


<p><b>RABUN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE</b></p>  <p><b>General Order Number: 13.04</b></p>	<p><b>Date of Issue</b></p> <p><b>2/23/2016</b></p>	<p><b>Effective Date</b></p>	<p><b>Revision Date</b></p>
<p>Subject: <b>CANINE UNIT</b></p>	<p>Amends:</p>	<p>Rescinds:</p>	
<p>Index as: Canine Unit</p>	<p>State Certification Standards:</p>		

**PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for the utilization of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office Canine Unit and the use of canines in field operations and regarding the procurement, storage, issuance, and security measures for all controlled substances utilized in canine training.

**STATEMENT OF POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office Canine Unit to use trained and controlled canines in support of law enforcement operations. Recognizing the superior scenting abilities, keen eyesight, advanced hearing capabilities, and ability to deter crime with their sheer presence, the trained canine is a valuable asset to the law enforcement community. The canine will be utilized in a position reflective of the animal's training and certification only. Such training and certification for the canine may include but are not limited to; drug detection, explosive detection, tracking, building search, article search, criminal apprehension and officer protection. The primary function of the canine units will be crimes in progress or requests for canine assistance. When not handling canine calls or training, canine units will assist district units as a back-up unit. Effort should be made to keep the canine units in-service and available for potential deployments as needed.

The decision to apply a canine in any situation will be solely that of the Canine handler. Understanding or "reading" law enforcement canines is crucial for appropriate and successful application. Only the Canine Handler, through daily contact with the canine and specialized training, can understand their unique capabilities and utilize them in the correct manner. The Canine Handler may refuse to apply this or his/her canine as requested if, in his or her judgment, the application of the canine would be unsafe, unlawful, or inappropriate for the situation.

**DEFINITION**

CANINE UNIT — A handler and his assigned canine.

Patrol Canine: A canine trained in suspect apprehension, building searches, tracking, article searches, and handler/officer protection.

Narcotics Canine: A canine trained in the detection of illegal narcotics.

Explosives Canine: A canine trained in the detection of explosive devices or materials.

Canine Deployment: An authorized use of a canine to complete a task.

Canine Training Coordinator: An Officer assigned to monitor all canine training and deployment reports

Controlled Substance Inventory: Controlled substances such as methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and marijuana, properly documented and securely stored, available for issuance to canine handlers as a canine training aid or waiting transfer for destruction.

Canine Training Aid: A controlled substance such as methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and marijuana, properly issued to a canine handler to be utilized in the training of drug detection canines.

Researcher Licensee: An individual who is personally licensed by the Georgia Board of Pharmacy – Drugs and Narcotics Agency and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration as the individual responsible for a Drug Researcher Protocol.

Licensed Drug Transfer: An authorized transfer of a controlled substance from one researcher-licensed agency to another researcher-licensed agency through the D.E.A. Form 222 Transfer process or the D.E.A. Form 1117-0007 Drug Surrender for Destruction process.

Court Order Acquisition: An authorized transfer of a controlled substance from evidence to a researcher-licensed agency through a court order signed by a judge.

Training Aid Issuance: An authorized transfer of a controlled substance from a researcher licensee or his/her designee to a canine handler for the purpose of canine training.

Licensee Ledger: A ledger book recording all licensed drug transfers, all training aid issuances, current inventories, and the location of all controlled substances in inventory.

## **I. USE OF CANINE UNIT**

### **A. Narcotics Detection**

1. When using the canine in a drug detection capacity, it is the responsibility of the handler to maintain records that document the use and the proficiency of the canine unit. Copies of all training or deployment documentation will be given to the Canine Training Coordinator each month.
2. This documentation shall be made readily available to officers who may need it when seeking warrants.
3. Use of drug detection canines in public schools is permitted only when:

- a. The school's principal or designated authority requests in writing the use of canines and with the approval of the Sheriff or designee.
  - b. The search is limited to inanimate objects in public areas and the exterior of student lockers, unless reasonable suspicion exists to gain admission to lockers and related areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.
4. Sniffs of the exterior of residences are not permitted without a search warrant.
5. Drug sniffing canines may be used to sniff motor vehicles when:
- a. Reasonable/ articulable suspicion exists to believe the operator or passengers are in possession of illegal narcotics; or
  - b. During a valid vehicle stop, the canine is used to sniff the vehicle's exterior in an exploratory manner. Unless the canine alerts to the vehicle, the operator may not be detained longer than necessary to conclude the business associated with the initial stop.

