in the safest atmosphere for all involved. The response is left solely to the discretion of the Support Dog Handler at the scene. If there is a dispute as to the manner of response, the handler will confer with his/her supervisor to resolve the conflict.
- D. The decision as to whether or not a support dog may be touched or petted shall rest with the handler. If the handler decides that their support dog cannot be petted, the handler shall explain why.
- E. Officer Support Dogs shall not be intermingled with the work canines in the Canine Unit due to the vast differences in their working roles and temperaments, as well as to avoid adverse interactions between the animals.

II. Support Dog Handler Responsibilities:

- A. Be responsible for maintaining the working proficiency of their support dog.
- B. Keep his/her dog in such physical condition that the dog is able to perform duties as expected.
- C. Be responsible for any issued specialized equipment.
- D. Notify the EAU OIC if any equipment is found to be faulty or in need of repair.
- E. Be responsible for the proper care of the support dog (i.e., feeding/watering, cleaning, grooming, exercising, and seeking routine and non-routine veterinary care).
- F. Immediately report any dog bite to the OIC of EAU.

III. Supervisor Responsibilities:

- A. The OIC of the EAU shall:
 - 1. Assume command of and supervise Support Dog Team(s).
 - 2. Approve any public events or community engagement efforts.
 - 3. Ensure each Support Dog Handler maintains their issued vehicle and equipment in good, safe, clean, order.
 - 4. Ensure each Support Dog Handler is properly caring for their support dog (i.e. cleaning, grooming, feeding, veterinary care).

PAGE: 3 of 4	SUBJECT: OFFICER SUPPORT DOG	NUMBER: 1.02.20
-----------------	---------------------------------	--------------------

IV. Injury to Support Dog Handler

- A. When a Support Dog Handler is injured and unable to secure their dog, officers shall:
 - 1. Attempt to secure the dog
 - 2. Request assistance from:
 - a. Another dog handler
 - b. Employee Assistance Unit OIC
 - c. A member of the handler's family
 - d. Cleveland Division of Animal Care and Control (Kennels)
- B. Employee Assistance OIC/ Sector Supervisor shall:
 - 1. Investigate the injury and complete an Injury Investigation entry for an injury to an officer.
 - 2. Forward reports via the Division's tracking software through the chain of command.

V. Support Dog Bites:

- A. If a support dog bites an individual, it shall be investigated as an Injury to Person Incident Report.
 - 1. The Support Dog Handler shall:
 - a. Secure the Support Dog.
 - b. Contact EMS and render first aid, if needed.
 - c. Notify the EAU OIC. If the EAU OIC is not available, notify a sector supervisor from the district of occurrence.
 - d. Complete an Injury to Person/Canine incident report, if a citizen or another officer is bitten by a support dog.
 - 2. EAU/Sector Supervisor Responsibilities:
 - a. Investigate all instances of bites from an Officer Support Dog.
 - b. Request Crime Scene and Records (CS&R) Unit to respond for photographs of all injuries, including non-visible injuries.

PAGE: 4 of 4	SUBJECT: OFFICER SUPPORT DOG	NUMBER: 1.02.20
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- c. The EAU OIC or sector supervisor shall complete the initial review of the Injury to Person report. Sectors supervisors shall forward all reviews to the EAU OIC.
- d. A thorough District Bureau Investigation (DBI) review into the injury to a person by the support dog shall be completed by the EAU OIC. The investigation shall include the following:
 - i. An entry in the Division's tracking software.
 - ii. Recommendation for appropriate corrective action of the handler or if warranted.
- e. The investigation shall be forwarded through the chain of command within seven days.

THIS ORDER SUPERSEDES ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DIRECTIVE OR POLICY FOR THIS SUBJECT AND WILL REMAIN EFFECTIVE UNTIL RESCINDED OR SUPERSEDED.