



# **California Narcotic Canine Association**

## **Standards for Patrol Dog Certification**

## **CERTIFYING OFFICIAL**

A patrol dog certifying official will be appointed by the Executive Board of the CNCA. The certifying official will follow all guidelines to certifications established by CNCA, and will be fair and honest to all participants.

## **PATROL DOG CERTIFICATION**

The patrol dog certification will consist of several events in three separate required phases and one optional event. The K9 Team must pass all three required phases in order to receive a patrol dog certification. The three required phases are:

Phase #1 – Obedience (on and off lead)

Phase #2 – Search Phase (building and area)

Phase #3 – Apprehension (bite, out, recall), Call-Off En route

Optional event – Guard and Bark

All events are scored as pass or fail.

If a K9 team fails an event, the K9 team may re-test after remediation. However, the certifying official has the right to refuse a re-test if in his/her discretion the remediation could not occur in a single certification session. Should another certification session be needed, the certifying official will identify another date/time, within a reasonable time frame, for the team to re-test.

The certification may be terminated at any time by the certifying official(s) in the event the certifying official(s) deems the canine is not under the control of the handler.

## **EQUIPMENT**

The California Narcotic Canine Association will not provide the equipment necessary to complete the Patrol Dog Certification. The certifying official(s) who will be attending the certification will ensure that the hosting agency will provide the following:

- Handgun & blank ammunition (no larger than .38 caliber)
- Minimum of one (1) decoy
- Bite Suit
- Building and Area of sufficient size to conduct the search phase

The K9 Teams participating in certification will be allowed to utilize all equipment that the team is authorized by their department to use on a regular basis during deployments.

Electronic training collars will be allowed to be worn during the certification; however, the collar shall not be used during any phase of the certification.

The K9 Teams participating in the certification will also be required to have a copy of their agency's canine utilization policy readily available for the certifying official to review should there be any question as to deployment techniques.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Control**

The ability of the handler to control his/her canine's actions, follow commands and read/work his/her canine on and off leash. Multiple commands or improper/inappropriate corrections deemed by the Certifying Official to be excessive during any phase of the certification may be grounds for failure.

### **Heel**

The canine is in a position alongside the handler with the canine's front shoulders approximate to the leg of the handler.

### **Down or Sit in Motion**

The canine is commanded to a down or sit while the handler continues in a forward motion, leaving the canine.

### **Gunfire**

The canine must stay, either in a sit or down on-leash, while a decoy discharges two rounds from a handgun (no larger than .38 caliber).

### **Recall to Finish**

The canine is commanded by the handler to return to either a front finish or side heel.

### **Deployment**

The search by a canine either on or off leash.

### **Bite**

Any contact with the mouth either intentional or not.

### **Re-bite**

Any bite that occurs after the canine has been commanded to release, and the canine has disengaged the bite.

### **Warnings**

A standard set of announcements a handler is required to give to a suspect prior to deploying the canine into a search or an apprehension.

## **PHASE I**

### **Obedience Event**

The obedience event is to document control of the canine. The K9 Team is judged on heeling, turns (left, right and about), sit/down in motion, recall and control during gunfire.

The obedience event will be conducted on and off leash and directed by the certifying official. The on leash routine will be conducted first. During off leash obedience, the leash will be secured to the handler's person.

#### **SAMPLE ROUTINE:**

*The K9 Team will heel forward 10 paces and make a left turn. The K9 Team will continue 5 paces and command the dog to down/sit in motion. The handler will continue forward 5 paces and recall his/her canine to a heel. The K9 Team will continue 5 more paces and make a right turn. The K9 Team will continue 10 more paces forward and make an about turn and stop. The handler will leave his/her canine. The handler will then recall his/her canine team to a heel.*

The handler will leash his/her dog after the last recall during the off leash obedience routine and heel his/her dog away from the certifying official. At some point two blank rounds will be discharged from a handgun as the K9 Team continues walking toward a designated finishing point. This phase will be complete when the certifying official is satisfied that the K9 Team is under control following the gunfire.

During this event, the handler must be in complete control of the canine. The handler shall not use excessive commands during each phase of the obedience event. The K9 Team must successfully complete each turn, down/sit in motion, recall to handler and remain in control during gunfire.

The K9 Team must pass the obedience event in order to proceed to the next phase of the certification.

## **PHASE II**

### **Search Event**

The search events will document the handler's control of the canine during a deployment and the canine's ability to locate a concealed decoy. The K9 Team is judged on the dog's indication of the concealed decoy, the handler's ability to recognize the canine's indication, identify the location of the decoy and control of the canine during the search of both an area and a building.

