

American Working Dog Association (South Carolina)

For reference, follow the link to view the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy's minimum patrol K9 standards: <https://sccja.sc.gov/general-information/forms>

- Follow the link and then scroll to the bottom of the page to open the K9 forms.
- Certification is available for each of the following: Patrol, Area Search, Building Search, Handler Protection, Tracking, Narcotic Detection, Explosive Detection and Article / Evidence Search
- Basic Obedience is a prerequisite to testing for Patrol certification
- Patrol certification is prerequisite to testing for Area Search, Building Search and Handler Protection

Patrol Standards

As stated above, basic obedience is a prerequisite to attempting the Patrol certification. A handler must demonstrate proficient and adequate control of his/her K9 partner to qualify for Patrol Standards testing. Criminal Apprehension is the primary focus for any patrol dog; however, the Patrol Standard contains the following sub categories: Area Search, Building Search, and Handler Protection. A K9 team must pass the criminal apprehension phase in order to test for building search and area search certifications. During the Patrol Standard testing, a handler may not use any electronic collars, whips or sticks of any kind to exert control over his K9 while testing for certification.

Obedience / Control Standards

- This standard will be conducted off lead
- The use of electronic devices, whips or sticks of any kind is prohibited
- Testing may be conducted on any surface with consideration for environmental conditions
- The K9 team will perform the following in any order, at the instruction of the evaluator
 - The K9 will be in a heel for a distance up to 300 feet
 - Pacing will be alternated between fast and slow
 - There will be a minimum of one (1) left and one (1) right turn
 - There will be one about-turn (180 degree turn)
 - There will be a minimum of two (2) halts (the dog may down or sit)
 - The K9 will be placed in a sit or down (discretion of the handler) The handler will then walk away from the K9 for a distance at the discretion of the evaluator but up to 100 feet
 - When instructed, the handler will stop and remain in place. The handler will then call the K9 using verbal command or hand signals. During the return, the handler will halt his dog
 - After a successful halt, the handler will walk past the K9 and pick the dog up in a heel

- The inability to demonstrate control in any Obedience/Control phase results in failure

Criminal Apprehension Standards

All decoys participating must wear the proper protection equipment. The purpose of this standard is to demonstrate the K9's ability to work independently of the handler as well as to demonstrate control of the K9 during the activation of prey and fight drives.

- The use of electronic devices, whips or sticks of any kind is prohibited
- This testing phase is to be conducted off lead
- The decoy will be on the certification field prior to the K9 team entering the field
- The K9 will be required to remain in place in the heel position until released
- Once the K9 team is set, the decoy will approach the handler in a casual manner from a distance of approximately thirty-five (35) feet. Small conversation and a handshake will be performed. Once the handshake takes place, the decoy will do an about turn (180 degrees) and walk back towards his starting position.
- After walking away from the K9 team for approximately fifteen (15) feet, the decoy will again turn and walk towards the K9 team in a non-aggressive but more animated manner. The decoy will about turn (180 degrees) prior to reaching the K9 team and walk/jog away to a distance of no more than seventy-five (75) feet or a distance set at the discretion of the certifying official
- Up to this point in this portion of the testing phase the K9 is not allowed to physically engage the decoy
- Once the decoy is set and facing the K9 team, the decoy will turn and run. The dog will be released (verbal command if needed) to engage the decoy
- After travelling approximately half the distance to the decoy, the K9 will be recalled. A successful recall must occur in the following ways:
 - The K9 returns to the handler and heels
 - The K9 ceases forward movement and downs, sits or stays at his current position. The handler can then proceed to the K9 for a decoy reset
 - The K9 ceases forward movement and downs, sits or stays at his current position. From there the handler may call the dog back to his position for a decoy reset
- Once the K9 returns to the handler, the decoy will run away from the K9 team and the K9 is to be sent again to engage the decoy
- Once the K9 is sent, the decoy will fire two (2) shots from a blank gun (loaded with blanks)
- Once the K9 has engaged/apprehended the decoy, one (1) more shot will be fired from the blank gun (loaded with blanks)
- The decoy will then be instructed to drop the blank gun by the certifying official
- The handler is allowed to approach the K9 as the K9 engages the decoy
- After a time and at the instruction of the certifying official, the handler will be instructed to verbally command the K9 to disengage from the decoy. The decoy will be passive and non-combative at this point
- The K9 must release the decoy in a reasonable amount of time

- Noncompliance of the verbal command to disengage or the reapplication of the bite will result in failure (reapplication will include any snipping or chattering in physical contact with the decoy)
- Once disengaged, the handler may leash the K9 in order to exit the certifying field

Handler Protection Standards

The Handler Protection standard is a subset of the Patrol certification. The Patrol standard must be met prior to testing for Handler Protection. Handler Protection is not a requirement to attain a Patrol certification. The Handler Protection standard can be tested with the use of a K9 vehicle equipped with a remote release, or without remote release or without the use of a vehicle at the handler's discretion.

