

**Oakland County Sheriff's Office**  
**General Order # 3.10**



<b>SUBJECT:</b> K9 Unit		<b>NUMBER:</b> 3.10
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 3/16/2026 <b>REVIEW DATE:</b> Annually		<b>MACP Standard Impact:</b> 3.5.9
<b>REPLACES AND RESCINDS:</b> GO 3.10 dated 8/22/2023	<b>DISTRIBUTION:</b> All Personnel	<b>NUMBER OF PAGES:</b> 5

This order replaces and rescinds all previously issued orders, procedures, rules and regulations, notices and/or practices in conflict with this General Order.

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to provide for a clear understanding of when, where and how the K9 Unit will be utilized and to inform deputies of general rules and instructions concerning K9s.

**II. POLICY**

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office shall maintain a K9 Unit consisting of trained K9 Handlers who are sworn and certified deputies. Their assigned K9s will be certified law enforcement work K9s that are trained for general tracking/narcotics work, handler protection, accelerant detection or explosive material detection.

**III. PROCEDURES**

A. Assignments

1. K9s shall be assigned to regular patrol areas, contract patrol, NET, Fire Investigation and Corrections. A Command Officer may assign a K9 to a specific special detail as needs demand.

B. Use of K9s (MACP Standard 3.5.9 a)

1. K9s may be utilized for the following types of specialized activities:
  - a. Tracking criminals
  - b. Tracking lost people
  - c. Searching opens areas/buildings for lost persons or criminal suspects
  - d. Searching for evidence or lost property
  - e. Searching for illegal narcotics
  - f. Searching for explosive material {Explosive detecting K9s}
  - g. Assisting in other patrol functions
  - h. Assisting other departments
  - i. Details/demonstrations
  - j. Detection of human remains
  - k. Any other function for which they are trained
  - l. Assisting law enforcement or fire agencies in the detection of accelerants

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C. Law Enforcement K9s and the Use of Force

1. The K9 Handler's decision to use force through the application of a K9 shall be bound by the Response to Resistance General Order and a meaningful review shall be conducted in the same manner as all applications of force by a member of the Sheriff's Office.
2. Before releasing a K9 or entering a situation where it is likely that through the training of the K9 a K9 bite of a suspect is likely to occur, the handler or other appropriate personnel shall make a loud announcement and repeat the announcement. The announcement shall include the identification of a law enforcement K9 presence, specific commands to the suspect and the results of non-compliance. A reasonable amount of time shall be allowed for the suspect to respond. This warning shall be repeated as necessary in situations where there are barriers present that may inhibit sound, such as a large structure.
  - a. K9 announcements are not required in any situation in which making such an announcement places the handler or others in immediate danger of serious physical injury or death from the suspect(s).
3. Following a K9 bite, the K9 shall be commanded to disengage when reasonable and practical based on the circumstances. The K9 Deputy shall render aid and ensure medical treatment is provided if needed.

D. Scene Security Responsibility of Requesting Deputy/Officer or Agency

1. It shall be the responsibility of any requesting deputy/officer or agency to make every effort to secure the area to be searched. For tracking, a perimeter should be established that will reasonably restrict a fleeing suspect and allow the responding K9 an opportunity to complete a successful track.
2. It is the responsibility of every Deputy to restrict the contamination of crime scenes and to keep foot traffic to a minimum. Deputies should immediately advise a responding K9 handler of where they have walked as well as any other deputies or civilians in the area.

E. Dispatching / Call Out

1. While K9s are assigned to a patrol area, they may be dispatched routinely as any other patrol unit. Consideration should be given to which calls are best suited for their use. If an Oakland County Sheriff's Office K9 is unavailable for a K9-related call, the dispatcher will advise an appropriate Command Officer or the Command Sergeant. A Command Officer will then make a determination whether to call in a K9 Deputy from their off-duty status. A duty call-out roster shall be made by the Unit Commander and copies shall be kept in the Emergency Communications and Operations Division.

F. Factors Affecting K9 Ability to Follow Scent

1. Determination to use a K9 shall be based primarily on the probability of obtaining a good track. Both the deputy requesting the track and the Command Officer who authorizes the use of the K9 should consider whether the factors present at the scene would promote a successful track.

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- a. Weather – rain, snow, wind
- b. Surface – hard roads, soft grass, wooded area
- c. Surroundings – service stations, chemical yards, barnyards, etc.
- d. Time – age of the event

**G. Outside Agency Requests**

1. The Command Sergeant shall consider K9 requests in the following order:
  - a. Oakland County – contracted areas
  - b. Oakland County – non-contracted areas/other agencies
  - c. Outside county agencies – both in- and out-county (i.e., schools, institutions, sports/entertainment arenas)
2. Whether or not outside requests are granted shall be determined by a Command Officer, only after considering the totality of the circumstances, including use of overtime, short-staffing contract areas, etc.

**H. Corrections Searches (MACP Standard 3.5.9 a)**

1. K9 Deputies and their K9s may be requested/scheduled as needed for use in searching a correctional/jail facility. The request for searches shall be approved by a Corrections Command Officer.

