

# **MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION**

## **CERTIFICATION RULES**

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**Revised September 11, 2022**

# MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION

## CERTIFICATION RULES

Certification Rules will only be reviewed and changed if needed. **Any proposed change(s) will be submitted in writing to the MPCA Secretary at least thirty (30) days prior to the fall Executive Board meeting held at the MPCA Workshop.** The MPCA Secretary will forward a copy of the proposed change(s) to the MPCA Executive Board. **If the proposed change(s) are not received in writing and at least thirty (30) days prior to the Executive Board meeting, it (they) will not be considered.**

The following test rules have been adopted by the Missouri Police Canine Association. Each of the following tests is designed to determine the proficiency of the work dog team for certification.

### Fees:

There will be no fee charged for MPCA certification testing. A fee may be imposed to cover expenses of travel, lodging and meals only, if necessary.

### MPCA Trainers:

Trainers will act as Judges for these tests. Trainers will designate the area, phase and manner of each phase to be tested. The Trainer should make every effort not to interfere with or distract the dog. The Trainer will evaluate the dog during each test for willingness, enjoyment, interest and accuracy. Handlers will be evaluated for ability and overall control of his/her dog.

### Certification Validity:

**\*\*\*\*No cruel or abusive corrections will be displayed at any time. If such behavior is observed, the Trainer will stop the certification test and will notify the MPCA Executive Board.**

### K9 Team Qualifications:

A MPCA certification of a K9 team in any and all phases will only be valid when the handler is commissioned by a law enforcement agency, and the K9 team is being utilized by a law enforcement agency.

The handler and dog will be considered as a team. It is the team which will be certified. If the dog changes handlers, a new team exists so the original certification will expire at the end of the last day they are a team. The new team will need to be certified.

### Membership:

- 1.) Teams wishing to be tested and certified under these rules and by this Association must be Regular members of this organization.
- 2.) Associate members can only be tested and certified under these rules in the following phases:
  - A.) Obedience
  - B.) Tracking / Trailing
  - C.) Article Search

Associate members, who successfully test in any of the above phases, will receive an Associate Member Certification Certificate, which is designed specifically for Associate Members. An Associate Member Certificate is only for recognition. The certification cannot be utilized for any law enforcement activities.

**Certification Test Sheets:**

The MPCA will issue Certification Test Sheets. The Trainer will complete the Test Sheet for all tests attempted by the team. The Test Sheet will be forwarded to the Secretary.

**Length of Certifications:**

MPCA Certifications will be valid for one year.

**Certain Equipment Prohibited:**

Electronic or Ultrasonic devices will not be used during any of the offered certification tests. Attempted use of such devices will result in a failing score and a same day retest will not be permitted.

**Scoring:**

Each test is based on a pass/fail basis according to the rules for each test listed below.

**Retesting:**

A team that fails any of the following tests may retest at the Trainer's discretion. Remarks should be noted on the Certification Test Sheet.

**Appeals:**

Any work dog team that fails a test and feels that they have been judged unfairly, will, at the time of the test, notify the Trainer of their appeal. The handler will then file a complete report of their observations, and the reasons they feel they were judged unfairly. The Trainer, having been notified of the appeal, will file a report of their observations. All testing sheets and the basis for failing the team will be forwarded to the Secretary in the same manner as if the team had passed. All reports and appeals will be filed within fifteen (15) days of the test to a member of the MPCA Executive Board. Reports or copies thereof will be forwarded to the Grievance Committee. Within fifteen (15) days, the decision of the Grievance Committee will be submitted to the Executive Board. Within ten (10) days, the Executive Board will make the final decision.

**MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION**  
**OBEDIENCE CONTROL TEST**

This test is to determine if the police work dog is capable of performing off lead obedience exercises. The test is designed to test the dog's ability and proficiency and the handler's total control over his/her dog.

**\*\*This test must be passed before proceeding to aggression certification.**

The team will be tested in the following three (3) phases:

- 1.) Heeling phase
- 2.) Walking phase
- 3.) Distance phase

The phases may be tested in any order and will be judged on a pass/fail basis. All phases will be done under direction of the Trainer.

**HEELING PHASE:**

The heeling sections of this test will consist of the following exercises in any order:

- 1.) Normal pace
- 2.) Fast pace or double time
- 3.) Slow pace or half step
- 4.) A minimum of two (2) right turns; two (2) left turns; two (2) about turns.

