



California State Parks

Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Division

Policy Manual

Canine Program – Patrol Training

318.2.2 WARNINGS GIVEN TO ANNOUNCE THE USE OF A CANINE

Unless it would otherwise increase the risk of injury or escape, a clearly audible warning to announce that a canine will be released if the person does not come forth, shall be made prior to releasing a canine. The canine handler, when practical, shall first advise the supervisor of his/her decision if a verbal warning is not given prior to releasing the canine. In the event of an apprehension, the handler shall document in any related report whether or not a verbal warning was given and, if none was given, the reasons why.

318.2.5 GUIDELINES FOR NON-APPREHENSION USE

Because canines have senses far superior to those of humans, they may often be effectively utilized to track or search for non-criminals (e.g. lost children, individuals who may be disoriented or in need of medical attention) or even suspects wanted for minor criminal offenses. In such circumstances, it will be necessary for the handler to evaluate the conditions and ability of the canine to determine the feasibility of such an application.

- (a) Absent a change in circumstances that present an immediate threat to officers, the canine or the public, such applications should be conducted on leash or under such conditions that will minimize the likelihood that the canine will bite or otherwise injure the individual.
- (b) Throughout the deployment of the canine in such circumstances, the handler should consider issuing periodic verbal assurances that the canine will not bite or hurt the person.
- (c) Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor, assisting personnel should take direction from the handler in order to minimize interference with the canine.

318.7 TRAINING

Before assignment to the field, each canine team shall be trained and certified to meet current POST patrol standards. Cross-trained canine teams trained for the detection of narcotics and/or explosives shall be trained and certified to meet the standards established for such detection dogs by Peace Officers Standards of Training (POST).

318.7.1 CONTINUED TRAINING

Each canine team shall thereafter be recertified to current POST standards. Additional training considerations are as follows:

- (a) Canine teams shall receive training as defined in the current contract with the Department's canine training provider.
- (b) Canine handlers are encouraged to engage in additional training with approval of the handler's supervisory chain of command.
- (c) To ensure that all training is consistent, no handler, trainer, or outside vendor is authorized to train to a standard that is contrary to the policies of the California State Parks.
- (d) All canine training shall be conducted while on-duty unless otherwise approved by the handler's supervisory chain of command.

318.7.2 FAILURE TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE POST TRAINING

Any dog team failing POST patrol canine certification shall not be deployed in the field until certification is achieved. When practical, pending successful certification, the canine handler shall be temporarily reassigned to regular patrol duties. Any canine team failing POST detection canine certification shall not be deployed for detection assignments until certification is achieved, but shall be allowed to continue canine patrol if certified for patrol.

Failure to Certify

Upon notification from the Canine Program Coordinator of an annual certification failure by a State Park Canine Handler, the District Superintendent will temporarily remove the patrol canine from patrol and/or detection duties. Failure for purposes of annual certification constitutes a failing score in any section.

The Canine Handler who fails to successfully qualify during the annual certification shall be required to comply with the following remediation process:

1. During the next quarter the handler will be given a maximum of 16 hours of training by a Department-designated trainer in order to qualify.
2. The Department's Canine Program Coordinator or other qualified Department personnel will be made available to provide on-going, focused training in the problem area.
3. If, upon completion of the remediation training, the handler qualifies in the failed section(s) the Canine Program Coordinator will notify the District Superintendent to authorize the patrol and/or detection canine to be put back in service.
4. Should the handler, after completion of the prescribed training, fail to remediate by the end of the quarter, the Canine Program Coordinator will notify the District Superintendent. The District Superintendent will convene the Handler Probation Review Committee. The Committee will determine a course of action such as remediation, extension or decertification.
5. Failure in the Annual Certification on any second occasion within a five-year period will result in an automatic review by the committee. The committee will examine all existing circumstances and decide upon a course of action.
6. Remediation extensions should not normally be granted except under extenuating circumstances such as significant medical problems of the handler or canine.
7. If the handler is to be decertified, they will receive written notice at least 5 calendar days in advance of the decertification. If the decertification requires additional action taken, such actions must be consistent with applicable DPA/SPB rules and contract provisions.