

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

June 1, 2026
1.14

TO: The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: USE OF DEPARTMENT POLICE DOGS; AND METROPOLITAN DIVISION
CANINE PLATOON – RENAMED AND REVISED

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Board of Police Commissioners REVIEW and APPROVE:

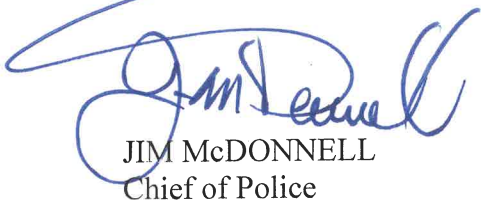
- I. The renamed and revised policy: Department Manual Section 1/571, *Use of Department Police Service Dogs*.
- II. The renamed and revised policy: Department Manual Section 4/212.70, *Metropolitan Division K-9 Platoon*.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this Order is to codify longstanding practices concerning training standards, search criteria, and search announcement requirements associated with Metropolitan Division's K-9 operations. This Order further renames the Metropolitan Canine Platoon to Metropolitan K-9 Platoon.

Should you have questions regarding this matter, please contact Police Administrator Sharon Sargent, Acting Commanding Officer, Strategic Planning and Policies Division at (213) 486-8720.

Respectfully,



JIM McDONNELL
Chief of Police

Enclosures

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS ON

SUBJECT: USE OF DEPARTMENT POLICE DOGS; AND, METROPOLITAN DIVISION CANINE PLATOON – RENAMED AND REVISED

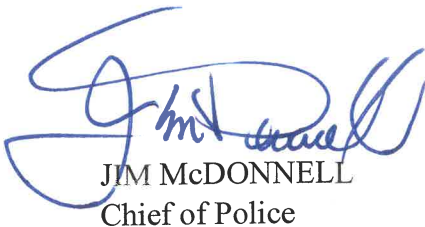
PURPOSE: The Metropolitan Division Canine Platoon supports Department operations through the deployment of police service dogs (K-9s) under various circumstances, including to effectively search for outstanding felony suspects, armed misdemeanor suspects, and to locate outstanding firearms and firearm-related evidence. The use of Metropolitan Division K-9s enhances public safety while reducing risk to Department personnel. This Order codifies longstanding Department practices concerning training standards, search criteria, and search announcement requirements associated with Metropolitan Division's K-9 operations. Additionally, this Order renames the Metropolitan *Canine* Platoon to Metropolitan *K-9* Platoon.

PROCEDURE:

- I. USE OF DEPARTMENT POLICE DOGS – RENAMED AND REVISED.**
Department Manual Section 1/571, *Use of Department Police Dogs*, has been renamed, *Use of Department Police Service Dogs*, and revised. The revised Manual section is attached.
- II. METROPOLITAN DIVISION CANINE PLATOON – RENAMED AND REVISED.** Department Manual Section 4/212.70, *Metropolitan Division Canine Platoon*, has been renamed, *Metropolitan Division K-9 Platoon*, and revised. The revised Manual section is attached.

AMENDMENTS: This Order amends Department Manual Sections 1/571 and 4/212.70.

AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY: The Commanding Officer, Audit Division, shall review this Order and determine whether an audit or inspection shall be conducted in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.



JIM McDONNELL
Chief of Police

Attachments

DISTRIBUTION "D"

DEPARTMENT MANUAL
VOLUME I
Revised by Special Order No. , 2026

571. USE OF DEPARTMENT POLICE *SERVICE* DOGS. Police *service* dogs (*K-9s*) are a multi-functional asset of the Los Angeles Police Department. *Department K-9s* may be used in appropriate circumstances to assist officers in the search for criminal suspects; the detection and location of narcotics and/or explosives, *outstanding firearms and firearms related evidence*; and the location of missing adults or juveniles.

Supervisors or officers at the scene of a police incident may request the assistance of a *K-9*; however, *K-9 supervisors* shall be responsible for determining if the *K-9* is to be used. When a *K-9* is deployed, the *K-9* handler shall be solely responsible for the control and direction of the *K-9*.

