

# K9 Search and Rescue Team Inc.

35 Railroad Avenue, Dolores, CO, 81323 | (970) 882-4746 | Email: k9@k9team.org

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## CANINE OBEDIENCE AND AGILITY STANDARDS

### SECTION 1

**PURPOSE:** This section of the Obedience and Agility Standards is in place mainly for young dogs (under six months of age). Dogs six months and up should be able to pass tests 1-10 and quickly move on to Section 2 of these standards. All dogs will pass and maintain all ten areas of the AKC Canine Good Citizen Test. At no time will the dog show aggression to other dogs or humans.

Dogs six months old and under will be required to pass tests 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8 of this section. All dogs will be required to pass all tests before being allowed on any Team functions such as, but not limited to, parades, demonstrations, conferences, etc.

The following was taken directly from the AKC Canine Good Citizen Program Participant's Handbook. Upon successful completion an AKC Canine Good Citizen Certificate will be issued to the dog.

#### **TEST 1: ACCEPTING A FRIENDLY STRANGER**

This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to approach it and speak to the handler in a natural, everyday situation.

The evaluator walks up to the dog and handler and greets the handler in a friendly manner, ignoring the dog.

The evaluator and handler shake hands and exchange pleasantries. The dog must show no sign of resentment or shyness, and must not break position or try to go to the evaluator.

#### **TEST 2: SITTING POLITELY FOR PETTING**

This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler. With the dog sitting at the handler's side (either side is permissible) to begin the exercise, the evaluator pets the dog on the head and body only. The handler may talk to his or her dog throughout the exercise. The dog may stand in place once petting begins. The dog must not show shyness or resentment.

#### **TEST 3: APPEARANCE AND GROOMING**

This practical test demonstrates that the dog will welcome being groomed and examined and will permit someone, such as a veterinarian, groomer, or friends of the owner, to do so. It also demonstrates the owner's care, concern and sense of responsibility.

The evaluator inspects the dog to determine if it is clean and groomed. The dog must appear to be in health condition (i.e., proper weight, clean, healthy and alert). The handler should supply the comb or brush commonly used on the dog. The evaluator then softly combs or brushes the dog and, in a natural manner, lightly examines the ears and gently picks up each front foot.

It is not necessary for the dog to hold a specific position during the examination, and the handler may talk to the dog, praise it and give it encouragement throughout.

#### **TEST 4: OUT FOR A WALK (Walking on a loose leash)**

This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog. The dog may be on either side of the handler, whichever the handler prefers. *(NOTE: The left-side position is required in AKC obedience competition and all activities where dog serves man, such as guiding the blind).*

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The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction. The dog need not be perfectly aligned with the handler and need not sit when the handler stops.

The evaluator may use a pre-plotted course or may direct the handler/dog team by issuing instructions or commands. In either case, there must be a left turn, right turn and an about turn, with at least one stop in between and another at the end. The handler may talk to the dog along the way to praise or command it in a normal tone of voice. The handler may also sit the dog at the halt, if desired.

## **TEST 5: WALKING THROUGH A CROWD**

This test demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control in public places.

The dog and handler walk around and pass close to several people (at least three). The dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk with the handler, without evidence of over exuberance, shyness, or resentment. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise the dog throughout the test. The dog should not be straining at the leash.

*(Note: Children may act as members of the crowd in this test, as well as in Test 9. However, whenever children participate in a test they must be instructed on their role and be supervised. It is permissible to have one dog in a crowd but the dog must be on-leash and well-mannered.)*

## **TEST 6: SIT AND DOWN ON COMMAND/STAYING IN PLACE**

This test demonstrates that the dog has training, will respond to the handler's commands to sit and down and will remain in the place commanded by the handler (sit or down position, whichever the handler prefers).

Prior to this test, the dog's leash is replaced with a 20-foot (6-meter) line. The handler may take a reasonable amount of time and use more than one command to make the dog sit and then down. The evaluator must determine if the dog has responded to the handler's commands. The handler may not force the dog into either position but may touch the dog to offer gentle guidance.

When instructed by the evaluator, the handler tells the dog to stay and walks forward the length of the line, turns and returns to the dog at a natural pace (the 20-foot (6-meter) line is not removed). The dog must remain in the place in which it was left (it may change position) until the evaluator instructs the handler to release the dog. The dog may be released from the front or the side.

## **TEST 7: COMING WHEN CALLED**

This test demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler. The handler will walk 10 feet from the dog, turn to face the dog, and call the dog. The handler may use encouragement to get the dog to come. Handlers may choose to tell dogs to "stay" or "wait", or they may simply walk away giving no instructions to the dog as the evaluator provides mild distractions (e.g. petting).

## **TEST 8: REACTION TO ANOTHER DOG**

This test demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs. Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance of about 10 yards (10-meters), stop, shake hands and exchange pleasantries, and continue on for about 5 yards (5-meters).

The dogs should show no more than a casual interest in each other. Neither dog should go to the other dog or its handler.

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## TEST 9: REACTION TO DISTRACTIONS

This test demonstrates that the dog is confident at all time when faced with common distraction situations.

The evaluator will select only two of the following (*Note: Since some dogs are sensitive to sound and others to visual distractions, it is preferable to choose one sound and one visual distraction.*):

- a) A person using crutches, a wheelchair, or a walker (This distraction simulates a disabled person who requires the use of service equipment).
- b) A sudden closing or opening of a door.
- c) Dropping a large book, no close than 10-feet (3-meters) behind the dog.
- d) A jogger running in front of the dog.
- e) A person pushing a shopping cart approaching from the front or rear, passing within 10-feet (3-meters).
- f) A person on a bicycle approaching from the front or rear, passing about 6-feet (2-meters) to the side of the dog.
- g) Knocking over a chair, no closer than 6-feet from the dog.