## II. PATROL CANINES

- A. It is the policy of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office that the primary function of a Patrol Canine as a law enforcement tool is to find and locate evidence, items and persons.
- B. Patrol Canines are trained, when ordered to do so by their handlers, to contact, seize and hold an actively resisting suspect. Patrol Canine Handlers will maintain control of their canines at all times, even when released to search and/or apprehend.
- C. Patrol trained canines may be utilized by any division within the Rabun County Sheriff's Office at the discretion of the Division Commander.
- D. Decisions to deploy a Patrol Canine to apprehend a suspect shall be based upon the totality of the circumstances, giving due regard to the following circumstances:
  - 1. The severity of the crime;
  - 2. Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others;
  - 3. Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest; and
  - 4. Whether the suspect is attempting to evade arrest by flight.
- E. If feasible, when deploying a Patrol Canine to apprehend a suspect by contact, the Canine Handler will give a verbal warning prior to releasing a Patrol Canine. The warning shall include the fact that a trained Police Canine will be released and that it may bite the suspect if they do not surrender.
- F. Tracking
  - 1. Canines are available with supervisory approval to track missing persons or suspects, or to locate evidence that the supervisor has reason to believe has been abandoned or hidden in a specific open area. Such searches are subject to the following conditions and limitations:

2. When the officers are pursuing suspects and contact with the suspect is lost, the officer, prior to summoning a canine team, shall:
    - a. Stop and pinpoint the location where the suspect was last seen;
    - b. Shut off engines of vehicles in the area if possible; and
    - c. Avoid vehicle or foot movement in the area where the suspect or subject was last seen.
    - d. Secure the integrity of the area to be searched by keeping all personnel out of the area; and
    - e. Protect all items of evidence, which will be collected, from being handled.
  3. Canines used for tracking purposes shall remain on a leash to provide a reasonable measure of safety to the subject of the search without compromising the canine's tracking abilities.
  4. A second law enforcement officer must accompany Canine Teams during tracking assignments for the protection of the Canine Team.
- G. Building Searches for Suspects in Hiding

A primary use of department canines is for locating suspects in buildings or related structures where search by officers would create an unnecessary risk. These searches shall be governed by the following:

1. Patrol personnel shall secure the building perimeter.
2. A supervisor shall respond to the scene prior to the search by a canine unit.
3. When a canine building search is anticipated, a preliminary search by officers should not be conducted, as this will interfere with the canine's ability to discriminate scents.
4. The on-scene supervisor shall also take the following steps in preparation for the canine search;
  - a. Evacuate all tenants, workers or others
  - b. Request, if possible, that all air conditioning, heating or other air-blowing systems be shut off so as not to interfere with the canine's scenting abilities.
  - c. All plain view drugs must be secured prior to the canine's search.
  - d. Upon entrance to the building, all exits should be secured, and communications limited to those of a tactical nature.
  - e. The canine should be kept in visual contact by the Canine Handler.
  - f. The canine should not be used to search facilities that contain substances potentially harmful to the animal unless overriding risk to human life is present.
  - g. Before commencing the search, the handler or other appropriate personnel shall loudly announce and repeat, that there are police officers on the premises and that a trained

police canine will be released if the individual(s) does not surrender. A reasonable amount of time shall be allowed for the suspect to respond.

- h. This warning shall be repeated on each level of all multi-level structures.
- i. When apprehending suspects in these or related circumstances, canines shall be commanded to disengage as soon as the suspect is subdued or readily complies with officer's directions.
- j. Where there is a reasonable belief that the suspect speaks a language other than English, a deputy or other individual fluent in that language should be summoned to the scene if available and the exigency of the situation permits.

#### H. Backup Officers

- 1. Backup officers will be given instructions by the canine handler for tracking or building searches. These instructions must be followed exactly.
- 2. Canine handlers will, under no circumstances, track for suspects or do area/building searches unless they have a back-up officer with them.

#### I. Backup Canine Officers

- 1. One officer from each patrol watch should be designated as a backup canine officer.
- 2. Backup canine officers may assist canine handlers with canine training.
- 3. If a canine officer is injured, another canine officer, or family member, will be called to take control of the canine.