A K-9 may be used:

- In the detection, control, and apprehension of a suspect when there is a reasonable suspicion of the suspect's involvement in criminal activity;
- In the search of buildings and large areas for suspects;
- In the investigation of a crime or possible crime;
- In searches for narcotics and/or narcotic paraphernalia;
- In searches for explosives and/or explosive devices;
- *In searches for outstanding firearms and firearms related evidence; or,*
- *In the search for missing juveniles or adults involved in criminal or non-criminal incidents.*

Note: *Gang and Narcotics Division (GND) is responsible for tracking/trailing bloodhounds. Requests for tracking/trailing bloodhounds shall be made through Communications Division or by telephonically contacting GND between 0800 and 2200 hours. Off-hour call-outs should be made to the Department Operations Center (DOC) between 2201 and 0759 hours.*

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212.70 METROPOLITAN DIVISION K-9 PLATOON. The services of the Metropolitan Division K-9 (Metro K-9) Platoon are available on a 24 hour-a-day, *seven (7) days a week basis*. When Department personnel determine there is a need for the services of a Metro K-9, requests shall be made through Communications Division or by telephonically contacting Metropolitan Division.

***Note:** Metro K-9s shall NOT be deployed in crowd control situations.*

K-9s are authorized to search when any of the following criteria have been met:

- *Search for felony suspect(s);*
- *Search for misdemeanor suspects reasonably believed to be armed with a firearm or other deadly weapon;*
- *Search in conjunction with a pre-planned or spontaneous Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)-related incident; or,*
- *Search for evidence related to a criminal investigation.*

Factors to consider when determining whether the above criteria are met include, but are not limited to:

- *Crime(s) involved;*
- *Whether there is a reason to believe the suspect is armed;*
- *Weapons or access to weapons;*
- *Threat level assessment and public safety issues;*
- *Age of suspect;*
- *Search environment (residential, apartment building, field, industrial area); and,*
- *Criminal history (if known)*

***Note:** The crime for which the suspect is arrested may be different than the booking charge or arrest disposition. K-9 officers are responsible to document all preliminary arrest information in their Deployment Reports regardless of the final booking charge or arrest disposition.*

Gun Dog Search Requests. *The following criteria must be met to request use of a Gun Dog on public property or lawful presence on private property (e.g., search warrant, call for service, etc.):*

- *Outstanding firearm(s) or related firearm evidence; or,*
- *Related to a criminal investigation; or,*
- *Concurrent with search warrant service where firearms are thought to be present.*

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***Note:** The Department uses K-9s to assist officers in locating and apprehending suspects believed to have committed crimes and who are refusing to submit to arrest. The Department has adopted a “Find and Bark” method of searching for suspects in accordance with the Preamble to Use of Force principles set forth in Department Manual Section 1/556.10. The “Find and Bark” search method allows K-9s to locate and control persons on command by finding a person, barking at them (as long as they comply with orders to remain still, otherwise the K-9 will take a bite hold), and holding that position until a handler calls the K-9 back to them.*

***METRO K-9 Announcement and Warning.** The Metro K-9 announcement and warning shall be given prior to initiating a K-9 search. The announcement and warning are intended to:*

- *Notify persons within a search area of the intent to use a K-9;*
- *Allow suspects an opportunity to surrender; and,*
- *Give the public an opportunity to enter their home/business or leave the area.*

In situations where noise or perimeter size is a factor, officers should use amplified sound systems, such as bullhorns or other Department public address systems.

The K-9 officers shall attempt to make K-9 announcements and warnings in a manner that can be reasonably heard throughout the contained search area.

The K-9 supervisor shall ensure that the Incident Commander is notified when K-9 announcements and warnings are given.

***Note:** These notifications should be made on a recorded frequency with confirmation that the announcements and warnings were audible and understandable throughout the contained search area. This shall be done by confirming with perimeter officers or search team members at perimeter positions that they can hear and understand the announcements and warnings.*

If noise or the size of the perimeter precludes officers from hearing announcements from the opposite side of the perimeter, a Department helicopter’s public address system shall be used to make an additional announcement whenever feasible.

When there is a reasonable belief that the suspect may not be fluent in English, or the residential area/community may not be fluent in English, efforts should be made to deliver the announcements and warnings in both English and the appropriate language, if known and feasible.

The K-9 announcements or any deviations should be captured on Body Worn Video and documented in the K-9 Deployment Report.

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***Note:** When exigent or unique circumstances make announcements and warnings impractical or unreasonable, the K-9 supervisor may, with concurrence from the Incident Commander, authorize an exemption to the K-9 announcements and warnings. The circumstances supporting the exception shall be documented in the K-9 Deployment Report.*