

CANINE SUB-GROUP GENERAL POLICIES
*Subordinate to the Canine Search Specialist Certification Process
Document*

1. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1.1 All participants in the DHS/FEMA Canine Program will be held to the US&R Code of Conduct as set forth in the Operations Manual. All participants will acknowledge that physical abuse of the canine is not permitted at any time. Violation may result in loss of certification(s), loss of evaluator status and/or referral to the appropriate authorities.

2. EVALUATORS BRINGING DOGS TO FEMA EVENTS

- 2.1 Evaluators should not bring dogs to evaluations unless requested to do so by the hosting task force IC. If an occasion arises whereby an evaluator must bring a dog, not requested by the host, it is the responsibility of the evaluator to ensure it does not impact the test. The evaluator will interface with the Chief Evaluator for arrangements to bring an unauthorized dog, not the hosting Task Force.

3. LIMITED ACCESS PILE

- 3.1 The Limited Access pile assesses the ability of the dog to search, find and bark out of sight of the handler. It is important that upon accessing the pile, the handler promptly pinpoints the alert location. If it becomes another search, the criteria is not being met.

4. MOTIVATIONAL SITE

- 4.1 Task Forces hosting a CE/CP may elect to provide a motivational site (e.g., alert tube) for teams to work after they have tested or during down time at a CP.

5. SHADOW EVALUATOR MENTORS

- 5.1 Shadow Mentoring will count towards the minimum evaluation requirement to maintain evaluator status.
- 5.2 Shadow Mentor SOPs
- 5.2.1 Rotate shadows on sites to make sure all shadows experience each pile, with not more than one on the pile. Shadows should not interfere with the process.
- 5.2.2 Mentor briefs and debriefs with the shadows.

5.2.3 Mentor reviews shadow's comments on score sheets.

5.2.4 Mentor uses the training guide once per shadow.

5.2.5 Mentor completes the Shadow Evaluator Critique form and the form is then forwarded as follows:

5.2.5.1 Mentor to Chief Evaluator

5.2.5.2 Chief Evaluator to Canine Sub-Group

5.2.5.3 Canine Sub-Group to appropriate Task Force personnel

6. EVALUATOR CONFERENCE CALLS

6.1 In order to keep the evaluator cadre current in their continuing education, all evaluators are expected to participate in the scheduled conference calls.

6.2 One unexcused absence will result in the evaluator dropping into the alternate pool. Two unexcused absences will result in the evaluator repeating the shadow process.

6.3 If absent from an evaluator conference call the evaluator must submit an email request to the Sub-Group for an excused absence and cc: their program manager.

7. INJURED CANINE

7.1 If a canine is injured during an evaluation, the clock will not stop. The handler should be prepared to attend to a minor injury and the team may proceed. If the handler or evaluators determine that the injury needs veterinary attention, the evaluation will be terminated as to that team. The evaluators will determine if it is a no-test or a failed attempt, depending largely upon whether the team was passing up to that point.

8. DOGS IN SEASON

8.1 It is strongly recommended that female dogs in season do not test.

9. CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR CE/CP - guidelines for extreme circumstances that may impact safety

9.1 In the event of unexpected catastrophic conditions, safety will be of primary consideration.

10.2 The following are general guidelines

10.2.1 IC will make the final determination based on input from the Chief Evaluator and Safety Officers. This may include conversion of a CE to a CP.

10.2.2 If the rubble is unsafe, consider the use of buildings or other safe areas.

11. CANINE CERTIFICATION ROSTER

11.1 The Canine Certification Roster is intended to reflect current certifications only. It will be revised regularly to reflect the additions of newly certified teams and re-certified teams, as well as the deletion of expired teams and those who have failed re-certifications.