

**WAC 139-05-915 Canines—Training and certification.** (1) Canine teams working in the state of Washington shall be certified to the adopted standards as set by commission policy.

(a) The standards shall be maintained by the commission and readily available to the public.

(b) These standards include the minimum performance standards for canine teams performing specific law enforcement or corrections functions.

(c) As a condition of certification, each handler must ensure that the canine performs to a level that is deemed acceptable by the commission in the category for a team's intended use.

(2) An evaluator shall be appointed by the commission to perform the testing of the canine teams.

(a) The qualifications to become an evaluator for canine certification shall be outlined in the evaluation policy adopted by the commission.

(b) In evaluating the proficiency of a canine team, evaluators shall use the standards approved by the commission for that particular discipline.

(c) Each certification issued pursuant to these rules will remain valid as set forth in commission policy, as long as the composition and responsibility of the canine team does not change.

(d) A canine team's certification shall automatically expire if the specific handler and canine, originally paired at the time of certification cease to perform canine team functions together or if the function for which the team was certified changes.

(3) This process is not related to and does not change the requirements for officer certification.

(4) Nothing in these rules is intended to limit the use of canine teams employed by other state or federal agencies for law enforcement purposes, or the use of volunteer canine teams where the handler is not a Washington officer.

(5) Certified canine teams shall have the knowledge and ability to comply with the canine model policy established on December 28, 2021, pursuant to section 3, chapter 320, Laws of 2021. This model policy provides the following:

(a) Canine certification training requirements - Set forth in the commission canine training policy;

(b) Considerations of canine deployment;

(c) Appropriate canine deployment;

(d) Strategies for minimizing law enforcement canine bites;

(e) Circumstances where a canine handler should consider the use of tactics other than deploying a canine;

(f) Prohibited use of a police canine;

(g) Use of canines to apprehend suspects;

(h) Agency canine team reporting protocols;

(i) Circumstances that would warrant the decertification of canine teams; and

(j) Circumstances where the use of voluntary canines and canine handlers may be appropriate.

(6) To report a use of force as outlined in the canine model policy, canine teams should follow the guidelines set forth in WAC 139-06-020.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.101.080 and 43.101.801. WSR 22-13-075, § 139-05-915, filed 6/9/22, effective 7/10/22. Statutory Authority: RCW

43.101.080. WSR 17-10-055, § 139-05-915, filed 5/2/17, effective 6/2/17; WSR 17-01-059, § 139-05-915, filed 12/14/16, effective 1/14/17; WSR 05-20-029, § 139-05-915, filed 9/28/05, effective 10/29/05; WSR 05-01-114, § 139-05-915, filed 12/15/04, effective 1/15/05; WSR 03-07-100, § 139-05-915, filed 3/19/03, effective 4/19/03; WSR 00-17-017, § 139-05-915, filed 8/4/00, effective 9/4/00. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.101.080(2). WSR 86-19-021 (Order 1-B), § 139-05-915, filed 9/10/86.]