

# Canine Volunteer Program

## 1034.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the implementation and utilization of a Therapy Dog, which is not to be confused with a Service Dog. The Santa Ana Police Department Canine Volunteer Program was established to supplement and assist Department personnel in the performance of their duties. The Canine Volunteer Program provides a dog that has been certified through a nationally recognized organization for service dogs. This dog can be used to reduce stress and improve morale in the station as well as be deployed in the field at Community Engagement events and Critical Incidents.

### 1034.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Therapy Dog** – A dog trained to provide affection, comfort, and love to people in a facility setting. These dogs are defined but not covered or protected under the Federal Housing Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act. They do not have public access rights, with the exception of the specific places they are visiting and working.

**Service Dog** – A dog trained to provide a specific service for a person with special needs.

## 1034.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The Chief of Police may authorize the placement of a K-9 Volunteer to strengthen comradery and to enhance our relationship with the public. This policy will outline the limitations and requirements before the placement of any K-9 Volunteer can occur. The safety of the employees and civilian visitors and the proper care of the K-9 Volunteer must be insured before and during the implementation of a K-9 Volunteer program. These responsibilities fall to the Canine Unit Commander. It is important to note, that the K-9 Volunteer does not have a designated handler, and therefore the program relies on the efforts and contributions of all who volunteer to assist. Locations may be added or removed in the future.

## 1034.3 QUALIFICATIONS

The dog must be certified through a nationally recognized organization for service dogs. This requirement is designed to ensure that the behavior, temperament, and obedience of the K-9 Volunteer does not create a danger or a distraction in the workplace. Review and approval of the certification will be conducted by the Canine Unit Commander, or a designee, before the placement of any K-9 Volunteer. The commander must provide proof of all vaccinations at the time of placement and maintain such vaccinations as commonly recommended by a veterinarian. The commander, or designee, may require re-certification or testing of the K-9 Volunteer at any time.

## 1034.4 DISQUALIFICATIONS

A K-9 Volunteer may be disqualified or removed from department property, if:

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1. Aggressive behavior is observed such as biting, growling, lunging, nipping, or scratching
2. The K-9 engages in uncontrolled, disruptive, or aggressive barking
3. The K-9 destroys department or employee property
4. The K-9 is not being properly cared for
5. The K-9 falls into poor health
6. The K-9 becomes a distraction to the Department's mission, safety, or workload
7. The K-9 is urinating, defecating or vomiting inside the Police Administration Building.
8. The Canine Unit Commander or his designee deems the dog disqualified
9. The Canine Unit Commander orders removal

#### **1034.5 PROCEDURES AND CARE**

1. Any facility with a K-9 Volunteer must place conspicuous signs at the main entrance notifying the public that a dog is on the property.
2. The K-9 shall be in a designated area of the building without unsupervised access to the visiting public.
  - (a) If the public is visiting with the K-9 Volunteer, a department member shall be present at all times and the dog shall be on a leash.
3. K-9 Volunteers shall never be allowed into areas where evidence is stored or is processed.
4. K-9 Volunteers shall not be allowed in break rooms or dining rooms.
5. K-9 Volunteers must be under some general supervision at all times.
  - (a) Areas within the Police Administration Building that are unoccupied for periods of time during the day or night, may not be suitable for a K-9 Volunteer.
  - (b) If a work location is not staffed during nighttime hours, or night staffing is insufficient to care for the K-9 Volunteer, the Canine Unit Commander must make arrangements for care and housing elsewhere.
6. One employee on duty at any given time must be willing to assume responsibility for the K-9 Volunteer's care, feeding, and control
7. An off-duty employee, regardless of classification or rank, who voluntarily accepts responsibility for a K-9 Volunteer will not be deemed to be on-duty or on-call, simply for caring for the K-9 Volunteer. Employees doing so are not eligible for extra pay or benefits and no special designation or assignment exists related to a K-9 Volunteer.
8. Any employee who witnesses or experiences aggressive behavior by the K-9 Volunteer shall report it to their supervisor immediately.
9. Approval from the Canine Unit Commander must be obtained before the K-9 Volunteer can be transported from the Police Administration Building for any reason.