**R728. Public Safety, Peace Officers Standards and Training.**

**R728-508. Police Service Patrol and SWAT Canine Training, Certification, and Recertification Standards.**

**R728-508-1. Authority.**

This rule is authorized by Section 53-6-403.

**R728-508-2. Purpose.**

This rule establishes training, certification, and recertification standards for police service agency police service canine teams.

**R728-508-3. Definitions.**

(1) Terms in this rule are defined in Sections 53-6-102, 53-6-401, and 76-9-306.

(2) In addition:

(a) "police service canine team" includes the "handler" and "police service canine" as defined in Section 76-9-306; and

(b) "qualifying canine certifying entity" includes:

(i) the Utah POST Police Service Dog Program; or

(ii) any entity that satisfies the standards provided in this rule, is approved by the POST Council, and meets the following criteria:

(A) demonstrates adherence to nationally recognized and proven best practices in canine training, assessments, and certification methodologies;

(B) employs certified canine judges who adhere to nationally recognized and proven best practices in canine training, assessments, and certification methodologies;

(C) qualifies as a nonprofit organization; and

(D) is nationally recognized or nationally accredited in the canine field.

**R728-508-4. Purpose.**

This rule provides minimum standards for training, certifying, and recertifying patrol and SWAT police service canine teams.

(1) Each police service canine team shall be initially certified and annually recertified by POST or a qualifying canine certifying entity.

(2) It is not the intent nor legal purpose of these minimum standards to be exhaustive on this subject.

**R728-508-5. Police Service Canine Certification.**

(1) A police service canine candidate seeking to become certified shall successfully demonstrate the following behaviors during a certification test administered by POST or a qualifying canine certifying entity:

(a) yard-to-yard search for subjects, on-leash and off-leash;

(b) building search for subjects, on-leash and off-leash, to ensure barking indication at doors or inaccessible hiding spots;

(c) open area search for subjects, on-leash and off-leash;

(d) open area pursuit and capture in which a subject refuses to surrender and physically engages with the canine followed by release after receiving a verbal release command at the earliest reasonable opportunity;

(e) open area pursuit and capture of a subject who surrenders prior to physical contact by the pursuing canine by use of a verbal command, such that the surrendering subject is not injured;

(f) wind scenting or scouting, on-leash and off-leash, exhibited by a non-barking indication;

(g) release of a subject after receiving a verbal release command at the earliest reasonable opportunity during any type of physical engagement, with a maximum of three commands to obey; and

(h) gun-sure, or remaining on task during gunfire, to ensure a neutral response to handler gunfire, backup officer gunfire, or suspect gunfire.

(2) It is recommended that a police service canine candidate demonstrate the following behaviors during a certification test administered by POST or any qualifying canine certifying entity:

(a) tracking to include footstep-to-footstep, street-tracking, or trailing; and

(b) evidence search, on-leash and off-leash, to ensure non-contaminating evidence indication.

**R728-508-6. Police Service Canine Handler Certification.**

A police service canine handler candidate seeking to become certified shall successfully demonstrate the following behavior, skills, and knowledge during a certification test administered by POST or a qualifying canine certifying entity:

(1) knowledge of foundational state and federal statutes, constitutional law, and essential controlling judicial precedent guiding appropriate deployment of a police service canine;

(2) ability to properly document the police service canine performance behaviors to establish the canine's reliability;

(3) ability to distinguish the diverse proper functions of a police service canine as a locating tool or force option;

(4) the necessity of pre-deployment warnings;

(5) ability to recognize the circumstances in which a police service canine should be recalled or commanded to disengage from a subject;

(6) understanding of technical information that includes canine psychology, emergency canine first aid, daily care and maintenance; and

(7) understanding of patrol canine basic training that includes the ability to execute common scent work training exercises, obedience and agility training exercises, and apprehension training exercises.

**R728-508-7. Police Service Canine Team Recertification.**

(1) A police service canine candidate seeking to recertify shall successfully demonstrate the behaviors and skills established in Section R728-508-4 in an annual recertification exam.

(2) A police service canine handler candidate seeking to recertify shall successfully demonstrate the behavior, knowledge, and skills established in Section R728-508-5 in an annual recertification exam.

**KEY: canine, standards, training, certification**

**Date of Last Change: May 20, 2025**

**Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: 53-6-102; 53-6-401; 53-6-402; 53-6-403; 76-9-306**