

Oklahoma Drug Dog Standards and Guidelines

1. Initial Training of Canines

- 1.1.** Training should be conducted by a qualified narcotic detector canine trainer. Utilizing a structured curriculum with specific training and learning objectives.
- 1.2.** The narcotic detection training course shall include training the canine to detect marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine as required to meet the mission, regional and operational deployment needs.
- 1.3.** The canine shall be trained to perform an effective and controlled search.
- 1.4.** The initial training of the canine shall include training of determined specific final response (active or passive alert).
- 1.5.** Training shall include varying quantities of target odors.
- 1.6.** Training shall include exposing the canine to a variety of different types of searches and locations.
- 1.7.** The initial training should continue until the narcotic detection canine team is certified or deemed not certifiable.

2. Certification of Drug Dogs and Handlers

Definitions:

- **Finished Dog:** A finished dog refers to a canine that has already completed foundational training in its designated discipline (narcotics detection, patrol, explosives detection, etc.) and has demonstrated reliable proficiency in those skills through testing or trainer evaluation. The term finished applies to the dog's level of training, not the team's experience.
- **Green Dog:** A green dog has basic drives and temperament suitable for police work but has not yet been trained in detection, tracking, or apprehension.

- 2.1.** A canine team consists of a commissioned law enforcement officer and a canine working for a law enforcement agency, with the responsibilities and duties of locating narcotics.
- 2.2.** A canine team may also consist of a private agency or individual and a canine with the responsibilities and duties of locating narcotics.
- 2.3.** A canine team may also consist of a commissioned part-time or reserve officer and a canine with responsibilities and duties of locating narcotics for his/her

department with a written letter of endorsement by the head administrator. An updated letter must be presented each time the team certifies. The certification is not valid unless a current letter is on file with CLEET.

- 2.4.** A canine team may also consist of a member of the Armed Forces, Homeland Security, or Department of Justice and a canine with the responsibilities and duties of locating narcotics for his/her department with a written letter of endorsement by the head administrator. An updated letter must be presented each time the team certifies. The certification is not valid unless a current letter is on file with CLEET.
- 2.5.** All new drug detection dog handlers shall successfully complete a basic handler course of no less than four (4) weeks in duration (160-hour course). The basic handler course shall be accredited by the Oklahoma Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET). Completion of the basic handler course shall occur prior to any attempt to certify the canine team with the State of Oklahoma or for the canine team to work in any capacity involving narcotics detection.
 - 2.5.1.** This course is required for beginner (green) handlers and finished drug detection canines. An experienced drug detection dog handler who is assigned a new finished drug detection canine shall complete a structured team integration course prior to certification. The duration of this course shall be no less than two (2) weeks, or until the handler and canine demonstrate proficiency as a team in all required operational tasks, as determined by a qualified trainer or evaluator. This training shall, at a minimum, include:
 - 2.5.1.1.** Odor recognition, alert (change of behavior) recognition, and final response verification
 - 2.5.1.2.** Search patterns (vehicle, building, open area, and parcel)
 - 2.5.1.3.** Handler-canine communication and control
 - 2.5.1.4.** Problem solving and proofing exercises
 - 2.5.1.5.** Scenario based training consistent with operational deployment
 - 2.5.2.** Completion of this training shall occur prior to any attempt to certify the canine team with the State of Oklahoma, or for the canine team to work in any capacity involving narcotics detection.
 - 2.5.3.** The 4-week training courses for new canine teams will need to be approved by a sub-committee made up of three (3) of the Drug Dog Advisory Council (DDAC) members. Trainers will need to submit their curriculum for evaluation to the DDAC secretary. DDAC secretary will submit it to the sub-committee for review. A majority vote of the members of the sub-

committee will approve or deny the training for new canine teams. DDAC sub-committee will submit decision to the DDAC secretary to inform trainer.

2.5.4. Trainers will have ten (10) business days to contest the denial by submitting a letter to the DDAC secretary. DDAC secretary will send a copy of letter to DDAC who will review and vote. The DDAC can deny or approve by majority vote. DDAC will submit its decision to the DDAC secretary to inform the trainer. DDAC can call a special meeting to discuss training.

2.5.5. The criteria the Sub-Committee will base approval on will consist of: Length of training; must be no less than four weeks. The team shows familiarity with low and high hides. The school offers indoor, outdoor and vehicle hides. When completed with the school, the handler will show proficiency in reading the dog's behavior.

2.5.6. New drug detection dog handlers must apply for a letter to test no later than 30 days after completing an approved basic handler school. If the thirtieth day lands on a day when CLEET's administrative office is closed, the application will be due the next day the office is open for business.