Sections 1, 2, and 3 above must be a minimum of thirty (30) feet long

**WALKING PHASE:**

- The handler and dog will begin from the "heel" position and walk forward together.
- At a point designated by the Trainer, the handler will place their dog in a stay position, (sit or down), and continue walking. This is to be done without the handler breaking stride.
- At a point designated by the Trainer, the handler, while continuing to walk away from their dog, will command their dog to heel.
- The Trainer will instruct the team to "About Turn." The team will turn 180 degrees and walk forward.
- At a point designated by the Trainer, the handler will stay (sit or down) their dog, and without the handler breaking stride, will continue walking.
- At a point designated by the Trainer, the handler will turn and face his dog.
- At the instruction of the Trainer, the handler will return to their dog and stand beside the dog. The dog must not break from its position.

**DISTANCE PHASE:**

- At a point designated by the Trainer, the handler will leave their dog in a "Sit or Down" position.
- At a distance of no less than ten (10) feet and not more than thirty (30) feet, the handler will be directed to turn and face their dog.
- The dog will remain in the down position for one (1) minute.
- A person at a distance of fifty (50) to one hundred (100) feet, will fire two blank rounds. The dog must stay in a down position for a minimum time limit of one (1) minute after the gun fire. If the dog breaks from the down position, it will be considered a Fail. The handler may reinforce the down command by either hand or voice.
- At the direction of the Trainer, the handler will recall the dog and down the dog approximately half the distance to the handler with either voice or hand signals. The Trainer will have the handler call the dog to a finish position.

The gunfire portion will not apply to single purpose K9 teams, unless they certify in aggression control.

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**MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION**  
**ARTICLE SEARCH TEST**

This test is designed to test the dog's ability and proficiency in searching a designated area for articles containing human scent on them. Trainers will observe the test from outside the search area. The Trainer will designate the search area.

**SEARCH AREA:**

- The area to be searched will be no less than 3500 square feet.
- It will be covered by heavy vegetation no less than five (5) inches high.
- The search area will be contaminated prior to the test by one or more subjects crossing through the area at least twice with another dog.

**SEARCH ARTICLES:**

Three (3) articles of different composition (metal, wood, paper, etc.) will be thrown at random into the search area. The team to be tested will not view this being done. One (1) article will be of metal composition. The articles to be used will be selected from, but not limited to, the following list:

- |                         |                                     |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a.) Plastic credit card | e.) Wood handle screwdriver (4"-6") |
| b.) Paper match book    | f.) Crumpled cigarette package      |
| c.) Shotgun Shell       | g.) Empty metal hand gun            |
| d.) Leather Wallet      | h.) Empty pop gun                   |

Articles are to be selected by the Trainer according to availability.

**TIME:**

- There will be a five (5) minute time limit for this test.
- Time will start when the handler sends their dog out to search from any point around the perimeter of the search area.
- A warning will be given when sixty (60) seconds remain for the test.

**HANDLER:**

- The handler may enter the search area and direct the search as they would in an actual situation.
- Each indication must be obvious to the Trainer.
- After article recovery, the handler will command the dog to continue to search.
- The dog must make two (2) out of three (3) finds in order to pass this test.
- The handler may not point out the article. If the Trainer determines the handler is pointing out an article to their dog, the Trainer will record the test as a failure and a same day retest will not be permitted.

If multiple K9 teams are tested, new articles will be utilized if they get contaminated by another dog prior to the next test.

**MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION**  
**AREA SEARCH TEST**

This test is designed to test the dog's ability and proficiency in searching for a hidden suspect within a large area when no known track is available. The team being tested should use the wind and air currents to their best advantage.

**AREA AND TIME:**

The size of the area where the search takes place, and the time allowed for the search will be at the discretion of the Trainer.

**DECOYS:**

The decoy will hide in the area for at least ten (10) minutes prior to the beginning of the test. The decoy should be an unknown person not normally used in training with the dog. The decoy will hide themselves from view of the team using available concealment. The decoy's final position will not be more than ten (10) feet above the ground.

**TRAINER:**

The Trainer will accompany the team during the entire test. The Trainer will make every effort not to distract or interfere with the dog while it is working. The Trainer will designate the general area to be searched. The area should not be smaller than 10,000 square feet. There is no time limit for this test. However, when it is obvious to the Trainer the dog is not searching for the decoy, the Trainer will stop the test and will record it as a failure.

**HANDLER:**

- The handler may select the starting point outside the search area.
- This test may be done on or off leash.
- After an obvious indication by the K9, the handler will indicate to the Trainer the area, within ten (10) feet of the decoy, in which the decoy is hidden.
- The handler will call for the decoy to show themselves.

## MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION

### TRACKING / TRAILING TEST

This test is designed to test the dog's ability and proficiency in tracking or trailing and finding an unknown subject in an unfamiliar area if possible.

#### TRACK / TRAIL:

- The handler and dog will be secluded from the view of the track /trail, while it is being laid.
- The track /trail must be at least one quarter (1/4) mile long and include at least two (2) different types of surfaces (dirt, grass, concrete, asphalt, woods, etc.).
- There will be at least three (3) turns in the track.
- There will be one (1) fresh cross track /trail laid at least fifteen (15) minutes after the original track /trail is laid. The cross track /trail will be laid by a second person to test the dog's scent discrimination.
- The track /trail will be approximately (1) hour old prior to beginning the test. Due to climatic conditions the age of the track will be at the discretion of the Trainer.
- When the test begins, the Trainer will inform the handler of the approximate area to begin. The handler will not be told in which direction the track /trail leads.

#### SCORING:

The Trainer will determine if the dog followed the track and found the decoy.



**MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION**  
**BUILDING SEARCH TEST**

This test is designed to test the dog's ability and proficiency in locating a suspect hiding in a building.

**DECOYS:**

- Whenever possible, will be a person unknown to the dog, and not normally used in training with the dog.
- Will not use any aggression equipment (sleeves, suits, etc.)
- Should be brought into the building by way of a different route than that to be used by the dog and handler.
- Will be hidden for at least ten (10) minutes prior to starting the test.
- Will be secured in a place of concealment at any reasonable height, which is not visible to the dog and handler.

**TRAINERS:**

- Will designate the area of the building to be used for the test.
- Prior to starting the test, the Trainer will confer with the handler to reach an agreement as to how not to disturb the dog's work during the test.
- Will designate the area in which the team is to begin their search.
- Will accompany the team into the building and must be able to observe the test by following behind the team, observing from doorways, using ladders, etc. The Trainer should make every effort not to interfere with the test.
- When it is obvious to the Trainer the dog is not searching for the suspect, the Trainer will stop the test and will record it as a failure.

**HANDLER:**

- This test may be done on or off leash.
- Confer with the Trainer prior to the test and agree on how the Trainer will observe the test.
- The handler will accompany the dog throughout the test, and may encourage their dog with commands and praise as needed.
- In NO case will the handler open any doors that are closed within their search area.**
- Rooms with open doors should be searched thoroughly.
- The dog's indication of the find of the suspect must be obvious to the Trainer. If the dog indicates that the suspect is behind a closed door, the handler will inform the Trainer of their observation, but will not open the door.

**MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION**  
**AGGRESSION CONTROL TEST**

This test is designed to test the dog's ability, proficiency and courage, as well as the handler's total control of their dog to determine if the dog is capable of performing exercises encountered by the police handler and their dog under simulated situations encountered while working.

**TEST REQUIREMENT:**

The canine team must have been certified within 1 month (or immediately before) in obedience prior to attempting the aggression control test.

**EQUIPMENT:**

- Prior to the test, the Trainer, at their discretion, must approve of the option utilized, inspect, and approve all equipment used.
- Outer sleeve, hidden sleeve or a full protective suit may be used for this test. The Trainer should keep decoy safety in mind prior to beginning the test.

**DECOY:**

- The Trainer will not be the decoy for this test
- The decoys utilized will be at the discretion of the Trainer.

**COMMANDS:**

- Prior to testing, the handler will inform the Trainer of the command sequence to be used.
- The type of call off used is at the handler's discretion.
- It may be one of the following:
  - 1.) Dog is recalled to the heel position.
  - 2.) Dog is commanded to the down (sit or stand) position, and the handler will join their dog.
  - 3.) Dog is commanded to the down (sit or stand) position, and then recalled by the handler to the heel position.

**RULES:**

- In the phases requiring the dog to physically apprehend the decoy, the dog must fully engage and hold/fight the suspect. Failure to engage, or excessive, unnecessary mouthing and readjusting of the apprehension, are grounds for failure.
- In the phases requiring the dog to stop his pursuit of the suspect, the handler may use any command or series of commands to control the dog.
- Failure of the dog to release and/or to respond to obedience commands in a timely manner is grounds for failure.
- The handler must demonstrate sound tactics during all phases of the test. When a search of the suspect is called for, the handler must demonstrate a safe approach, simulate handcuffing and thoroughly search the suspect for weapons.
- Only the phases and exercises listed/described are required for successful completion of this test.
- The type of "call off" used is at the handler's discretion, but the Trainer must be informed of the type to be used prior to the test. It may be one of the following:
  - 1.) Dog is recalled to the heel position.
  - 2.) Dog is commanded to the down, sit or stand position and the handler will join their dog.