With the use of a vehicle:

- The handler will begin by standing near a vehicle with K9 inside
- The decoy will be approximately twenty (20) feet from the handler (not next to the vehicle)
- The handler will engage the decoy verbally
- The decoy will approach the handler
- Once the decoy reaches the handler's position, handcuffing will be simulated
- During the simulated handcuffing, the decoy will simulate assaulting the handler
- The handler will then release the K9, either remotely or by physically opening the door
- The K9 is to apprehend (and not release) the suspect without any commands (verbal or hand signal)
- The handler may then remove the K9 from the decoy and exit the certifying field

Without the use of a vehicle:

- The K9 team will begin with the K9 in a sit or down position
- The decoy will be approximately twenty (20) feet from the K9 team
- The handler will engage the decoy verbally
- The decoy will approach the K9 team
- A "stay" command may be used at this time
- The handler will step away from the K9 to a distance at the discretion of the handler
- Once the handler and decoy arrive at the same position on the certifying field, handcuffing will be simulated
- During the simulated handcuffing, the decoy will simulate an assault on the handler
- The K9 is to apprehend (and not release) the suspect without any commands (verbal or hand signal)
- The handler may then remove the K9 from the decoy and exit the certifying field

Building Search Standards

The Building Search standard is a subset to the Patrol certification. Criminal Apprehension must be completed prior to testing for the Building Search Standard. All Building Search standard testing will follow the following guidelines:

- The building will be a minimum of one thousand five hundred (1500) feet and a maximum of five thousand (5000)
- Building types are not limited other than the need to be fully enclosed and not present any environmental hazards to the K9 team
- The certifying official shall designate the area of the building to be searched
- The decoy shall wear protective equipment
- The decoy shall enter the building from a different access point than the K9 team
- The decoy shall be hidden for a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes prior to any searching
- The certifying official will accompany the K9 team into the building
- The certifying official will not interfere with the K9 team in any way
- The handler may not open any doors except to enter the building and reach the search area
- The K9 team will be on a fifteen (15) minute time limit
- The handler may use praise or verbal commands if needed
- The K9 must make a clear indication that can be interpreted by the certifying official
- If the K9 locates a decoy behind a closed door, the handler may call the decoy out after being told to do so by the certifying official
- If time expires prior to locating the decoy, the standard is not met
- If a K9 team passes a hidden decoy and moves to another area of the building, the standard is not met

Area Search Standards

Area Search testing is a subset of the Patrol standard, but it is not a requirement to attain a Patrol certification. Criminal Apprehension must successfully be completed in order to test for Area Search. Area Search guidelines:

- The search may be conducted in but is not limited to the following area types:
 - wooded areas
 - fenced compounds such as a vehicle impound
 - business parks
 - school complex
- The search may be conducted on or off lead at the handler's discretion
- The decoy will wear protective equipment
- The decoy will be hidden for fifteen (15) minutes prior to test start
- There will be a fifteen (15) minute time limit for the test
- The certifying official will designate the search area
- The certifying official will accompany the K9 team during the search
- The certifying official will not interfere with the K9 in any way
- Apprehension by the K9 is based on scenario type and decoy location
- The K9 must give a clear indication to the certifying official upon locating the decoy
- The K9 team may not pass the hidden decoy during the search
- The decoy must be found in the allotted time

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Law Enforcement Narcotic Standards

Narcotic detection consists of testing through the detection of four (4) odors and their derivatives. Those odors are marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine. The testing will take place either indoors (residential, business, or storage) or outdoors with the use of vehicles. Each odor will be presented on once in either setting. Training aids will be no smaller in weight than eight (8) grams and no larger than twenty-eight (28) grams. A soak time of thirty (30) minutes will be observed prior to any testing. No pseudo narcotic odors will be used during testing. The decision to test indoors or outdoors will mainly depend on situations and environmental factors such as building / vehicle availability, weather, number of teams to certify, etc. Certification allows one (1) false indication and no missed hides by each K9 team. Exceeding these limits will result in a failure to certify. K9s must alert near source odor when they are physically able to do so. When a handler calls the alert, it must be in an area where source odor is present. Odors will be placed in practical areas.

