234.01 SUMMARY
The use of trained Canines and Handlers has proven to be an asset to law enforcement operations. This directive describes the procedures to be followed when utilizing a Department canine.

234.02 DEFINITIONS

FORCE WHEEL
The Canine falls into the “Hard Control” section of the use of force wheel.

BITE INJURY
The penetration of a person's skin, scratches, marks, bruises, or other bite induced injury, by the teeth of a working Law Enforcement Canine.

NON-BITE INJURY
Any physical injury directly caused by the use of a working Law Enforcement Canine.

MAINTENANCE
The feeding, watering, exercising, grooming, veterinary care and sheltering of the Canine.

CANINE PROGRAM COORDINATOR
The Operations Administrative Commander as designated by the Operations Division Deputy Chief.

CANINE SUPERVISOR – A Patrol Sergeant designated to supervise the day to day operations and activities of the Canine program.

234.03 CANINE PROGRAM SPECIFICS

COMPOSITION OF TEAM – A Department Canine Team will consist of a trained Canine Handler (Officer) and a certified law enforcement working Canine. Only full-time Handlers will be used to work a Canine.

OWNERSHIP – Canines may be owned by the Police Department or a contractual agreement may be initiated to obtain the services of an employee-owned Canine that meets certified standards for a Police Canine. The contract shall be prepared by the City Attorney and shall be renewed annually.

CHIEF TO DETERMINE SELECTION – The Chief of Police will determine the number of Canine and Handler positions to be allotted within the Department. A candidate for a position of Canine Handler must:
CANINE PROGRAM SPECIFICS (con’t)

- Be a full-time Sworn Officer with the Department.
- Have a minimum of two years experience as a law enforcement Officer, with at least one year with the Grand Junction Police Department.
- Voluntarily apply to the program.
- Be willing to participate in a highly disciplined training program and commit themselves to the additional responsibilities.

Selection will be based on:

- Strong interest and commitment to program.
- Responsiveness to constructive criticism.
- High job proficiency as an Officer.
- Demonstrated commitment to the Department’s Mission, Values, and core philosophies.
- Satisfactory personnel evaluations.
- Recommendations from the applicant’s supervisors.
- Recommendations from the current Handlers and the Canine Coordinator.
- Must be able to assume “on-call” assignments.
- Must live in a residence with a fully enclosed and suitable fenced area.

Selection of a Canine Handler will be conducted as outlined in the “Special and Collateral Duty Assignments” (OPR-231) directive and may involve the Patrol Canine Program Coordinator and Supervisor, with input from the current Handlers. Final selection/approval will be made by Command Staff.

All Canines selected for the Canine program will be approved by a certified instructor. If the Canine has been previously certified by any recognized standard, a selection will be conducted to ensure the Canine is capable of performing to the level of acceptable standards.
234.04 CANINE BUDGET  The Program Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the Canine program and budgetary issues pertaining to the Canine program. The Canine handlers may develop budget requests and submit them to the Program Coordinator as required and/or needed.

234.05 CANINE TRAINING  MANDATORY TRAINING – The Canine Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that training is scheduled and completed.

- Canine Teams will be tested/certified annually to ensure they are performing within acceptable standards. A minimum of 16 and up to 40 hours of recertification training will be required at the direction of the K-9 Supervisor and/or Coordinator. Failure to meet certification requirements may result in remedial training, removal from the Canine program and/or disciplinary action.

234.06 APPLICATION OF CANINES – GENERAL PROCEDURES  Handler responsibilities and duties include:

- Canine Handlers will be assigned to the Patrol Section and will function operationally as Patrol Officers under their assigned Shift Supervisor and/or Commander.

- Handlers are responsible for the maintenance and health of an assigned Canine and for ensuring veterinary care is provided.

- Each Canine Handler shall be assigned a marked patrol vehicle equipped to facilitate efficient use of the Canine. The vehicle shall be equipped with a release mechanism allowing the Canine to be released from the unit by remote control.

- Only Canine Unit canines will be transported in Canine vehicles.

- In all cases where it is necessary to leave the Canine in the vehicle for any significant period of time, the Handler will make periodic checks of the Canine for its welfare.