2.6. Certifications will be valid for one year from the date of certification.

2.7. If a handler has certified with previous narcotic canines, a two-week course shall suffice, if the handler certification was received before January 1, 2024.

2.8. The guidelines in 2.5 will not affect continuing education courses, seminars, or conferences.

2.9. A handler who was previously certified but who has been without an active certification for longer than one year shall be required to complete a refresher handler's course that is at least 16 hours long and is approved by the subcommittee referred to in 2.5.a before being eligible for recertification.

2.9.1. Any handler falling under 2.9 may apply to the subcommittee for a waiver of the refresher course requirement. Waivers may be granted when in the sole discretion of the subcommittee the handler's experience and continuing education history demonstrate that the handler possesses current

competency to be part of a canine team without the need of a refresher course.

3. Target and Optional Odors for Certification

- 3.1.** Cocaine minimum amount to be used 10 grams, maximum 28 grams.
- 3.2.** Optional target odor of marijuana minimum amount to be used 28 grams.
- 3.3.** Heroin minimum amount to be used 10 grams, maximum 28 grams.
- 3.4.** Methamphetamine minimum amount to be used 10 grams, maximum 28 grams.
- 3.5.** All target odors shall be stored in separate containers.
- 3.6.** All target odors should be placed in the search area at least 30 minutes before the first team attempts to certify.
- 3.7.** Target odors should not be placed at a higher elevation of 5 feet unless it can be accessed by the canine.
- 3.8.** Pseudo narcotics will not be used for certification tests.

4. Search Areas Used for Certification

4.1. Indoor Searches:

- 4.1.1.** Buildings, warehouses, residences, or other structures.
- 4.1.2.** Should be no larger than one thousand square feet (1000).
- 4.1.3.** Inside this area there shall be a section for each drug. At least one blank area will be designated.

4.2. Vehicle Searches:

- 4.2.1.** The word “vehicles” as used for certification purposes shall include passenger cars, trucks, or vans.
- 4.2.2.** During the search there should be at least 2 vehicles, but no more than 10, with at least one vehicle blank.
- 4.2.3.** There should be only one target odor hidden on/in each vehicle.

4.3. Field Searches:

4.3.1. May be used by the evaluation official solely at this/her discretion.

4.3.2. The fields should not be greater than 3600 square feet.

5. Evaluation Officials Standards

- 5.1.** Drug Dog Advisory council along with OBN will designate evaluation officials. (State law designates this for the time).
- 5.2.** Each evaluation official must be an Oklahoma state certified, full time law enforcement officer.
- 5.3.** Each applicant shall obtain an evaluation official packet from CLEET.
- 5.4.** The packet will contain a resume of schools, training, certifications, and years of experience.
- 5.5.** The evaluation official shall have a minimum of four years' experience handling drug detection dogs.
- 5.6.** The evaluation official shall have a minimum of 200 hours of formalized detector dog training.
- 5.7.** The evaluation official shall have completed and passed the evaluation official's course certified by CLEET.
- 5.8.** The evaluation official shall have a current OBN and DEA license to possess drugs for training/testing with the State of Oklahoma.
- 5.9.** The evaluation official shall submit a letter of support from his/her agency/department.
- 5.10.** Evaluation officials shall not test dogs that have initially trained or from within his/her own department/agency or a company in which he/she is the owner or affiliated.
- 5.11.** Evaluation officials will be responsible for setting up the testing area and the evaluation of the handler/dog teams.
- 5.12.** An evaluation official can be removed as an evaluator by a majority vote of the Drug Dog Advisory Council.

6. Certification Standards

- 6.1.** The evaluation official will determine the search areas used for certification.
- 6.2.** The evaluation official shall know the desired outcome of the search.
- 6.3.** Revoked. (1/1/2024)
- 6.4.** The canine being tested shall be able to locate/indicate all the stashes of target odors hidden in each location.
- 6.5.** The handler shall be advised of the parameters of the search.
- 6.6.** The handler shall not know the placement of the target odors.
- 6.7.** The handler shall have on-lead control of the canine for a minimum of 50% of the test.
- 6.8.** Once deployed, search time for each area will not exceed three (3) minutes for each search.
- 6.9.** It will be the responsibility of each handler to advise the evaluation official as to the type of alert/indication his/her canine will give prior to the search.
- 6.10.** To cause the evaluation official to score a positive find for the detection team, the handler must verbally state "alert" to the evaluation official and identify the location of the alert.
 - 6.10.1.** Alert Response: is a characteristic change in ongoing behavior in response to a trained odor, as interpreted by the handler.
- 6.11.** Only one "false response" will be allowed by the evaluation official. A second "false response" will result in failure to certify the handler/canine team.
 - 6.11.1.** False Response: In a controlled environment, the dog responds as if a trained odor was present when it is known that it is not. This is a false response and a false positive.
- 6.12.** Failure to find the minimum hidden target odors consisting of cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine will result in failure to certify the team.

