



Minneapolis Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual

Number:
5-300

Volume Five – Code of Conduct and Use of Force

Use of Force

5-311 Force Option- Canines

(08/23/25)

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I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that members' use of canines adheres to the force guiding principles described in P&P 5-301. The force guiding principles include, but are not limited to, the Sanctity of Life (as incorporated below), the Duty to De-escalate, and Objectively Reasonable, Necessary, and Proportional Force.

MPD and its members shall uphold the sanctity of life (P&P 0-102 and P&P 5-301) by striving to protect and preserve human life in all situations and keep the community and MPD members safe from harm.

This policy covers canine apprehensions and accidental bites. Other canine uses are covered in P&P 7-807.

II. Policy

A. Conditions for Use

Canine apprehensions may only be used on a subject in accordance with the factors and requirements described below. In addition to the conditions in this policy, the use of canine apprehensions must be objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional, and members shall use the lowest degree of force necessary (P&P 5-301). When using canines, members must apply the critical decision-making model (CDM) (P&P 7-801) to continually assess the situation and modulate their use accordingly as the subject behavior changes (see also the section below on disengaging).

1. Deploying canines

Members shall only deploy a canine in accordance with P&P 7-807 Authorized Use of Canines.

In accordance with P&P 7-807, Department canines may only be used to search for or apprehend a subject if:

- a. The canine handler reasonably believes that the person has either committed or is about to commit a serious offense.

and

b. Any of the following conditions exist:

- There is a reasonable belief that the person poses an immediate threat of violence or serious harm to the public or any member.
- The person is actively resisting or aggressively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest, and the use of a canine is reasonably necessary force under the circumstances to overcome such resistance or prevent the escape of the person.
- The person is believed to be concealed in an area where entry by a member would pose a threat to the safety of members or the public.

2. Warnings and announcements

In addition to the requirements in “Identify Self and Warn of Intent” in P&P 5-301:

- a. Whenever feasible, the required warning shall be given loud enough to be reasonably heard by other people (in addition to the subject) prior to deploying the canine, and shall include the following additional components:
- The identification of the MPD.
 - That the canine is being released.
 - That the person is under arrest.
 - That the person may be bitten by the canine.

3. Consider vulnerable populations

In accordance with P&P 5-301, members shall consider the characteristics and conditions of vulnerable people when determining the lowest degree of force necessary, and shall calibrate their force practices accordingly.

Vulnerable people may not have the ability to comprehend the threat associated with the deployment of a canine against them, may fail to comply with orders or not fully understand orders of the canine handler, or may act in an unpredictable manner that could impact the decision to deploy a canine.

B. Disengaging Canines

When used for canine apprehensions, handlers shall disengage canines as soon as reasonably possible after the person is able to be controlled or secured (in accordance with the policy on modulating force in P&P 5-301).

C. Treatment and Medical Aid

1. Members are responsible for ensuring any person injured by an MPD canine receives medical treatment as soon as reasonably possible (P&P 5-301 and P&P 7-350).
2. Members shall request an ambulance to the scene after any canine apprehension or accidental bite.

D. Sergeant Notifications and Review

1. The canine handler shall notify the Canine Sergeants immediately after any canine apprehension or accidental bite.
2. Canine Officers will be debriefed by Canine Sergeants and trainers as soon as possible following notification.
3. The Canine Sergeant shall complete the required force review in accordance with P&P 5-303. If a Canine Sergeant is not available, another MPD Sergeant may be asked to do the force review (in accordance with P&P 5-303).

E. Documentation

The following steps are required in addition to the documentation requirements in P&P 5-302 and P&P 5-303:

1. Canine handlers shall photograph all injuries and ensure the images are uploaded in accordance with P&P 10-400.
2. Upon notification of a canine apprehension or accidental bite, a Canine Sergeant shall complete the K-9 Unit Apprehension Review form (MP-9090) and will send it electronically to the members of the review panel.

F. Reviews

All canine apprehensions undergo force reviews, and all canine apprehensions and accidental bites undergo a review by the canine review panel and a review by the appropriate MPD force review board.

III. Definitions

Accidental Bite: Any time a canine bites a person who is not the subject of a search or a directed canine apprehension.

Canine Apprehension: When a police canine makes physical contact with the subject or bites the subject, in an effort to take them into custody.

Canine Handler: A sworn member specifically trained to use a canine.

Deploy a Canine: Any time a canine is used outside of training or a demonstration.

Disengage Canines: The tactical decision of a canine handler to call off the canine and end the canine apprehension.