



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

320 - CANINES

GENERAL ORDER: 2025-43
ISSUED: September 5, 2025

EFFECTIVE: September 5, 2025

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:
Assistant Chief Steven Johnson
DATE: July 22, 2025

ACTION: Amends General Order 2023-14 (April 7, 2023)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): 5.2.1, 5.3.1, 6.1.2

ROLL CALL VERSION

**Contains only changes to current policy.
For complete version of SOP, see SharePoint.**

320.00 PURPOSE

To establish policies and procedures for the use of the Patrol Canine Unit and Explosive Ordinance Detection (EOD) Canine Unit, which are assigned to the Specialized Patrol Division, and the HIDTA trained detector dogs of the Milwaukee Police Department, **and the Facility Dog(s), which are assigned to the Wellness Team.** The primary objective is to utilize the Milwaukee Police Department canines to assist in the accomplishment of the mission of the Milwaukee Police Department.

320.05 POLICY

It is the policy of the Milwaukee Police Department to utilize canines as a valuable supplement to police resources, due to their superior senses of smell and hearing and their physical capabilities. However, utilization of canines requires adherence to procedures that properly control their use-of-force potential and channel their specialized capabilities into legally acceptable crime prevention and control activities.

The primary use for department **patrol** canine units is as a finding tool, and not as an apprehension nor as an extraction tool. If a canine is used for the purpose of apprehension, canine handlers shall only use the force necessary to effectively maintain control of a situation and protect the safety of police members and the public. A patrol canine handler shall only deploy a canine to locate, apprehend, and control a suspect in accordance with SOP 320.20(E) of this policy.

320.10 ORGANIZATION OF THE PATROL CANINE UNIT (WILEAG 5.3.1, 6.1.2)

C. All assignments to the Patrol and EOD Canine Units, and the duration of such assignment, shall be under the sole control of the Chief of Police.

1. Members must be capable of performing all canine tasks, and be able to perform a series of physical standards as determined by the Specialized Patrol Division commander, in order to be selected, certified, and retained as a canine handler.

- d. EOD canine teams must maintain ~~National Odor Recognition Test (NORT)~~ and

~~North American Police Working Dog Association (NAPWDA)~~ a nationally recognized certifications.

- e. Patrol canine teams must maintain ~~NAPWDA and United States Patrol Canine Association (USPCA)~~ a nationally recognized certifications.

(WILEAG 6.1.2.2)

- 2. Members assigned to the **Patrol** Canine Unit shall be assigned the following equipment:

- a. A marked squad car for Patrol Canine Units configured for canine transport and unmarked squad for EOD Canine Units;
- b. Waist lead leashes of various lengths;
- c. Bite sleeve (patrol canine only);
- d. Muzzle (patrol canine only);
- e. Pinch collar;
- f. Fur saver collar;
- g. Hot Dog system with pager;
- h. Crate;
- i. Harness;
- j. K-9 squad vet kit.

Note: The Specialized Patrol Division commander may assign additional equipment deemed necessary.

(WILEAG 6.1.2.3)

320.20 GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR USE OF THE PATROL CANINE UNITS (WILEAG 5.3.1, 6.1.2)

- F. Requests for the use of the Canine Unit will comply with the following guidelines:

- 2. Department Requests – Canine Unit Off-Duty

~~The request for recall to duty of a canine team may be made by a district or division shift commander through a canine supervisor, or in his/her absence a Specialized Patrol Division supervisor. The canine supervisor or Specialized Patrol Division supervisor shall make the determination of whether or not a Canine Unit will respond to the scene. If there is no canine supervisor or Specialized Patrol Division supervisor available, the district or division shift commander shall contact a Technical Communications Division supervisor who shall contact a canine~~

~~supervisor or Specialized Patrol Division supervisor via call-up protocol. A Technical Communications Division supervisor shall contact the tactical commander of the Specialized Patrol Division via call up protocol in exigent circumstances when a canine supervisor or Specialized Patrol Division supervisor is not available.~~ The request for a canine team may be made by a district or division shift commander through a Specialized Patrol Division supervisor at extension [REDACTED] between 7:00am – 11:00pm. If a canine team is needed on scene between 11:00pm – 7:00am, the district or division shift commander shall contact a Department of Emergency Communications (DEC) supervisor at extension [REDACTED] who will contact a Specialized Patrol Division supervisor via call-up protocol. This procedure shall be applicable for the following requests:

320.40 CARE OF CANINE BY ASSIGNED HANDLER

- B. Canine handlers shall be provided with a department kennel and crate for their private residence. If the canine handler chooses not to take the department kennel and crate provided, they must provide one of their own at their own cost. Any privately purchased kennel or crate shall be inspected and approved by the canine sergeant. Canine handlers shall be vigilant and present at all times when the canine is out of its kennel or crate at the officer's private residence. Canine handlers shall secure their canine in their kennel or crate when the handler will be away from the residence without the canine. The canine sergeant shall conduct an annual inspection of the patrol canine handlers kennel and crate kept at the handler's private residence. If a canine handler does not live in the City of Milwaukee, the officer must purchase a travel crate for their personal car for the safe travel of the department canine to and from their work location.
- C. Canine handlers who travel away from the City of Milwaukee for an extended period of time shall leave the canine in an approved boarding facility. The patrol canine sergeant will provide a list of approved boarding facilities to the canine officer. Prior to any placement in a boarding facility, the handler shall file a *Department Memorandum* (form PM-9E) and the boarding must be approved by the commander of the Specialized Patrol Division. Facility dogs must follow the procedures outlined in SOP 320.60(C)(5).
- E. The canine handler shall make sure the department canine has access to proper medical care at an approved veterinary facility. The canine sergeant shall provide a list of approved veterinary facilities for use by the handler. Facility dogs must follow the procedures outlined in SOP 320.60(C)(6).
- F. Canines shall be kept on a leash unless they are in an enclosed area to prevent escape.

320.60 DEPARTMENT FACILITY DOG

C. FACILITY DOG PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- 2. The handler will be responsible for the dog(s) to include basic care and maintenance in accordance with SOP 320.40, unless specifically stated below.

3. The handler will be provided supplies for the facility dog and only equipment approved by the department shall be utilized for the facility dog(s).
4. Members assigned a Facility Dog shall be assigned, but not limited to, the following equipment:
 - a. An unmarked squad car configured with the capability to secure an approved travel kennel and transport a canine in a safe manner;
 - b. An approved travel kennel for the squad car and all necessary equipment for properly securing it;
 - c. Waist lead leashes of various lengths;
 - d. Working leashes of various lengths;
 - e. Flat nylon working collar;
 - f. Pinch collar;
 - g. Harness(s) and identification patches;
 - h. Crate;
 - i. Bowls, brushes/combs, fecal bags/dispenser;
 - j. An approved climate control system for squad;
 - k. K-9 squad vet kit;
 - l. Bedding and enrichment supplies.

Note: The Training Division commander may assign additional equipment deemed necessary.

54. The responsibilities associated with the handler will be completed in addition to the handler's normal duties.
6. Facility dog handlers who travel away from the City of Milwaukee for an extended period of time shall leave the canine in an approved boarding facility. The Wellness Team co-coordinators will provide a list of boarding facilities to the commander of the Training Division. Prior to any placement in a boarding facility, the handler shall file a *Department Memorandum* and the boarding must be approved by the commander of the Training Division, or their designee.
7. The canine handler shall make sure the department canine has access to proper medical care at an approved veterinary facility. The Wellness Team co-coordinators shall provide a list of veterinary facilities for the facility dogs, which will be approved by the commander of the Training Division, or their designee.

85. A facility dog handler may be removed from the program at any time at the discretion of the Chief of Police, or his or her designee.

D. TRAINING

1. Any member assigned as a facility dog handler by the Chief of Police, or designee, will be required to complete all required initial and continuing training with the facility dog(s) through the American Kennel Club (AKC) and under the guidance of Partners with Paws Service Dogs.
2. The department's facility dog(s) shall not be trained in any aggression tactics or used as any level of force.

- E. Department members may request the presence of the department's facility dog(s) by contacting the department's Wellness Team co-coordinators. The types of situations where the facility dog(s) may provide facility services include, but are not limited to:

4. Other similar situations where it may be appropriate to use a facility dog(s).

- F. The facility dog's handlers shall assess all requests for use before utilization and the following criteria shall be taken into consideration and includes but is not limited to:

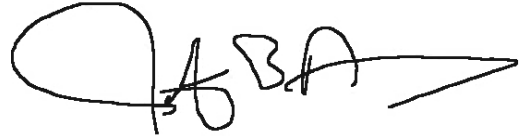
1. Scene safety, including the environment and status of the scene for the facility dog(s).
2. Individual is willing to interact with the dog(s).

- G. The facility dog(s) shall not be utilized in:

1. Areas where subjects with dog related allergies are present.
2. Areas where persons who have a fear of dogs are present.
3. Locations where the existence of a zoonotic disease is known or suspected to be present.

- H. The facility dog(s) shall be transported in a department vehicle suitable for transporting and maintaining the dog comfortably. A department vehicle that is transporting a facility dog(s) shall not engage in any emergency response driving or vehicle pursuits.

- I. Handlers shall immediately contact a supervisor in all cases where a person is bitten or injured, or claims to be injured, by a department facility dog(s), and shall request medical attention. If a bite or injury occurs as a result of the facility dog's actions, the facility dog's handler shall file a *Department Memorandum* and document the incident. The *Department Memorandum* shall be forwarded for review to the commander of the Training Division.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.B. Norman', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

JEFFREY B. NORMAN
CHIEF OF POLICE

JBN:mfk