3.) Dog is commanded to the down, sit or stand position and then recalled by the handler to the heel position.

### **TEST ORDER:**

There are two (2) phases of this test. The dog and handler will be tested in all phases in the order listed. Each phase is tested on a pass/fail basis and must be passed before proceeding to the next phase.

### **PHASE 1: TERMINATION OF CHASE**

#### **START:**

-The dog will begin this phase from the heel position, off lead. The dog will not be held by the collar at any time during this phase.

-The decoy will begin at a distance of approximately forty (40) yards away from the team.

#### **EXERCISE:**

-At the direction of the Trainer, the decoy will run away from the team in any direction.

-The Trainer will inform the handler when to send their dog.

- When instructed by the Trainer, the decoy will stop and surrender, terminating the pursuit.

#### **EVALUATION:**

-The importance of this test is that the suspect is not mouthed, nipped or bitten by the dog, regardless of the type of call off used. Non aggressive incidental contact made by the dog while attempting to respond to the call off is not faulty.

-This phase will be complete when the dog is in the heel position with the handler and is secured on lead.

### **PHASE 2: Apprehension of a Suspect**

#### **START:**

-The K9 will be off lead until the completion of this phase. The dog will not be held by the collar at any time during this phase.

#### **EXERCISE:**

-The handler will order the decoy to approach them from a distance not more than 100 feet.

-When the decoy refuses and after the handler issues the appropriate verbal warnings, the handler will command their dog to apprehend the decoy.

- The dog will apprehend and hold the decoy.

-At the direction of the Trainer, the handler will command the dog to release and “call off.”

-The handler will order the decoy to an appropriate position, approach the decoy, and then simulate searching and handcuffing the decoy. No assault of the handler is to take place this time.

-The handler will return to the dog and assume on lead control ending the complete Aggression Control Test.

**MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION**  
**DRUG DETECTION TEST**

This test is designed to determine the proficiency and reliability of dogs in the detection of drugs.

**DRUGS:**

- The basic drug odors (and their derivatives) that can be tested in are: marijuana, cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine.
- Drugs will be listed by their "Laboratory" names on the certification certificate.

**TRAINING AIDS:**

- The amount of drug substance used for testing will not be less than one (1) gram.
- **Pseudo drugs WILL NOT** be used for certification tests.

**TEST AREA:**

- Testing will be conducted in three (3) areas of concealment:
  - 1.) **Vehicles** (Mandatory) (outside count as one (1) area.)  
(Must have at least five (5) vehicles. Four (4) for concealing drugs and at least one (1) blank vehicle.)
  - 2.) **Building** (Mandatory)  
(Must have four (5) rooms. Four (1) for concealing drugs and one (1) blank room. Rooms do not need to be in the same building.
  - 3.) Other Areas:
    - Luggage- must have a minimum of 15 pieces of luggage. (4) hides
    - Lockers- minimum of at least 25 lockers. (4) hides
    - Open Areas- minimum of 150' X 150' area. (4) hides

**SETUP:**

Definitions:

- “Exterior vehicle hide”- a hide placed on the exterior portion of a vehicle
- “Building hide”-a hide placed in the room of a building
- The Trainer will place the aids in locations unknown to the team. Hides may be high or low.
- Each odor tested will have:
  - 1 “exterior vehicle hide”
  - 1 “building hide”
- All tests will include a minimum of one (1) blank uncontaminated area to be searched (1 blank vehicle and 1 blank room)There must be 12 total hides regardless of how many drugs are being attempted. However, there must be 4 loaded vehicles and 1 blank vehicle used for the test.
  - 1 odor: , 4 exterior vehicle hides, and 4 building hides
  - 2 odors: , 2 of each odor outside of a vehicle and 2 of each odor in a building
  - 3 odors: minimum of 1 of each odor outside of a vehicle and minimum of 1 of each odor in a building. The Trainer will decide the other odors as long as, 1 is outside of a vehicle and 1 is in a building.
  - 4 odors: 1 of each odor outside of a vehicle and 1 of each odor in a building
- Finds shall be concealed in the search area at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the search.