- 6.13.** When choosing optional odors, failure to find the minimum hidden optional target odors will result in failure to certify the team.
- 6.14.** Electronic or prong collars will be allowed. The handler will not be allowed to Touch the electric collar remote. The evaluating official may request to hold the Remote during certification.
- 6.15.** No drug contaminated/scented rewards are allowed during certification.
- 6.16.** The team must complete all application forms for CDS Detection Teams and meet all standards of CLEET.
- 6.17.** If, in the opinion of the evaluation official, a handler uses extreme or abusive treatment of a canine the team will be immediately disqualified.
- 6.18.** All tests given to the detection team will be a pass/pass/failure. The evaluation official will decide if the team successfully completed the test. The handler and dog will be considered as a team, and it is the team who will be certified.
- 6.19.** Handler errors, when excessive may result in failure of the team.
- 6.20.** If the dog changes handlers, a new team exists and the new team will need to be certified.

7. Retesting for Certification

- 7.1.** A detection team who fails to qualify for certification may after seven (7) days attempt to certify again.
- 7.2.** The handler/canine team must use the same evaluation official, if available.
- 7.3.** The handler/canine team shall complete a corrective action plan before making another attempt to certify.
- 7.4.** If an officer wishes to challenge test procedures or results, they may do so in writing within seven (7) days of the test date. Challenges must be sent to: (CLEET, Attn: K9 Coordinator, 2401 Egypt Road, Ada, OK 74820). The protest will be presented to the Drug Dog Advisory Council who will make the final decision and notify the handler and evaluation official.

7.5. Detection teams who fail qualification or certification on his/her third attempt will no longer be allowed to test as a detection team. An administrative letter will be sent to the agency's administration after the second failure with the detection team. (This letter will be sent by the CLEET K9 Coordinator).

8. Maintenance Training

8.1. The canine team shall conduct regular objective-oriented training sufficient to maintain operational proficiency on all trained odors.

8.2. Training is meant to sustain and enhance the performance of the handler, canine, and the canine team.

8.3. In training situations are purposely sought where the capabilities of the canine team are challenged within the operational environments for which the team may be deployed.

8.4. Teams shall be challenged to improve and enhance their abilities.

8.5. Training may include:

8.5.1. A variety of locations.

8.5.2. A variety of target odor amounts (no less than one (1) gram)

8.5.3. A variety of environments, noises, heights, depths, containers, and distraction odors.

8.5.4. Various types of searches (vehicles, buildings, parcels, luggage, blank areas, and persons depending on local, state and federal law).

8.5.5. A varied duration of set times for target odors.

8.5.6. Varied duration of search times.

8.6. The canine team should spend an average of sixteen (16) hours per month in routine training to maintain the proficiency level of the team.

9. Handling of Target Odors

9.1. The target odors shall be packaged in a manner safe for the canine throughout training.

- 9.2.** The target odors shall be maintained in a manner to avoid loss or destruction.
- 9.3.** Target odors shall be stored in a manner that prevents odor contamination or physical contamination. The materials shall be stored in separate labeled containers.
- 9.4.** Required security procedures pertaining to the target odors shall be followed according to local, state, and federal laws.
- 9.5.** Required substance registrations shall be current and accurate records maintained.
- 9.6.** Target odors should be replaced every 1 to 3 years. Sooner if contaminated or compromised.
- 9.7.** Disposal/destruction of the target odors shall follow local, state, and federal guidelines.

10. Documentation/Records

- 10.1.** The handler, department and organization shall maintain training records, certification records and seizure records.
- 10.2.** Deployment/utilization records may be kept in accordance with agency policy.
- 10.3.** Records shall contain discipline-related specifics.
- 10.4.** Records shall be standardized within the department, agency and/or organization.
- 10.5.** Documents shall be retained in accordance with state, federal and unit guidelines.
- 10.6.** Training records kept by the handler and/or the department should contain the following information:
 - 10.6.1.** Date training held.
 - 10.6.2.** Name of individual conducting training.
 - 10.6.3.** Type and amount of target odors used.