#### J. Article Search

- 1. The canine may be used to search for articles that are evidence in a criminal investigation.
- 2. When this service is requested, every effort should be made to avoid contamination of the area with human scent caused by the presence of unnecessary persons, including law enforcement personnel.
- 3. If the search is conducted off leash, the dog handler will assure the area is cordoned off prior to beginning the search. The dog handler is responsible for the safety of innocent persons in the search area.
- 4. Requests to search for lost articles, which have no evidentiary value, must be approved by a supervisor.

#### K. Officer Protection

- 1. The canine unit may be used to assist the handler or another officer who needs help while being overpowered by assailant(s), where it is apparent that the officer is in danger of suffering serious bodily injury or death.

2. The handler will have the responsibility of ensuring that the canine remains at a reasonable distance from the persons not directly involved.
3. The canine handler will not instruct a canine to bite unless it is necessary to ensure the safety of the officers.
4. If the handler's safety is in jeopardy, the dog may be used to protect the handler.

L. Crowd Control (Riot)

1. When the canine is utilized for crowd control the animal will:
  - a. Be short leashed at all times, unless no other means are available to protect an individual from serious injury; and
  - b. Not initiate any offensive action, unless to guard against imminent loss of life or serious bodily injury or as part of a crowd dispersal tactic approved by the command staff.
2. If at all possible, a photographer or video operator will be present when canines are utilized to provide officer rescue in crowd control situations.
3. The canine handler will:
  - a. Ensure that the canine remains at a reasonable distance from the nearest person in the crowd being dispersed.
  - b. Be constantly alert for stragglers.
  - c. Not affect any arrest without the assistance of a backup officer. (Under no circumstances should the handler attempt to handle an arrestee and his dog simultaneously.)
  - d. Be responsible for keeping his dog under control at all times.

M. Vehicle Stops

1. When assisting a canine unit, approaching officers must remember that the windows may be down in the unit of the handler and that the dog will be watching the handler during a traffic stop.
2. If approaching officers must approach the unit, prior contact with the handler must be made if possible thus allowing the dog handler to command and control the canine without being distracted.

N. Police canine activity log

1. All police canine activity, including training and actual deployments, shall be documented. Copies of the training sheets will be provided to the Canine Training Coordinator on a monthly basis.
2. The activity log will be maintained by the handler and made available to superior officers upon request.

O. Canine Bites and Injuries

1. Use of specially trained canines for law enforcement responsibilities constitutes a real or implied use of force. In this as in other cases, officers may only use that degree of force that reasonably appears necessary to apprehend or secure a suspect as governed by the department's use of force policy.
2. Whenever a canine bites an individual, whether or not in the line-of-duty, the handler shall:
  - a. Notify the shift supervisor;
  - b. Examine the affected area to determine the seriousness of the bite or injury;
  - c. Obtain medical treatment for the person-medical personnel should examine the affected area respective of the perceived seriousness of the bite or injury;
  - d. Take a color photograph(s) of the affected area; and
  - e. Complete a Use of Force report whenever it has been alleged that a canine has bitten or otherwise injured an individual. The report must detail the circumstances surrounding the incident, the identity of the individual involved and any witnesses, the extent of injuries if known, and measures taken in response to the incident. The original report shall be filed in accordance with the department's use of force policy and copies provided to the Canine Training Coordinator.

### III. REQUEST USE OF CANINE UNIT

#### A. Use Within Jurisdictional Confines

1. On Duty – Any Sheriff's Office member may request the use of a Canine Unit during the Canine Units normal duty hours. The canine may be used for any of the previously described duties.
2. Utilization outside the jurisdictional boundaries of Rabun County will require the approval of the Division Commander or designee. Utilization inside Rabun County will require the approval of the highest-ranking supervisor on duty along with the approval of the jurisdictional supervisor in which the canine is to be utilized.
3. Canines may be approved to respond to single incidents if deemed appropriate by the highest-ranking supervisor on duty.
4. Prior to using the canine for a drug search, the investigating officer must make the determination that there is at least reasonable suspicion (based on articulable facts) that illicit drugs may be found.
5. When feasible, consent to search should be requested prior to a canine search.
6. If a vehicle is the subject of the investigative detention, a determination must be made that the detainment is legally proper and, if a search is warranted, it must be constitutionally permissible. No action shall be taken which would exceed the authorized scope of the search.
7. The use of the dog for drug detection has been an invaluable aid in the area of drug enforcement as long as it is used in certain parameters. The dog's ability to detect odor is directly related to:

- a. The availability of the odors; and
- b. The time and environment of the odor.

#### **IV. CONDUCT IN THE PRESENCE OF CANINE**

A. The following rules of conduct apply to all Rabun County Sheriff's Office personnel for their safety:

1. Treat the dog as you would a dog owned by a friend. Be friendly but not familiar. Do not pet the dog without permission of the canine handler.
2. Respect the handler's wishes in regard to the dog.
3. Stay away from the dog during all searches unless otherwise instructed.
4. Stand still if you think you are about to be bitten.
5. Avoid furtive or sudden movements in the presence of the dog.
6. Do not tease or agitate the dog.
7. Do not try to entice the dog to break away or disobey commands.
8. Do not use any command you have heard the handler use.
9. Do not feed the dog.
10. Do not engage in violent or simulated violent behavior with the handler in the dog's presence.
11. Do not point a weapon at the dog or the handler.
12. Do not stare intensely at the dog.
13. Do not hug the dog or lean down closely to the dog's head.

B. Canine handler injury

1. In the event of the handler being injured, the dog must be controlled and secured. The following steps shall be taken:
  - a. Never approach the canine that is protecting the officer-handler or attempt to assist the officer unless it is apparent that the failure to respond to the officer would be detrimental to the health or safety of the officer-handler;
  - b. Request medical assistance for the injured officer immediately; and
  - c. Make contact with another officer-handler, backup canine officer or family member to remove the dog or control its actions.

#### **V. CANINE HANDLER RULES**

- A. The canine handler has the additional responsibility for the care and conduct of the dog and himself.
- B. The handler shall insure the dog is groomed daily and routinely checked for any signs of illness, disease or injury.
- C. The canine handler will have the ultimate responsibility in deciding as to the propriety of a search or "canine sniff". The canine handler may decide at any point that a search or "sniff" is no longer justified.
- D. Veterinary services shall be provided to the dog through agreement with Rabun Animal Hospital.



- E. The handler shall keep the dog's living quarters clean and sanitary at all times. The handler shall be compensated 1 hr. per day for care and maintenance of the canine and kennel, in accordance with FLSA standards. Compensation shall be the handler's choice of either overtime or work adjustment.
- F. Canines shall be kept out of restaurants, bars and public places, homes of friends or relatives, except when required by official business.
- G. "Showing off" with the canine will not be permitted.
- H. Dogs are not to be fed or petted by the public, except under the supervision of the canine handler.
- I. Handler will notify the supervisor of any illness or injury to the canine.
- J. Canines are not permitted to run at large.
- K. Make frequent rest and exercise stops in an effort to prevent the canine from urinating or defecating inside or around the outside of a property when responding to calls for service.
- L. Examine and replace, as needed all collars, choke chains, and other equipment daily to assure operational readiness.
- M. Do not utilize agitation or aggressive response training except as part of an authorized training session.
- N. Maintain uniforms and patrol vehicle interiors clean and free of excessive hair and odors.
- O. The canine handler will keep a record of all canine training and deployments.
- P. The following issued equipment should be transported with canine:
  - 1. One steel "choke" collar;
  - 2. One regular collar;
  - 3. One 6 foot lead;
  - 4. One rake brush;
  - 5. One shedder brush;
  - 6. One k-9 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit;
  - 7. One water bowl; and
  - 8. One muzzle.

## VI. PROHIBITED USES

- A. Rabun County Sheriff's Department canines shall not be put to the following uses, except, under specific circumstances as noted. Canines will not be:
  - 1. Used to search people to retrieve objects in their immediate possession;
  - 2. Used for breeding purposes without the written authorization of the Sheriff; or designee.
  - 3. Retired or destroyed without the written authorization of the Sheriff; or designee.
  - 4. Used for demonstrations without the expressed authorization of the Sheriff; or designee.

5. Provided for use by private parties or agencies;
6. Used in any area or on any premise to which the handler does not have lawful access; or
7. Utilized for any secondary employment purposes.

## **VII. TRAINING**

- A. Canine Handlers will complete an approved basic Canine Handler's Course prior to handling the canine.
- B. Canine handlers will perform a minimum of 4 hours a week (16 hours total per month) of maintenance training with the canine, in accordance with Federal guidelines. All training will be documented in the Canine Activity Log.
- C. Canine Handlers will also attend other training designated by the Commander of the Uniform Patrol Division.
- D. Rabun County Sheriff's Canine Unit dogs shall be trained to meet or exceed the Georgia Post Certifications standards.

## **VII. Procurement of Controlled Substances for Canine Training**

- A. The procurement of all controlled substances for the purpose of drug detection canine training will be conducted by a drug researcher licensee in compliance with all state and federal regulations.
- B. Controlled substances may be obtained from;
  1. The United States Drug Enforcement Administration;
  2. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation;
  3. Another researcher-licensed agency; and/or
  4. Court Order release of evidence.
- C. All licensed drug transfers and court order acquisitions will be recorded, by the researcher licensee, in the licensee ledger.

## **IX. Controlled Substance Inventory Storage**

- A. All controlled substance procurements will initially be placed into controlled substance inventory storage.
- B. Controlled substance inventory storage will be stored in the secure location outlined in the Drug Researcher Protocol and approved through inspection by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.
- C. Access to the drug inventory storage will be limited as outlined and approved in the Drug Researcher Protocol.
- D. The drug inventory storage and the licensee ledger will be maintained current and available for the random inspections by the D.E.A. and the Ga. Drugs and Narcotics Agency.

## X. Canine Training Aid Issuance

- E. All canine training aids will be issued by the Chief Deputy from drug inventory storage to the canine handler.
- F. Canine handlers will be issued a minimal amount of controlled substance training aids for;
  - 1. Maintaining the canine's odor recognition of each controlled substance the canine is certified to find;
  - 2. Re-motivating the canine, if necessary, during extended search periods resulting in no find; and/or
  - 3. Conducting unplanned canine training exercises.
- G. Access to larger and more varied quantities of controlled substances for the purpose of planned and structured canine training exercises will be arranged through the Chief Deputy.
- H. All training aid issuances to canine handlers will be documented as follows:
  - 1. Each training aid issued will be tested and weighed separate from any packaging;
  - 2. Each training aid issued will be recorded in the licensee ledger, by weight, date of issue, and recipient;
  - 3. The weight of each training aid issued will be subtracted from the current drug inventory at the time of issuance to maintain an accurate balance;
  - 4. The transfer and receipt of each training aid will be documented on a departmental property and evidence sheet signed by both the canine handler receiving the training aid and the researcher licensee issuing the training aid; and
  - 5. A copy of all property and evidence sheets documenting all current training aid issuances will be maintained by both the canine handler and the researcher licensee.
- I. All canine training aids issued to a canine handler will be the responsibility of the canine handler until returned to the researcher licensee.
  - 1. Any incident resulting in the loss of a canine training aid by a canine handler will be immediately reported to the canine handler's supervisor and a report will be filed with a copy of the report provided to the researcher licensee.
  - 2. Any incident resulting in the accidental adulteration of a canine training aid such as exposure to water or other liquid, or a possible loss of a portion of the training aid such as being bitten or torn by the canine will be documented in a supplemental report by the canine handler, with a copy of the report provided to the researcher licensee, and the training aid will be immediately returned.
- J. Canine handlers are not authorized to transfer training aids out of their custody except for returns to the researcher licensee.

## **XI. Training Aid Storage by Canine Handlers**

- A. A canine handler who is issued controlled substance training aids is responsible for maintaining proper security over the training aids at all times.
- B. A canine handler who is issued controlled substance training aids will have access to a safe, securely located within the Sheriff's Office L.E.C. or other government building for the storage of training aids. All controlled substance training aids should be stored in this safe whenever;
  - 1. The canine handler is on vacation for more than one day;
  - 2. The canine handler is in a training class that does not include canine training for more than one day;
  - 3. The canine handler is temporarily assigned a non-canine related job duty lasting more than one day;
  - 4. The canine handler plans or anticipates family leave or medical leave lasting more than one day. In the event of unexpected leave, such as an extended illness or serious injury, arrangements should be made through the canine handlers supervisor for securing all training aids;
  - 5. Any other time that no canine training is planned or anticipated for several days.
- C. While a canine handler is in possession of issued canine training aids, he/she will securely store the training aids in a locking container within his/her duty vehicle.
  - 1. The secure storage of issued controlled substance training aids should be noted as part of the canine handler's routine vehicle/equipment inspections.
- D. While a canine handler is utilizing his/her issued canine training aids in canine training, he/she is responsible for insuring the security of his/her training aids;
  - 1. Training aids will only be deployed in areas with controlled access;
  - 2. Non-law enforcement personnel will not be permitted into the training area while training aids are deployed;
  - 3. Training aids will not be left unattended;
  - 4. Training aids will not be placed in a location that will likely result in damage to, or contamination of, the training aid;

## **XII. Training Aid Inspections**

- A. A canine handler who is issued controlled substance training aids will be expected to produce all issued training aids for inspection upon the request of;
  - 1. Any supervisor of the canine handler;
  - 2. The Chief Deputy;

3. An Internal Affairs investigator.
- B. The Chief Deputy will provide to the canine handler's supervisor or a designated supervisor, an updated copy of the licensee training aid ledger listing all currently issued training aids. This designated supervisor will;
1. Maintain a copy of all lock combinations and/or keys used in securing and storing training aids;
  2. Insure the security of the training aid safe;
  3. Conduct documented, at a minimum quarterly, routine inspections of the training aids, the training aid safe, and the locking containers within the canine handler's vehicle.
  4. Annual inspection completed by the assigned Drug Task Force for weight and label/content compliance.

### **XIII. Training Aid Returns**

- A. The only authorized process for a canine handler to dispose of a canine training aid is to return the training aid to the Chief Deputy who initially issued the training aid to the canine handler. A canine handler will be required to immediately return training aids to the researcher licensee for the following:
1. Replacement of aged training aids with fresh training aids;
  2. Any incident resulting in the adulteration or partial loss of a training aid accompanied by a copy of the report documenting the incident;
  3. Any incident resulting in the odor contamination of a training aid;
  4. The conclusion of, or an interruption in, the canine handler's assignment as an active canine handler;
  5. Any incident resulting in suspected violation of any part of this policy;
  6. At the direction of the canine handler's supervisor or the Chief Deputy.
- B. When a canine training aid is returned to the Chief Deputy, the returned training aid will be tested and weighed and compared to the initial issue purity test and weight.
1. It is commonly accepted by inspectors from the Ga. Drugs and Narcotics Agency and D.E.A. that certain controlled substances will dry over time, losing a small portion of their weight.
  2. It is commonly accepted by inspectors from the Ga. Drugs and Narcotics Agency and D.E.A. that a small portion of controlled substances may be lost in the process of repeated handling and re-packaging of canine training aids.
- C. The researcher licensee will report to his/her supervisor and Internal Affairs any incident involving the following:
1. A variation in the weight of a returned training aid that is too substantial to be explained by drying out of excessive handling;

2. A substantial variation in the physical appearance of a returned training aid;
  3. Any other reason to suspect that the returned training aid is different than the originally issued training aid.
- D. When a canine training aid is returned to the Chief Deputy, the return and receipt of the training aid will be recorded on a departmental property and evidence sheet signed by both the canine handler returning the training aid and the Chief Deputy receiving the training aid.
  - E. The receipt of the used training aid will be documented in the licensee ledger as a return for destruction.
  - F. All returned training aids awaiting destruction, will be maintained in the drug inventory storage.
  - G. The only authorized process for the destruction of canine training aids is a licensed drug transfer to an agent of the Ga. Drugs and Narcotics Agency for destruction, or through written approval of the Superior Court.
  - H. The licensed drug transfer will be documented in the licensee ledger and the weight of the controlled substance will be subtracted from the drug inventory.

#### **XIV. SELECTION OF CANINE HANDLERS**

Deputies shall volunteer for the K-9 assignment and meet the following qualification:

- A. Candidates shall have a minimum of two years law enforcement experience.
- B. The handler must reside in a home with ample space and yard to accommodate the dog and its kennel.
- C. The handler must agree to be available for K-9 callouts.
- D. Candidates must complete a physical fitness assessment.
- E. Candidates must complete an interview board. The board will consist of the Canine Training Coordinator and current canine handlers. This board will review the candidate's personnel file and previous use of force reports.



By Order of the Sheriff: **Chad K. Nichols**  
**Sheriff, Rabun County**