The dog may express a natural interest and curiosity and/or appear slightly startled but should not panic, try to run away, show aggressiveness, or bark. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the exercise.

## TEST 10: SUPERVISED SEPARATION

This test demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person, if necessary, and will maintain its training and good manners. Evaluators are encouraged to say something like, "Would you like me to watch your dog?" and then take hold of the dog's leash. The owner will go out of sight for three minutes. The dog does not have to stay in position but should continually bark, whine, or pace unnecessarily, or show anything stronger than mild agitation or nervousness.

## SECTION 2

**PURPOSE:** Section 2 of the Canine Obedience and Agility Standards is in place in order to maintain a high level of canine professionalism. The ability to control a search dog in any situation is a must. These standards are not meant to make the dog so obedient that it is always looking to the handler for direction. Search dogs must have the ability to think and problem solve for themselves.

Dogs advancing to this section of the standards will maintain the AKC Canine Good Citizen certification in addition to the basic obedience set forth.

All dogs will have the ability and training necessary to be worked by another handler. **At no time will the dog show aggression to other dogs or humans.**

### 1. SIT/DOWN

The handler will give the command to sit. The dog will stay in this position until asked to do otherwise. The handler will then give the dog the command to down. Again the dog will stay in this position until asked to do otherwise. Repeated commands are not acceptable.

### 2. HEEL

The dog shall be in the handler's left side. A shoulder in-line/torso is not required but excessive lagging or forging is not allowed. The handler will change paces, the dog will stay on the left side, with no excessive slowing or advancing by the dog. Repeated commands are not acceptable.

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## 3. SIT WHILE HEELING

The dog will sit in the heel position when the handler stops. If the handler must give the dog a sit command, it is acceptable. Repeated commands are not acceptable.

## 4. STAY/COME

The handler will place the dog in either a sit or down position and move away from the dog to a minimum distance of 10-meters, wait a minimum of 15 seconds, and then call the dog. The dog will come to the handler when called and either position itself in "Front" (sitting directly in front of the handler) and then to the "Finish" position (back to the heel/sit position) when asked or the dog may go directly to the "Finish" position. Repeated commands are not acceptable.

## 5. DROP ON RECALL

The handler will place the dog in a stay command and move away to a minimum distance of 10-meters. The handler will then call the dog and before the dog is within 5-meters of the handler, the handler will "Drop" the dog (to a down position). The handler will again call the dog. The dog will come to the handler and either position itself "Front" and then "Finish" or directly to the "Finish" position. Repeated commands are not acceptable.

## 6. WAIT

This command is done with the other search dogs present and one handler "attending" all of the dogs. The handler will put the dog in either a sit or down position. After the dog is placed on a wait command, the handler will walk a minimum of 10-meters away and position themselves out of the dog's sight. Several handlers will rotate into the "attending" position with all dogs remaining on a wait. After a minimum of 15 minutes the handlers will return to their dogs. Repeated "breaking" or repeated commands are not acceptable.

## SECTION 3

**PURPOSE:** Section 3 of the Canine Obedience and Agility Standards is to ensure that the search dog has the physical and mental ability suitable for situations that he may encounter during a search. At no time will the dog show aggression to other dogs or humans.

### CLOSED AND OPEN TUNNELS

Open tunnel: The handler will be asked to send their dog through a tunnel no less than 76cm in diameter and 6-meters long. The dog must enter the tunnel and exit on the other side. It is acceptable for the dog to go through the tunnel to the exit, turn, and come back to the entrance through the tunnel.

Closed tunnel: The handler will be asked to send their dog through a tunnel no less than 76cm in diameter and 4.5 meters long with the end of the tunnel constructed of material no less than 1.5 meters long. The dog must enter the tunnel and exit through the "closed" end.

### A-FRAME

The handler will have their dog go up one side of the A-Frame to the top and down the other side. The A-Frame will be constructed with a non-slip surface and be a minimum of 1.22 meters by 1.22 meters on both sides and a minimum 45° angle. The dog can either be on or off lead.

### MOVEMENT AND MACHINERY

Using the bucket of a tractor or similar equipment the handler and the dog will load into the bucket or similar equipment and be lifted a minimum of 3 meters above the ground. At no time will the dog attempt to jump. The handler must have control of the dog at all times.

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## **LOADING AND UNLOADING**

The handler/dog will load into the back of a pick-up truck with other handlers/dogs and be transported a minimum of 20 meters. At no time will the dog attempt to jump out or act aggressively towards other dogs or handlers. Each handler/dog will then unload individually. The handler must have control of the dog at all times.

## **ATV AND SNOWMOBILES**

The handler and the dog will be transported in a trailer or cart being pulled by an ATV or a snowmobile a minimum of 20 meters. At no time will the dog attempt to jump. The handler must have control of the dog at all times.

## **WATER TRANSPORT**

The handler will make every attempt to expose and load their dog into a boat on the water. Any exposure will be documented in the handler's log books. This is needed before any attempt is made to utilize the dog on a water search in a boat, raft, or similar water vehicle. The handler must have control of the dog at all times.

## **HELICOPTERS**

The handler will make every attempt to expose their dog to a running helicopter. Any exposure will be documented in the handler's log books. This is needed before any attempt is made on a search to transport the dog/handler team by means of aircraft. The dog must be under control at all times and show minimal to no signs of apprehension.

## **LONG LINE/HARNESS**

The handler will make every attempt to expose their dog to being transported in a harness on a long line. Any exposure will be documented in the handler's log books. This is needed before any attempt is made to transport the dog/handler team by means of a long line and/or harness.