

## **K-9 Alert Search and Rescue Dogs, Inc.**

Welcome to K-9 Alert. This is a guide to assist you through your training and hopefully answer your questions as to what is expected of you during your training period.

Once you have shown an interest in the group, you will receive a membership packet that contains an application, check off sheet, state standards and all the tests required to become an operational dog team. The Training Officer will tell you when to bring your dog to be evaluated for drive, non-aggression and SAR ability. Please do not bring your dog to trainings until the Training Officer tells you. If your dog seems to be a good candidate, you will continue to train with the group for a three-month period, without your dog, and work on getting your certification checklist signed off. After completing the checklist and having been told by the Training Officer you are callout ready, you can then start bringing your dog to trainings.

To be eligible for membership in K9 Alert, you must turn in an application, criminal history background check and have attended at least 6 trainings. This is the minimum required by the by-laws.

### **Uniforms**

Now that you are a member of K-9 Alert, you can wear the K-9 Alert uniform. The uniform consists of Black BDU pants, brown button down shirt with K-9 patch and FTM patch (if completed FTM class) and hiking boots. K-9 Alert ball cap is optional. The uniform should only be worn during training, at searches or at group approved demos. The gray or blue t-shirt should not be worn at searches or at demos. The same also applies to the dog vests. They should not be on the dog any other time except searches, group approved demos and at training.

### **Text Messages**

Once you are callout ready, you will be placed on our group text messaging system and allowed to respond as a walker to searches. You will start receiving text messages from DEM and the group. You will be expected to follow the procedures of calling into dispatch. Once you receive the text message asking to call dispatch with availability, you have 10 minutes max to call the dispatcher. The dispatcher needs to hear from you ASAP because DEM is waiting to see if they need to respond another dog group. You must call in regardless, even if you are not available. If you know that you are not going to be able to call in or if going out of town, please notify the dispatcher. If you consistently do not respond to text messages, you will be removed from callout ready status.

### **Searches**

It will be very beneficial to you to attend all the searches you can as a walker. You will learn some valuable information and will learn how a search is conducted. When you arrive on a search scene, make sure you sign in and tell them your qualifications and that you are a member of K-9 Alert. Most times you will be dealing with local law enforcement and since you are representing K-9 Alert, you should always act in a professional manner. Upon completion of the search, make sure you notify dispatch when you are home. (No matter what time it is) Dispatch keeps track of who responded and needs to make sure everyone is home safe. Within two weeks of the search, an After Action Report needs to be filled out by everyone that

attended the search and sent to the training officer. The training officer will compile all the data and send it to DEM.

## **Training Log**

Everyone will be required to keep a training log. There is no specific format but it should contain the date, location, mileage, total training time, weather, and type of training. This is a guideline for your training and to help you see your progress. It is very important that this log be kept up to date and be accurate. This log could be presented at anytime for a court case. The training officer will review the training logs quarterly.

## **Certification Checklists**

It will be your responsibility to bring the checklist with you during training and make sure you get things signed off. The training officer will check on your progress every quarter. If you lack a certain training and are nearing the completion time, please let the training officer know so arrangements can be made to help you get the required training. If you do not meet the required deadline, you will have to explain in writing why you could not complete the training. At this time it will be brought before the Board of Directors to decide whether to extend the timeline or reevaluate the trainee's status.

## **Evaluations**

When you and your mentor feel that you are ready to test your dog, notify the training officer. You and the training officer will agree on a date and the training officer will choose the evaluators. It is your responsibility to get the subjects, someone who the dog is not too familiar with. The training officer will choose the location and notify the trainee and the subjects. Evaluations such as the 40 night and 160 day should not be held during regular scheduled training.

## **Operational Dog Handler**

Once you have passed all requirements for becoming operational, you can now take your dog with you on a search. You will also be given a group radio for your use. It has been a long hard road but it will be worth it in the long run.

The training never stops and you are encouraged to continue training and challenging yourself and your dog.