

**M A S S A C H U S E T T S**  
**OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**  
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENT MANUAL**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** February 2, 2023    **AUTHORIZATION:** Susan Lewis, Acting Director  
**TITLE:** Training Requirements for Police Dog (K9) Treatment and Transport for EMS Personnel  
**SUPERSEDES:** August 10, 2022

**PURPOSE:**

This administrative requirement contains the content that course sponsors and instructors must meet in developing a DPH/OEMS-approved continuing education course for responding to police dog medical or traumatic emergencies sustained in the line of duty, under Chapter 23 of the Acts of 2022, commonly known as “Nero’s Law.” This course trains all levels of EMTs to assess and treat police dogs at the basic life support (BLS) level only, and transport them in ambulances, in accordance with the Police Dog Protocols and Chapter 23 of the Acts of 2022.

**TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:**

Unless an ambulance service has obtained from DPH/OEMS a waiver from responding to police dog emergencies, each ambulance service must ensure that all of its certified EMTs, at all levels, have successfully completed a training course of a minimum of 3 hours in length (1.5 hours didactic; 1.5 hours practical) meeting the requirements of this Administrative Requirement by the effective date of the Police Dog Protocols, February 10, 2024, and a refresher of the didactic portion, as set out below, every 2 years thereafter. It is the responsibility of each ambulance service to ensure their EMTs are properly trained and provided continuing training regarding changes or updates in the Police Dog Protocols, service policy/procedures and all equipment they will be using or assisting with. Police Dog (K9) care courses approved by the Department after August 10, 2022 and taken before the effective date of this Administrative Requirement are valid for this requirement.

***COPIES OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENT MUST BE PROVIDED TO AND REVIEWED  
 WITH ALL PARTICIPANTS WHO ATTEND EMS POLICE DOG TRAINING PROGRAMS***

**TARGET AUDIENCE:**

Certified EMTs at all levels, who are employed by transporting ambulance services and who will be working on ambulances responding to police dog emergencies.

**INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIRED RESOURCES:**

The didactic portion must be taught by a licensed veterinary professional (veterinarian) accompanied by a police K9 and handler.

The practical portion must be taught by a veterinarian or a veterinary technician currently credentialed as a Veterinary Technician Specialist (VTS) by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America in Anesthesia, Surgery, Internal Medicine, or Emergency and Critical Care, accompanied by a police K9 and handler. No other veterinary technician is authorized to teach this course. Resources required for hands-on learning during the practical are a large (80+ pound) dog that is not a police dog, and a dog mannequin capable of demonstrating CPR landmarking and delivering ventilations. Students will be expected to demonstrate skills on the non-police K9 dog and mannequin, so class size or available resources must allow for adequate exposure.

The inclusion of a local police department K9 and handler is an opportunity for EMS and police K9 handlers to discuss safety precautions, drill and preplan emergency procedures and cooperate for the provision of emergency care to the K9, in cooperation with local animal control resources.

**COURSE FORMAT:**

Didactic (distributive T3), virtual live instructor (T5) or in-person (T1/T2), followed by hands on practical component (T1/T2). In accordance with Administrative Requirement 2-212, EMTs may apply up to 3 hours of continuing education credit for the completion of courses related to police dog (K9) treatment and transport towards their recertification.

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**SUPERSEDES:** August 10, 2022

**REFERENCES/RESOURCES:**

- Chapter 23 of the Acts of 2022 (known commonly as “Nero’s Law”)
- MA Police K9 Protocols
- MA Disinfection and Sterilization Cleaning Procedures (Administrative Requirement 1-522G)
- MA Required Equipment List (Administrative Requirement 5-401K9)
- Statewide Police Dog Point of Entry Plan
- This Administrative Requirement

**PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (didactic portion):**

- Understand the MA statute requiring EMS to treat and transport police K9s, including scope of practice and liability limitations.
  - Discuss regulatory, clinical, and sub-regulatory standards for management of police K9 emergency treatment, proper equipment, and documentation of care and transport.
  - Describe and apply appropriate decontamination procedures for ambulance and equipment, and the use of appropriate personal protective equipment
- Review K9 Protocols, point of entry and transportation considerations related to police K9 care
  - Review documentation requirements and standards for assessments performed and first aid rendered
- Identify and appropriately manage environmental emergencies including anaphylaxis, hypothermia, and heat stroke/heat injury
  - Categorize and manage burns and smoke inhalation
  - Manage drowning and water emergencies
  - Recognize and treat anaphylaxis, including the intramuscular injection of epinephrine.
- Demonstrate appropriate assessment and management during transport for overdoses and toxic exposures, including opioid, carbon monoxide, cyanide, and nerve agent exposure.

**PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (practical portion):**

- Demonstrate appropriate assessment, restraint (muzzling) and low-stress handling of injured animals, including the selection and use of commercial and improvised muzzles.
  - Discuss appropriate indications, contraindications, and technique for muzzle application
- Identify relevant anatomic structures in police K9s and differences from human anatomy
- Perform physical exam to non-police dog canine, including primary survey/ M<sup>3</sup>ARCH<sup>2</sup> algorithm and to identify trauma (DCAP-BTLS).
- Demonstrate appropriate pulse checks and vital signs measurement in non-police dog canine.
- Assess for life threatening bleeding and provide appropriate hemorrhage control interventions, including the use of hemostatic dressings and non-windless style tourniquet devices
- Assess for airway obstructions and perform basic life support maneuvers for clearance and to maintain patency
- Identify and appropriately manage chest trauma, including the use of occlusive dressings, if razor to shave fur is carried on the ambulance.
- Identify and appropriately manage shock
- Demonstrate assessment and management of cardiac arrest in canines, in accordance with current CPR guidelines, including chest compressions, ventilations using bag valve mask and post resuscitation care

**DIDACTIC COURSE CONTENT:**

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#### INTRODUCTORY MODULE

	<p>Introduction/Overview to “Nero’s Law,” Police K9 Prehospital Care Guidelines and their intended application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Statutory framework: Chapter 23 of the Acts of 2022</li> <li>● Police K9s and common injuries/illnesses requiring EMS transport</li> <li>● Keeping EMS personnel safe (sanitation, PPE)</li> </ul>	10m
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#### PREPAREDNESS MODULES

	<p>Police K9 Prehospital care considerations - Pre-Mission Analyses and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Statewide Point of Entry Plan for Police K9s</li> <li>● Documentation of care</li> </ul>	10m
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Utilizing dog-specific equipment on ambulance</li> </ul>	10m

#### EMS POLICE K9 ASSESSMENT MODULES

	<p>Approach, Restraint (Muzzle), and Low-Stress Handling of injured Police K9s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discuss safety precautions: Police K9’s handler must make initial approach to the injured police K9, to secure the dog so EMS may safely assess, care and transport. If police K9’s handler is not available, police must provide a backup K9 handler. If the backup is also not available, consider calling animal control, if available and able to respond, to secure the police dog.</li> <li>● In localities that have animal control equipped and available to do so, animal control should be first line transport, freeing up ambulance for human patients.</li> </ul>	15m
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#### NON-TRAUMA & ENVIRONMENTAL INJURIES/ILLNESSES MODULES

	<p>Allergic / Anaphylactic Reaction to Insect Bite or Sting Administration of intramuscular epinephrine</p>	5m
	Hyperthermia/Heat-Related Illnesses	5m
	Burn Injury and Smoke Inhalation	5m
	Hypothermia/Cold – Related Illnesses and Submersion/Drowning	5m
	<p>Toxin / Poisons (General Approach and Decontamination)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opioid/Fentanyl Occupational Exposure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use of Naloxone</li> <li>-Differences in opioid sensitivity between dogs and humans</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Other recreational or illicit drug intoxication (THC, cocaine, methamphetamine)</li> <li>● Recognize signs of OP/Carbamate toxicity (SLUDGEM), treatment with antidote autoinjectors, if carried on the ambulance.</li> </ul>	20 m
	Question & Answers	5m

**Total didactic time: 1 hours, 30 min**

#### **PRACTICAL COURSE CONTENT:**

#### POLICE K9 PHYSICAL EXAM AND HANDLING LAB

	<p>Basic Comparative Canine Anatomy and Physiology Physical Exam, Vital Signs and Secondary Survey</p>	90 m
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Primary Survey/ M<sup>3</sup>ARCH<sup>2</sup>algorithm</li> <li>● Pulse checks and vital signs</li> <li>● Landmarking and administration of intramuscular injections</li> <li>● DCAP-BITLS</li> </ul> <p>Handling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Safe approach</li> <li>● Use of box muzzles and field-expedient muzzle techniques</li> <li>● Leashing, carrying, and restraining an injured Police K9</li> </ul> <p>Respiration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recognizing tension pneumothorax</li> <li>● Treating chest wounds</li> </ul> <p>Circulation/shock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Signs of shock (police K9 vs human)</li> </ul> <p>Management of Cardiac Arrest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chest Compressions – positioning, rate, and rhythm</li> <li>● Airway management, positioning/manipulation             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Removal of foreign body airway obstruction (FBAO)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● BLS airway and ventilation management (mouth-to-snout and BVM with tight-fitting-mask), post-ROSC care</li> </ul>	
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**Total practical time: 1 hour, 30 minutes**

**Total required time for successful course completion is 3 hours.**

**PROGRAM EVALUATION:**

A written or verbal quiz must be incorporated at the completion of the police dog training program to assure that each EMT in the class is knowledgeable and competent regarding the Police Dog Protocols and equipment, and understand statutory/regulatory limitations of EMS police dog care and transport. Skill performance documentation may also be utilized for practical course content.

**SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RECORD KEEPING:**

The ambulance service must maintain all associated training documents for its EMTs regarding the police dog training program and upon request submit these training records to the Department. This documentation must be readily available to the Department at all times, including during the service's re-licensure inspection and will include at a minimum skill performance and attendance rosters for each EMT it employs and utilizes on ambulances. Such record keeping shall include all documentation of police dog training that any of its EMS personnel obtained while working at other ambulance services. In addition, if the police dog training course is offered with approved continuing education, the sponsor is responsible for providing each student with course completion documentation in accordance with Administrative Requirement 2-212.