



# Tulsa Police Department

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**Policy #** 117A

**Policy Name** Use of K-9

**Approved by** *Wendell Franklin, Chief of Police*

**Effective Date** 09/15/2020

**Approved Date** 09/15/2020

**Previous Date** 08/15/2003

## PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

Update Exploitation Unit is now Sex & Violent Offender Registration Unit (SVOR).

## POLICY:

K-9 units may be used to assist officers in the following circumstances:

1. Apprehension of felony suspects.
2. To locate a lost or missing person in emergency situations. \*
3. In certain serious misdemeanor situations.
4. In property searches.

K-9 contact apprehension of a suspect is considered use of force and is in all circumstances controlled by Policy 101A *Use of Force*.

\*If the situation is not an emergency there are volunteer organizations that have search and rescue dogs to assist in missing persons. If one of these dogs is needed contact the SVOR Unit for assistance.

**SUMMARY:** It is the policy of this Department to utilize K-9 Units as a supportive tool to assist with crime deterrence, evidence location, offender apprehension, and to increase officer safety. The primary use of the police dog is to locate persons, evidence, objects, narcotics, and/or explosives.

**APPLIES TO:** All police personnel

## DEFINITIONS:

K-9 APPREHENSION – a suspect is brought into custody as the result of a K-9 deployment. This may be because the K-9 Team was used as trained, or because the suspect surrendered after becoming aware that the K-9 might be used.

K-9 CONTACT APPREHENSION – a K-9 makes physical contact (bites) a suspect to bring them into custody.

K-9 DEPLOYMENT – a K-9 is brought out of a vehicle at the scene of an active incident and has the potential or is intended to be used as trained.

## PROCEDURES:

1. Officers will request a K-9 through dispatch if the deployment of a K-9 Unit will assist officers and the circumstances are allowed by this policy.
2. Officers will set-up a perimeter as quickly as the circumstances of the situation allow.
3. Before releasing their partner, K-9 Officers shall consider the totality of the circumstances of each case including:

- a. The severity of the crime at issue.
  - b. Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to officers or others.
  - c. Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest.
4. When a K-9 is used to search for a suspect, the K-9 Officer shall make audible announcements, announcing his/her identity and purpose in a loud and clear voice stating that a police dog is present and will be deployed, except in circumstances as provided in the following procedures:
 

\*No announcement is required if the K-9 Officer can clearly articulate why making the announcement would create an officer safety issue or other exigent circumstances exist. If no announcement is made and a contact apprehension is made, the K-9 Officer must include the justification for no announcement in the Use of Force report.
  5. The announcements will be made in an attempt to de-escalate the situation, giving the suspect(s) a chance to peacefully surrender, and alert any bystanders to seek safety before the K-9 is deployed.
  6. If a suspect is located prior to the K-9 contacting the suspect, the K-9 will no longer be a locating tool, it will be considered a use of force option. The K-9 Officer shall allow the suspect time and opportunity to submit to verbal commands before force is used unless such a delay will compromise the safety of the officer or another and will not result in the destruction of evidence, escape of a suspect, or commission of a crime.
  7. When a contact apprehension is made, the K-9 should be removed from the suspect as quickly and safely as possible once the suspect no longer poses a threat to officers or anyone else.
  8. As soon as possible after the suspect is in custody, EMSA will be requested to check on any injuries sustained by the suspect. A supervisor will be notified of the use of force, and photographs of the injuries will be taken for documentation to the use of force report.

## **REGULATIONS:**

1. K-9 Officers shall make a K-9 Announcement prior to deployment unless justified by this policy.
2. Approval from a K-9 Supervisor, Shift Commander, or Staff Duty Officer shall be received prior to the use of a K-9 in misdemeanor situations. If none of the above personnel are on-duty, then a Patrol Supervisor can authorize the use of the K-9.
3. A supervisor shall only approve the use of a K-9 in a misdemeanor situation when extreme circumstances exist. To determine if the use of a K-9 would be appropriate, the following circumstances shall be considered:
  - a. Safety of the general public.
  - b. Safety of the officer.
  - c. Type of crime committed.
  - d. Exigent circumstances.
  - e. Vehicle and pedestrian traffic.
  - f. Weather.
  - g. Time lapse.
  - h. Location.
  - i. Time of day.
  - j. Concerns of the K-9 officer.
4. K-9 officers shall always make every reasonable effort to maintain control of their partner.
5. When a K-9 is deployed as a locating tool in an unsecure area, the K-9 shall remain on a restraint (leash, tracking

harness) unless there is an environmental or safety issue. If the K-9 is taken off of a restraint, the K-9 announcements shall be made unless allowed by this policy.

6. K-9 officers shall keep their partner on a restraint (leash, tracking harness) anytime the dog is used to assist in the apprehension of a misdemeanor suspect unless the suspect poses an imminent threat to officers or others.
7. K-9 Officers shall keep their K-9 on a restraint anytime they are used to assist in locating a lost or missing person.
8. The K-9 Officer shall determine the most appropriate search method and have the final decision to apply a K-9 to a specific police operation.
9. K-9 officers shall make every effort to prevent their partner from making physical contact with a misdemeanor suspect. However, the actions of the suspect and the officer's safety will always be taken into consideration.
10. The use of a K-9 is not authorized when the size, age, and physical capabilities of the offender are known and would be considered inappropriate.
11. K-9 will not be used in civil disturbance instances unless directed by the Chief of Police.

## **REFERENCES:**

TOG 1009, *K-9 Deployment*