**HANDLER:**

- **\*\*\*The safety of the detection dog will be the sole responsibility of the handler, (such as overdose).\*\*\***

-The "Reward" toy or object used during a drug detection certification **WILL NOT** contain any drugs or drug odor/residue. If the Trainer determines the handler is using a loaded toy or object, the Trainer will record the test as a failure and a same day retest will not be permitted.

-It is up to the handler to interpret the dog's final response, aggressive or passive.

-The Handler will verbally notify the Trainer when their dog has located a hide and has given the appropriate final response.

-If multiple handlers are testing, all handlers who have not tested must be out of sight and sound of the hide locations when the other handlers are testing.

**SCORING:**

- The handler must be as specific as possible where they believe the training aid is located. If there is an aid within a reasonable distance, the team will be credited with a find. If there is no training aid within the area, then it will be considered a "miss."

-It must be obvious to the Trainer the dog located the hide, even if the handler tells the Trainer where the hide is.

-The trainer will prevent the handler from rewarding the detector dog on a false response only.

The minimum acceptable level required to pass is 91.6%. (11 out of 12 total hides.)

**TIME:**

-Time limits on searches will be at the discretion of the Trainer and so long as the Trainer determines that the dog is still working.

-\*\* **NOTE: There will be a break between the drug building searches and the drug vehicle searches.**\*\*

**MISSOURI POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION**  
**EXPLOSIVE DETECTION TEST**

Canine explosive certification reflects the basic skills to meet acceptable professional standards in the usage of explosive dogs. This test is designed to determine the proficiency and reliability of dogs in the detection of explosives.

**EXPLOSIVES:**

The explosive training aids used in the certification process will consist of commercial powders, gels, plastics, and liquid. At least six different aids from the following list shall be used for the certification:

1. Binary Explosives (Kine-Pack or Kine-Stick)
2. Chemicals (Potassium or Sodium Chlorate, Potassium Nitrate)
3. Detonation Cord (commercial or military)
4. Dynamite (commercial or military)
5. Plastics (C-3, C-4, Data Sheet, Flex-X or Semtex)
6. Powders (Black Powder, Pyrodex or Smokeless)
7. R.D.X.
8. T.N.T.
9. Tovex or Water Gel

**CANINE:**

All dogs testing for explosives certification must be trained in a passive indication.

**TEST AREA:**

- Testing will be conducted in two (2) areas of concealment:
  - 1.) Vehicles
  - 2.) Buildings

**SETUP:**

- The Trainer will place the aids in locations unknown to the team. Hides may be high or low.
- The search shall consist of eight (8) indoor rooms and eight (8) vehicles with a total of twelve (12) finds.
- The search area must be contaminated by a canine prior to the search if available.
- Finds shall be concealed in the search area at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the search.

**VEHICLE SEARCH**

- Search shall consist of eight (8) vehicles and six (6) finds.
- Explosive finds will be concealed on the exterior of the vehicles or in the engine compartment.
- Only one (1) find may be concealed on a vehicle. (No find will be concealed in two of the eight vehicles.)
- The K-9 team is not required to search the interior on the vehicle search.

**BUILDING SEARCH**

- Search shall consist of eight (8) indoor rooms and six (6) finds.
- Only one (1) find will be concealed in a room. (Therefore, no find will be concealed in two of the eight rooms.)
- Each room shall be at least 380 square feet, but no more than 600 square feet in an area. The Trainer may make exceptions.
- No finds shall be concealed higher than eight (8) feet from floor level.

**HANDLER:**

-The "Reward" toy or object used during an explosive detection certification test **WILL NOT** contain any explosives or explosive odor/residue. If the Trainer determines the handler is using a loaded toy or object, the Trainer will record the test as a failure and a same day retest will not be permitted.

-It is up to the handler to interpret the dog's final response.

-The Handler will verbally notify the Trainer when their dog has located a hide and has given the appropriate final response.

-If multiple handlers are testing, all handlers who have not tested must be out of sight and sound of the hide locations when the other handlers are testing.

**SCORING:**

- The handler must be as specific as possible where they believe the training aid is located. If there is an aid within a reasonable distance, the team will be credited with a find. If there is no training aid within the area, then it will be considered a "miss."

-It must be obvious to the Trainer the dog located the hide, even if the handler tells the Trainer where the hide is.

-The trainer will prevent the handler from rewarding the detector dog on a false response only.

The minimum acceptable level required to pass is 91.6%. (11 out of 12 total hides.)

**TIME:**

-Time limits on searches will be at the discretion of the Trainer and so long as the Trainer determines that the dog is still working.

-\*\* **NOTE: There will be a break between the explosives building searches and the explosives vehicle searches.**\*\*