Guidelines for Indoor Narcotic Certification

- A total of five (5) rooms to be searched in random order
- Four (4) rooms are loaded with one (1) training aid per room and each aid must be a different odor
- One (1) room will remain blank
- The K9 team has fifteen (15) minutes total for the search of all rooms
- Time starts when the K9 enters the room to search
- Time will stop during the reward phase and begin again in the next room
- Prior to testing, handlers must notify the certifying official of the type of alert the K9 provides
- Handlers must call the alert prior to rewarding the K9

- No hide will be placed higher than five (5) feet from the floor
- Before leaving a room and moving to another, the handler must call the room (blank or loaded) and provide the hide location if loaded
- Only the K9 team and up to two (2) certifying officials may be present in the search area

Guidelines for Outdoor (vehicle) Narcotic Certification

- A total of five (5) vehicles will be used and may be searched in random order
- Vehicles may be cars, trucks, SUVs or commercial vehicles
- Four (4) vehicle will contain one (1) training aid and each aid a different odor
- One (1) vehicle will remain blank
- All hides will be placed on the exterior of vehicles
- No hide will be placed higher than five (5) feet from the ground
- The K9 team has fifteen (15) minutes total for the search of all vehicles
- Time starts with the K9 begins searching the vehicle
- Time stops during the reward phase and will begin again at the next vehicle
- Prior to testing, handlers must notify the certifying official of the type of alert the K9 provides
- Handlers must call the alert prior to awarding the K9
- Only the K9 team and up to two (2) certifying officials may be present in the search area

Law Enforcement Tracking Standards

There are two levels of tracking standards. The American Working Dog Association offers a Tracking certification and a Master Tracking certification.

Tracking standard guidelines:

- The track will consist of at least three (3) surface changes. Surfaces may include but are not limited to:
 - Short grass
 - Tall grass
 - Gravel
 - Wooded terrain/foilage
 - Dirt
 - Pavement
 - Concrete
 - Sand
- The track will age a minimum of thirty (30) minutes and no more than forty-five (45) minutes prior to start
- The track will be a minimum of three hundred (300) yards and no more than six hundred (600) yards
- One (1) scent article will be placed on the track. There is no penalty for failure to locate the scent article
- One (1) cross track will be laid as designated by the certifying official
- The track starting point and direction of travel will be provided by the certifying official
- The certifying official will accompany the tracking team
- The certifying official will not interfere with the K9 team at any time
- The handler may use praise, or encourage the K9, or use verbal commands
- The certifying official may call a stop to the search if it is obvious that the K9 is not tracking/working
- A K9 team successfully completes this phase by locating the track layer
- There will be a thirty (30) minute time limit for this test

Master Tracking standard guidelines:

- There will be a minimum of five (5) surfaces changes. These surfaces may include but are not limited to the following types of terrain:
 - Short grass
 - Tall grass
 - Gravel
 - Wooded terrain/foilage
 - Dirt
 - Pavement
 - Concrete
 - Sand

□ Water crossing

- The track will age a minimum of one and one half (1.5) hours and a maximum of two (2) hours
- The track will be a minimum of twelve hundred (1200) yards and a maximum of fifteen hundred (1500) yards
- A minimum of three hundred (300) yards of hard surface will be included in the track
- Three (3) cross tracks will be laid
- One (1) scent article will be placed on the track. The K9 team must locate the article
- The K9 team will be given a starting point consisting only of a last known location such as a car, door way, window or general area
- The certifying official will accompany the K9 team
- The certifying official will not interfere with the K9 team in any way
- The certifying official may stop the exercise if it is obvious the K9 is not tracking/working
- The K9 team successfully completes this test by locating the track layer

Article Search / Evidence Recovery Standards

The Article Search standard may be tested as an independent standard. It is not reliant on having successfully completed any other standard. Testing consists of the following guidelines:

- Testing will be conducted in an approximately one half (1/2) acre area
- The test area will consist of terrain which will visually conceal the article
- There will be three (3) articles to locate
- Each article will be made of a different material such as wood, metal, plastic, etc.
- The articles will age for thirty (30) minutes
- The articles will be scented by breath or hand or rubbing on clothing for one (1) minute prior to being placed
- There is a ten (10) minute time limit for this test
- The K9 must make an obvious indication on each item to pass successfully