Both the building and area searches will be conducted in locations large enough for the certifying official to evaluate the K9 Team's search ability and its indication of a hidden decoy. The search area should contain items where a decoy could potentially be

concealed (i.e. furniture, vehicles, etc.). A decoy will be placed in a concealed position in the search area at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the certification. The decoy will have no equipment and will give no indication to his/her presence. The certification official will ensure the canine cannot gain access to the decoy and cause injury.

Both searches must be conducted off leash unless the handler presents the certifying official a copy of his/her department policy that requires a K9 search on lead only. The handler may have physical control of the dog by holding its collar after the leash is first removed. The handler will give warnings prior to deploying the K9 Team. Once the search command is given by the handler, the K9 Team will be given a reasonable amount of time to complete the event. The search time will be determined by the certifying official based upon the respective search areas. Each search event is complete when the canine gives an indication of the concealed decoy, the handler recognizes the indication and informs the certifying official of said indication and location of decoy, or the established time limit expires.

The K9 Team must pass both search events in order to successfully pass this phase of the certification.

### **PHASE III**

#### **Apprehension Event**

The apprehension event documents the control of the K9 Team. The K9 Team is judged on control, pursuit, bite, release and recall. Prior to the beginning of this phase, the handler will inform the certifying official of his/her canine's release command.

This phase of certification will be conducted off leash until the exercise is completed. The handler must show control of the canine and remain at the designated start location throughout this event.

This phase begins with the K9 Team at the designated start location. The canine will be either in a down or sit position at the handler's side. The canine will be taken off leash and the leash will be secured to the handler's person. The handler may have physical control of the dog by holding its collar after the leash is first removed. A decoy in a bite suit will be positioned about five (5) yards in front of the K9 Team. The decoy will turn and run away. The handler will give warnings prior to deploying the canine. The handler will command the canine to apprehend the decoy. The canine will pursue the decoy and bite. At the direction of the certifying official the decoy will cease all motion and noise and the handler will command his/her canine to release. The canine will release the bite within five (5) seconds of the command. The handler may give as many commands within the five (5) seconds as he/she deems appropriate. The canine must disengage from the decoy. The handler will recall the canine to a heel and secure the canine with a leash.

If the canine releases the bite prior to the handler giving direction to do so, it will be at the discretion of the certifying official to re-run the exercise so the bite may be properly evaluated.

In the event the canine re-bites after it disengages, the handler will go forward and take physical control of his/her canine and command the release. A re-bite is considered a failure. A canine must be able to release and disengage without re-biting.

#### **Call-Off En route Event**

This phase of certification will be conducted off leash until the exercise is completed. The handler must show control of the canine and remain at the designated start location throughout this event.

This phase begins with the K9 Team at the designated start location. The canine will be either in a down or sit position at the handler's side. The canine will be taken off leash and the leash will be secured to the handler's person. The handler may have physical control of the dog by holding its collar after the leash is first removed. A decoy will be concealed approximately 25 yards in front of the K9 Team. At the direction of the certifying official, the decoy will appear and face the K9 Team for a brief moment and then turn and run. The canine must remain in the heel position until the handler gives the deployment command. The handler will give warnings prior to deploying the K9 Team. The handler will deploy the canine. Once the canine has reached a full pursuit and/or reaches a designated marker, the certifying official will tell the handler to command the canine to stop the pursuit. At that point, the decoy will stop running. The handler will either recall the canine to a heel position or command the canine to sit or down. At no point will the canine make physical contact with the decoy.

The decoy may protect him/herself upon determining the canine has failed to recall.

#### **Guard and Bark Event (optional based on agency policy)**

This phase of certification will be conducted off leash until the exercise is completed. The handler must show control of the canine and remain at the designated start location throughout this event.

This phase begins with the K9 Team at the designated start location. The canine will be taken off leash and the leash will be secured to the handler's person. The handler may have physical control of the dog by holding its collar after the leash is first removed. A decoy in full bite suit will be against a wall approximately 15 yards in front of the K9 Team. The decoy will remain still for this event. The handler will give warnings and will deploy the canine. The canine will pursue the decoy and prior to making contact, perform a guard and bark. Once the canine is stable, the certifying official will instruct the handler to recall his/her canine. The handler will recall the canine to a heel and secure the canine with a leash.

Any bite of the decoy will be considered a failure. In the event the canine fails to recall, the event will be considered a failure.