- In cases of extreme temperature, the Handler will make every effort to relocate the Canine to a more temperate environment.

- A Handler shall use discretion in emergency driving situations to ensure that a Canine is not injured. During vehicular pursuits, the Handler shall yield the primary position to another unit as soon as practical.
GENERAL PROCEDURES (con’t)

- Handlers shall keep their Canine on lead or under voice control at all times.

- Handlers may release their Canine from lead while maintaining verbal control or electronic control via an electronic remote training/control device, when it is appropriate or necessary.

- When tactically feasible the handler should give a warning notice of the Canine’s presence and the potential deployment of the Canine. Deployment may include building searches, area searches, tracking, handler protection, etc.

- Before any search, when practical, the Handler will attempt to notify all known Police personnel in the area that a Canine is being deployed. This notification may be made by radio transmission, personal communication, or any other method determined appropriate.

234.07 CANINE CALL-OUT AND/OR RESPONSE

Mutual Aid procedures as described in the “Mutual Aid” (OPR-241) directive will govern the response of a Canine Team. If staffing permits, a Shift Supervisor may allow an Officer from this Department to accompany a Canine Team to assist another agency.

234.08 CANINE USE OF FORCE EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to the Use of Force Directive include but are not limited to:

- In suicide attempts, the Canine may be used to keep the person from completing their attempt or exiting an established perimeter when such action could endanger innocent bystanders.

- Canines may be used to control crowds during civil disorder or riots. The psychological impact of a Canine may assist in deterring acts of violence. If a Canine is requested to control a large crowd at a predetermined location, the Canine Handler should be considered in the planning stage prior to deployment. Use of the Canine shall be authorized by the Shift Supervisor prior to deployment.

234.09 ASSIGNMENT OF BACK-UP OFFICERS

Any time a Police Canine is deployed, the Handler should utilize a back-up Officer. This back-up Officer will maintain a position and follow instructions as directed by the Handler.

- The Handler should make an announcement prior to releasing the Canine of the intent to use a trained Canine to search the building, and the possibility of the person being bitten by the Canine if he/she does not surrender.
ASSIGNMENT OF BACK-UP OFFICERS (con't)

This announcement will be repeated as needed when different areas of a large building are encountered or where the initial announcement may not have been heard.

234.10 REQUESTS FOR SCHOOL SEARCHES

SPECIFIC CRITERIA – “School Searches” is a term which applies to the action of the Canine “sniffing” for controlled substances. It should be understood that this action is not technically a search as defined under the Fourth Amendment, but is classified as an administrative search. Requests by local school districts for school searches for the purpose of searching for and seizing controlled substances will only be authorized by the Chief of Police or Division Deputy Chief after the following criteria have been met:

- A written request from the appropriate school administrator.

- Upon completion of the search, the Handler shall make a detailed report of the search including results of the search.

- When possible, the search should be coordinated with the School Resource Officer assigned to the school, or Law Enforcement personnel having jurisdiction at the school outside of the city limits of Grand Junction.

234.11 REQUIRED REPORTING

In situations where the Canine was successful in locating suspects or evidence, a "Canine Utilization Report" will be completed by the Handler and submitted to the Handler’s immediate Supervisor. A copy will also be submitted to the Records Section with the case file.

- A Handler is responsible for all paperwork in self-initiated activities. In assists to other Officers, the Handler will complete supplemental reports when applicable.

234.12 GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

No personnel will touch or pet a Departmental Canine without the permission of the Canine’s Handler.

Observed mistreatment of Department Canine by any employee of the Department will immediately be reported in writing to a Supervisor.

Personnel at no time will stand or pass between a working Canine and a suspect.

Except in emergencies, or where permission has been given, personnel shall not give commands to a Canine.
234.13 SUPPORT AND CARE OF CANINE

If a Handler is injured or in any way unable to control his/her assigned Canine, another Handler or member trained in the use of a protective sleeve should be called to draw the Canine from the Handler and then contain the Canine. The Canine will be cared for by another Handler or designee.