**I. Handler Selection and Training (MACP Standard 3.5.9 b)**

1. Deputies interested in consideration for the K9 Unit shall submit the "Oakland County Sheriff's Office Request for Assignment – Letter of Interest" to Administrative Services. Selection of individuals for the Unit will be made through the current procedure as established by the collective bargaining agreement.
2. Handlers with submitted letters of interest may be selected to participate in the "K9 Support Team" established in 2021 as a precursor program to K9 Handler selection. Vacant K9 Handler positions will be selected by the Sheriff from the K9 Support Team, based on the candidate's aptitude for working with K9s, training participation, self-motivation, teamwork ability, work ethic within their current assigned work location and individual responsibility.
3. All handlers will receive their initial training/certification through an approved law enforcement K9 Academy. Upon certification/graduation from the program, they will be encouraged to pursue their training goals in the following manner:
  - a. Barring exigent circumstances, one agency workday will be set aside each week for training.
  - b. Each K9 will be required to maintain certification by a nationally recognized association (i.e., The North American Police Work K9 Association or the United States Police K9 Association) in the basic disciplines (i.e., tracking/narcotics ID, explosive ID).

**J. Training Material**

1. Controlled substance training materials shall be issued by the Oakland County Sheriff's Forensic Science Laboratory in accordance with lab procedures.
  - a. Controlled substances shall be issued by Oakland County Sheriff's Office Forensic Science Laboratory personnel, when requested by the K9 Sergeant.

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- b. Controlled substances will be obtained by the laboratory from the Property Room from adjudicated cases authorized for destruction. The controlled substances shall be weighed, documented and packaged appropriately prior to being issued.
  - c. The Oakland County Sheriff's Forensic Laboratory shall track controlled substances by laboratory number, original complaint number and tag number for tracking purposes each time substances are checked out.
  - d. Each handler shall personally pick up and sign for their issued material.
  - e. Handlers shall store the training samples at an Oakland County Sheriff's Office secured location or in an approved narcotics safe, secured inside their assigned patrol vehicle.
  - f. When training samples are used, the handler or trainer shall maintain exclusive physical control over them. The handler or trainer shall not leave the immediate area in which training samples have been placed until the training exercise is complete and all samples are retrieved.
  - g. The trainer or handler shall not allow unauthorized persons to handle training samples.
  - h. When handling training samples, handlers shall exercise caution to prevent accidental absorption of the material through the skin. Absorption can be avoided by wearing latex or nitrile gloves.
  - i. The handler shall also use care in choosing locations for the placement of training samples during proficiency training. The samples shall not be placed in a manner that the K9 could accidentally ingest any of the samples. In the event an assigned K9 does ingest one of the training samples, handlers shall be knowledgeable in recognizing symptoms and applying the appropriate first aid measures.
  - j. When controlled substance training materials are deemed expired or no longer usable, they shall be returned to the Oakland County Sheriff's Office Forensic Science Laboratory for re-issuance of new materials according to laboratory procedures. The unusable controlled substances are then returned to the Property Room for destruction.
  - k. In the event a training sample is accidentally damaged or destroyed during a training session, all recoverable materials shall be collected, packaged and returned to the Oakland County Sheriff's Forensic Science Laboratory for repackaging or reissuance. A report shall be written, documenting the incident.
  - l. All deputies that are issued narcotics for training aids will have them inspected and inventoried by the K9 Sergeant on or about January 1st and July 1st of each year. The K9 Sergeant will obtain records from the Forensic Laboratory to cross check the issued controlled substances against the physical inventory.
  - m. K9 Handlers issued narcotics shall submit to a drug test when being newly assigned to the unit and upon leaving the unit. Random drug testing of deputies will be at the discretion of the Patrol Services Division Captain or their designee.
- K. Vehicles/Equipment (MACP Standard 3.5.9 e)
- 1. The Sheriff's Office will furnish a K9 vehicle to transport the K9 to and from work and all equipment necessary for the maintenance and deployment of a K9 to include leads, collars, harnesses, etc.
  - 2. It will be the responsibility of the K9 Handler to see that the vehicle and equipment are properly maintained and cleaned.
  - 3. The vehicle shall be used in accordance with Sheriff's Office and County policy; it shall not be used for personal business.

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#### L. K9 Care/Grooming (MACP Standard 3.5.9 d)

1. Handlers will be responsible for 24-hour care and maintenance of their K9 and will be provided 30 minutes per workday for the care/grooming of their K9. The handlers shall be allowed to perform this function during their normal work shift if time allows. If time does not allow, the handlers will be compensated for 30 minutes of overtime at their established pay scale.

#### M. K9 Care/Grooming Expenses

1. Expenses for the K9 will be paid for by the County of Oakland while the K9 is active. This will include such items as:
  - a. Veterinary bills – Emergency
  - b. Veterinary bills – Non-Emergency
  - c. Boarding
  - d. Food
  - e. Grooming
  - f. Any other essential costs as approved. The Patrol Services Division Captain or designee shall decide as to whether an item is “essential” should a question arise regarding the validity of any product or service.

#### N. Explosive Detection

1. Explosive detecting K9s are trained to locate numerous types of explosive material such as dynamite, black powder, smokeless powder, C-4, primer cord, TNT, etc.
2. Explosive detecting K9s are not cross-trained and are strictly used for explosive materials detection.
3. If a specific item or package is the source of the threat, and is suspected to be Explosive material, the K9 and handler are not to enter the immediate area. At this point, a bomb technician should be summoned to the scene, and the area is to be evacuated.

#### O. Activity Reports/Logs (MACP Standard 3.5.9 c,f)

1. All K9 Handlers are to submit a quarterly K9 activity report to the Sergeant/Unit Commander, detailing any activities specific to their K9 function. A specific form will be provided by the Patrol Services Division.
2. Each K9 Handler is to maintain a training log documenting the specific training activity their K9 receives. Those training logs must be submitted to the training unit by the handler on a weekly basis.
3. The K9 Unit Sergeant/Commander shall provide an annual report of K9 Unit activities to the Captain of the Patrol Services Division, as required.



**ISSUED BY:** Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard