



POLICY & PROCEDURE

ELKHART LAKE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **Therapy Canine Program**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel

DISTRIBUTION: Policy and Procedure Manual

ISSUED: 8.02
4/1/2022
EFFECTIVE: 4/1/2022
 RESCINDS
 AMENDS

1. PURPOSE

The trained therapy canine is a valuable supplement to police services for victims and witnesses as well as community service events and opportunities. Utilization of the therapy canine requires cooperation between the law enforcement handler and the subjects or events utilizing the therapy canine.

2. MISSION

The mission of the Elkhart Lake Police Department “Therapy K9” program is to enhance the services of the department in providing therapeutic aid to employees, residents, students, and to build positive relationships between police and citizens throughout Elkhart Lake by implementing well-trained dogs as a medium in those efforts.

3. DEFINITIONS

Therapy K-9 Team: a specially trained officer and their assigned police therapy canine

4. PROCEDURES

1. The therapy K-9 team shall perform his/her regular duties in addition to their K-9 duties and will be under the same chain of command as any other department member.
2. During those hours, when the therapy K-9 team is on duty, it shall be called to and respond to those assignments where a therapy K-9 could be of assistance. Examples could include incidents at school, traumatic events,

incidents where groups of people may be affected, sexual assaults, incidents involving children, mental health, and other incidents.

5. **Deployment and Use of Therapy Canine Teams**

1. **Authorized Uses**

Therapy canines may be used in a variety of circumstances, to include but not limited to:

1. Daily duties (extension of handler)
2. Public events
3. Community outreach and engagement
4. Major/traumatic incidents
5. School demonstrations
6. Grief loss and trauma
7. Natural disaster incidents
8. Victim forensic interviews
9. Criminal investigations/interviews
10. Crisis intervention
11. Medical facility visits
12. ELPD staff wellness
13. In partnership with government and non-profit organizations who address the effects of trauma, mental health and crime.
14. Any use not covered in this procedure as deemed appropriate by handler's supervisor

2. **Deployment considerations**

Where the handler has prior knowledge that the presence of a canine would aggravate a situation (such as meeting someone with a fear of dogs, dog allergies, particular cultural beliefs etc.) they will make prior arrangements to leave their canine safely secured while tending to daily business.

6. **Training**

Training shall be continuous and in the prescribed specialty areas in which the canine is certified.

- a) Training other than a prescribed specialty shall first be cleared through the Village Board.

7. **Bite or Injury Resulting from Therapy Canine**

1. Immediately secure the canine in a safe area or vehicle if practicable.
2. Request EMS and administer first aid if applicable.
3. Notify supervisor as soon as feasible.
4. Document the injuries and scene (photographs), and document incident with narrative report.
5. Obtain witness statements from affected person and witnesses if possible.

6. **Equipment**

1. Food, grooming supplies, and veterinarian care.
2. All equipment as recommended by the training center/kennel where the police canine was purchased, and any other equipment as deemed necessary by the Canine Handler after conferring with the Chief of Police or designee.

7. **Vehicle Usage**

1. Due to the carrying of special equipment, the modification of a vehicle to transport a Canine Unit is necessary.
2. To reduce the Village of Elkhart Lake's liability, potential injury to the Village's Canine, and to improve the efficiency, the effectiveness and response time for off-duty call-ins of the Canine Team, the Department shall make available to the K-9 Handler, a take-home squad for the Canine.
3. The squad will be used only in an official capacity (i.e.: to and from work, training, vet, call-in, court, etc.) and not for personal use.

8. **Canine Retirement**

1. After a canine has surpassed its usefulness to the Department due to age or

other extenuating circumstances, the canine will be retired from active service.

- a. Upon retirement, subject to approval of the Chief of Police and at the written request of the assigned handler, the handler will be given sole ownership of the canine and shall assume total responsibility for all costs relating to ownership of the canine.
 - b. Canines will be retired only upon the recommendation of the designated veterinarian.
 - c. Euthanasia will not be considered for a retired canine unless such health conditions of the canine exist and the opinion of the designated veterinarian indicates such action is the only humane alternative.
2. Euthanasia for serious canine illnesses is subject to the approval of the Chief of Police and shall require a written report from a veterinarian indicating that the prognosis of the canine is such that euthanasia represents the only humane alternative.
 3. Should the handler retire or leave the department they should get the first opportunity to purchase the canine at a reasonable price agreed upon by the handler and Village, not to exceed the price of the canine and training that the Village purchased over the useful career of the canine.

Village of Elkhart Lake Board of Trustees

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

Initial 04/01/2022

Approved by the Village of Elkhart Lake Board of Trustees on _____