

STATEMENTS OF POLICY

Title 37—LAW

MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICER'S EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMISSION

[37 PA. CODE CH. 281]

Canine Training and Certification Program

[53 Pa.B. 5003]

[Saturday, August 12, 2023]

Under 53 Pa.C.S. § 2172 (relating to canine training standards for police officers), on March 23, 2023, the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission in collaboration with the Pennsylvania State Police amended the police officer canine training and certification standards, originally adopted December 8, 2022. This document, set forth in Annex A as 37 Pa. Code Part IV, Subpart E, Chapter 281, Appendix A (relating to canine training and certification standards), is published under 45 Pa.C.S. § 702(7) (relating to contents of *Pennsylvania Code*) as a document general and permanent in nature which shall be codified in the *Pennsylvania Code*.

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Annex A

TITLE 37. LAW

PART IV. MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICERS' EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMISSION

Subpart E. LEGISLATIVELY ORDERED MATERIAL

CHAPTER 281. LEGISLATIVELY ORDERED MATERIAL RELATING TO CANINE TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

APPENDIX A. Canine Training and Certification Standards

(*Editor's Note:* Under 53 Pa.C.S. § 2172 (relating to canine training standards for police officers), the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission in collaboration with the Pennsylvania State Police and municipal police department canine units or officers, established police officer canine training and certification standards. This document is published under 45 Pa.C.S. § 702(7) (relating to contents of *Pennsylvania Code*) as a document general and permanent in nature which shall be codified in the *Pennsylvania Code*.)

§ 1. Basic training.

(a) *Requirements.* Prior to conducting police operations, a police canine unit must complete a basic training program that includes instruction in the following:

- (1) Basic working dog skills including temperament, obedience, apprehension and the like.
- (2) Applicable specialty skills including patrol, scent and the like.
- (3) Team training with the assigned handler.

(b) *Evaluation/approval organizations.* Following completion of basic training, the police canine unit must be evaluated and approved by a police canine trainer operating with the approval of one of the following organizations:

- (1) American Mantrailing, Police & Work Dog Association
- (2) American Police Canine Association
- (3) National Narcotic Detector Dog Association
- (4) National Police Canine Association
- (5) National Tactical Police Dog Association
- (6) North American Police Work Dog Association
- (7) Penn Vet Working Dog Center
- (8) Pennsylvania State Police
- (9) United States Customs and Border Protection
- (10) United States Police Canine Association
- (11) United Police and Corrections K-9 Association
- (12) Transportation Security Administration
- (13) American Working Dog Association
- (14) Maine Criminal Justice Academy
- (15) National Association of Professional Canine Handlers
- (16) Pittsburgh Police Department

§ 2. Maintenance training and evaluation.

(a) *Training.* Every police canine unit shall accomplish 16 hours of monthly maintenance training that includes the following:

- (1) Review basic skills.
- (2) Review specialty skills.

(3) Review use of force decision-making by the handler.

(b) *Attendance.*

(1) A police canine unit that is unable to complete monthly training shall document the reasons and will be required to make up the missed training at the next available opportunity.

(2) A police canine unit that fails to accomplish monthly training for 2 consecutive months will be required to be evaluated in accordance with subsection (c) before being permitted to conduct police operations.

(c) *Evaluation/approval.* At least once per calendar year, each police canine unit must be evaluated and approved by a police canine trainer as specified in § 1(a) (relating to basic training).

(d) *Evaluation/probation.* A police canine unit that fails an evaluation may continue to conduct police operations for a period not to exceed 60 days, during which the canine unit must be re-evaluated and approved.

(e) *Removal from service.* A police canine unit not meeting evaluation and approval standards within 60 days will be removed from service until the police canine unit is successfully evaluated and approved.

§ 3. Records and documentation.

(a) *Training documentation.* Every police department employing a police canine unit shall maintain documentation of all basic and maintenance training for the duration of the police canine unit's service and for at least 5 years following the end of the police canine unit's service with the department.

(b) *Evaluation form.* Both initial and annual evaluations will be documented on a form promulgated by the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission.

(c) *Evaluation results.* Evaluations, whether successful or unsuccessful, shall be maintained for the duration of the police canine unit's service and for at least 5 years following the end of the police canine unit's service with the department.

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