10.6.4. Length of training session.

10.6.5. Location of training.

10.6.6. Type of training (vehicle, luggage, building or open area).

10.6.7. Number of searches and results

10.6.8. Name of canine and handler.

10.7. Seizure records kept by the handler should include:

10.7.1. Date of seizure.

10.7.2. Location of seizure.

10.7.3. Length of search.

10.7.4. Description of activity.

10.7.5. Results of search.

10.7.6. Name of canine and handler.

10.7.7. Non-productive responses (dog alerts with no detectable or sizable amounts of narcotics).

10.7.8. Seizure substance type.

10.7.9. Narcotics.

10.7.10. Currency.

10.7.11. Currency non-seizures.

10.8. Other information as required by the organization and/or agency.

10.9. Certification records kept by certifying authority and handler shall include the following information:

10.9.1. Date team was certified.

10.9.2. Certification authority, agency, or professional organization.

10.9.3. Name of evaluation official.

10.9.4. Target odors.

10.9.5. Location of certification.

10.9.6. Name of canine and handler.

10.10.Deployment/utilization/seizure information shall be kept separate from training and testing information.

10.11.Supervisory review is recommended.

10.12.Each animal shall undergo an annual veterinary examination.

10.13.Medical records shall be maintained in a manner where they are accessible to the handler/department/organization.

11. Use of Records/Documentation

11.1. The reliability of the canine team shall be based upon the results of certification.

11.2. Training records do not necessarily reflect the reliability of the team.

11.3. Training records are necessary to illustrate the type and amount of training that the team has experienced before and after certification.

12. Vehicles Transporting a Police Dog (Effective January 1, 2027)

12.1. Any vehicle used to transport a police dog will be equipped with a heat sensor/monitoring device approved by the employing law enforcement agency.

12.2. The heat sensor/monitoring device will continuously monitor the internal temperature of the area of the vehicle in which the police dog is transported.

12.3. The heat sensor/monitoring device will provide an audible and visual alert outside of the vehicle when the interior temperature reaches 85 degrees Fahrenheit, notifying the law enforcement officer or agency responsible for the police dog.

12.4. Any vehicle used to transport a police dog will be equipped with an automatic safety mechanism designed to reduce the interior temperature of the vehicle upon activation of the heat sensor alert.

Proposed Exceptions / Waiver Provision

12.5. Exceptions:

The requirements of Section 12 may be waived under the following circumstances:

12.5.1. Vehicles used temporarily or in exigent circumstances, including but not limited to emergency transport, vehicle breakdowns, or operational necessity, provided the police dog is under direct and continuous supervision of the handler or another law enforcement officer.

12.5.2. Vehicles not primarily assigned as a canine transport vehicle, when the police dog is transported for a limited duration and environmental conditions do not pose a foreseeable risk to the dog.

12.5.3. Vehicles operated by agencies that have alternative canine safety measures in place that provide equivalent or greater protection, as approved by CLEET.

12.5.4. Any waiver or exception must be documented by the employing agency and made available for review upon request by CLEET.

12.6. Compliance Verification at Certification

12.6.1. At the time of initial certification or annual recertification, the state canine evaluator will verify compliance with Section 12 by conducting a visual and functional inspection of the heat sensor/monitoring device installed in the vehicle used to transport the police dog. Verification will include confirmation that:

12.6.1.1. The heat sensor/monitoring device is installed in the canine transport area;

12.6.1.2. The device is operational; and

12.6.1.3. Audible and visual alerts activate at the required temperature threshold.

12.7. Non-Compliance – Device Not Installed or Inoperable

If, at the time of certification or recertification, the vehicle used to transport the police dog is not equipped with a heat sensor/monitoring device or the device is not functioning properly, the following will apply:

12.7.1. The canine team will not be certified or recertified until compliance is achieved, unless an exception under Section 12.5 is approved.

12.7.2. The evaluator will document the non-compliance and notify the handler and employing agency of the deficiency.

12.7.3. The canine team may be permitted to complete the remainder of the certification evaluation, at the discretion of the evaluator; however, certification will not be issued until proof of compliance is provided and verified.

12.8. Corrective Action and Proof of Compliance

To remedy non-compliance, the employing agency or handler must provide documentation or verification demonstrating that:

12.8.1. A compliant heat sensor and monitoring device has been installed; or

12.8.2. The previously installed device has been repaired and is fully operational.

Proof of compliance may include:

12.8.3. Visual inspection by a state evaluator or authorized designee; or

12.8.4. Written confirmation from the agency, accompanied by supporting documentation.

Upon verification of compliance, certification or recertification may be issued without requiring the canine team to retest, provided all other certification requirements have been met.

12.9. Evaluator Authority

12.9.1. State canine evaluators will not certify or recertify a canine team that does not meet the requirement of Section 12 unless a documented exception under Section 12.5 applies.

12.9.2. Evaluators are not responsible for troubleshooting, repairing, or installing heat sensor/monitoring devices.