In the event of an extreme emergency involving an injured Handler, any Officer has the responsibility to protect the Police Canine, their handler, any other Officers and/or the public, to include making the decision to tranquilize or terminate the Canine.

The Operations Division (Canine Program Budget) provides for the cost, care and health of a Department owned Canine which includes veterinary services. Handlers are responsible for ensuring the overall health of the canine.

Handlers will have their Canine examined and/or treated by a Department approved veterinary service. The costs of Veterinarian services for contractual canines will be limited to injuries sustained while on-duty or during departmental approved training.

All medical arrangements will be made by the Handler and Veterinarian, after notification has been made to the Canine Coordinator.

In cases of extreme emergency, the closest emergency veterinary service may be used without prior notification/approval. The Canine Handler's Supervisor will be notified as soon possible after the emergency.

Copies of all medical bills incurred for care of the Canine will be forwarded to the Program Coordinator.

If the Handler is ill and neither a member of the Handler’s family, nor another member of the Canine unit can care for the Canine, it will be the responsibility of the Canine Handler’s Supervisor to place the Canine in a Department approved kennel.

If the Canine becomes ill, a Department approved Veterinarian will be consulted to determine if the Canine should work. This determination should be made as soon as possible prior to the start of shift. The Handler shall notify the on-duty Shift Supervisor anytime that a Canine cannot be used due to illness.

The Canine Handler will notify his/her Supervisor regarding the Canine’s inability to work along with an assessment of when the Canine can be expected to return to work. The Handler will report for duty regardless if the Canine is unable to work.
PATROL CANINE PROCEDURES

SUPPORT AND CARE OF CANINE (con’t)

A Canine may accompany a Handler on vacation, with prior approval of his/her Supervisor.

Arrangements may be made between two (2) Canine Handlers to care for each other’s Canine during brief periods of absence.

Facilities at the Handler’s residence to secure and shelter the Canine will include:

- Kennels, concrete pads, and suitable shelter to protect the Canine from the elements.
- An assigned patrol unit for the purpose of on-duty use, transporting the Canine to and from their residence before and after shift, and to transport during off-duty call-outs, or veterinary visits.
- All required equipment as determined by the Canine Coordinator.

234.14 INJURIES RESULTING FROM APPREHENSION

After any bite, prompt medical attention will be obtained for the person receiving the bite.

- The on-duty Shift Supervisor shall be notified of any injury involving the use of a Canine, either to another person or to the Canine.
- The written report of the incident will be completed by the Handler and forwarded to the Canine Coordinator through the chain of command prior to the end of shift.
- Any incident of injury will be documented on a Use of Force report and reviewed as described in the “Use of Force” (ADM-156) directive.
- Copies of any medical reports will be included and photographs of injuries will be taken and placed with the report.

234.15 COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

Public demonstrations are encouraged as an avenue for community relations and education. Demonstrations must have prior approval of the Handler’s Supervisor.

234.16 RETIREMENT OF DEPARTMENT OWNED CANINE

Police working Canines have a finite working life. Because of their special training, however, they cannot be routinely retired to live as a pet. Only dogs that demonstrate consistent and a predictably sociable disposition will be retired by the Department. Canines that continue to demonstrate over-protective or aggressive behavior will be euthanized.
RETIREMENT OF DEPARTMENT OWNED CANINE (con’t)

- The Canine Handler will prepare a memorandum detailing specific justification for the type of disposition he/she recommends for the retiring canine. Canines shall only be retired to trained, qualified employees who have demonstrated the needed capacity and responsibility to own such an animal.

- The prospective owner/caretaker will prepare and submit a letter of understanding, accepting all responsibility for the care and actions of the Canine. Approval or denial of the prospective owner/caretaker shall be decided by the Chief of Police.

- When a Canine Handler leaves the unit, and would be leaving an older Canine, an assessment by the Canine Coordinator and the Division Deputy Chief will be conducted. Considerations will include the cost effectiveness of retraining the Canine to a new Handler or retiring the Canine to the original Handler or other employee.

- Canines which are considered “contract dogs” shall be retired from service per the contractual agreement which is in effect at the time of retirement.

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