

**University of Maryland Department of Public Safety Headquarters
Pocomoke Building
College Park, Maryland 20742-6011**

SPECIAL ORDER: 26-0001

SUBJECT: UMPD/Canine Companions Facility Dog Program

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 16, 2026

ORDERED BY: David B. Mitchell
Chief of Police

I. Purpose & Policy

Under the direction of the Chief of Police, the University of Maryland Police Department is hereby authorized to employ a Facility Dog under a memorandum of understanding with Canine Companions. The Facility Dog will assist in all relevant aspects of police work. The canine selected as a Facility Dog must meet/exceed benchmarks for: temperament, medical history, breed, age, and any other factor that is deemed suitable to the animal's specialized use. The Facility Dog may be acquired from a breeder, shelter, or other reputable resource. The Facility Dog will aid the Department in providing the following services (CALEA 41.1.4.a):

- A. Assistance to Individuals with Disabilities: Facility K-9 will be partnered with a professional handler to directly serve individuals with special needs. The facility dog is trained in over 40 commands that are utilized in health care, criminal justice, and educational settings. The tasks the Facility Dog is trained to perform will be used to assist and motivate individuals with disabilities within the University of Maryland community.
- B. Victim/witness assistance: In addition to primary duties, the Facility Dog may provide support to individuals who have been impacted by traumatic events or crimes of a sensitive nature as needed.
- C. Community Partnership: Creating a more engaging relationship for students, faculty, staff, and other community members with the University of Maryland Police Department.
- D. Awareness for department campaigns: Bringing more awareness to the University of Maryland Police Community Outreach safety campaigns.
- E. Presence at Educational programs and Community Events: An advertising tool for the University of Maryland Police Department to provide more programming, events, and police presence in the community.

The following are the operational guidelines and procedures relative to the University of Maryland Police Department Facility Dog program.

II. Definitions

- A. Facility Dog (CALEA 41.1.4.c): An expertly trained dog who partners with a handler and works

in a health care, visitation or education setting. Their trained skills can be utilized to enhance therapies, promote participation, and reduce anxiety for clients in professional environments.

i. According to the Assistance Dogs International (ADI) minimum training standards, a facility dog must:

1. Maintain a calm manner and good social behavior in a variety of environments and able to interact with all people including those with physical and/or developmental disabilities.
2. Demonstrate basic obedience skills by responding to commands for sitting, staying in place, lying down, walking in a controlled position near the handler, and coming to the handler when called.
3. Meet all of ADI's minimum standard requirements.
4. Graduate from a program that is recognized by ADI.

B. Handler: A sworn police officer who meets all of the necessary qualifications to work with a Facility Dog.

III. Selection and Training of Facility Dog and Handler Responsibilities

- A. The Facility Dog must be trained as a facility dog by an ADI-certified dog training facility, prior to the dog assuming regular duties. (CALEA 41.1.4.c). UMPD's Facility Dog and handler are certified through Canine Companions.
- B. The training schedule for the department's Facility Dog and handler will be coordinated through the training unit.
- C. Handler Selection: Openings for Facility Dog Handlers will be announced via email to the agency. An officer having an interest in acting as handler for a Facility Dog will submit a letter of interest as directed in the notice, making the solicitation through their chain-of-command.
- D. Handler Training: An officer assigned to a Facility Dog will attend Canine Companions' two-week group class known as "Team Training," or similar program hosted by an ADI-compliant provider. This training will include, at a minimum, managing facility dog behavior, directing the dog to respond to learned commands, and assuming responsibility for maintaining the health and well-being of the dog. (CALEA 41.1.4.b)
- E. The Facility Dog and its handler will participate in ongoing recertification, inspections and follow-up visits by Canine Companions as required.

IV. Handler Qualifications

A handler must be a sworn officer who shows an earnest desire to work with a Facility Dog focusing on community activities and members of the University of Maryland community. The officer must have a demonstrated ability to engage in positive and proactive community policing strategies and the ability to lift and carry the canine when needed. The officer must be able to house the canine at their residence. The assignment as a Facility Dog handler is a supplemental assignment to their current assignments. Retention of the assignment shall be contingent upon maintaining a satisfactory level of performance. (CALEA 41.1.4.b)

V. Use of Facility Dog and Handler Responsibilities

- A. **Primary Duty**: The primary duty of the Facility Dog will be to motivate and assist individuals with disabilities.
- B. **Vehicle designation**: The handler for the Facility Dog will be assigned a specific take-home vehicle to transport the Facility Dog.

- C. **Identification and Uniform:** The Facility Dog Handler will routinely wear the approved Community Outreach uniform of the day unless otherwise authorized by their supervisor for special functions. The Facility Dog will wear the requisite identification equipment provided by Canine Companions at all times while in service.
- D. **Overtime and Special Assignments:** During overtime and special assignments, it is the handler's responsibility to determine the most adequate location for the Facility Dog.
- E. **Designated hours:** The Facility Dog may have specific availability to the public at designated times and locations at the discretion of the handler and their supervisor.
- F. **On-Call service:** Normally, the Facility Dog will not be available on an 'on-call' basis. The availability of the Facility Dog for service calls will be at the discretion of the handler and approved by their supervisor.
- G. **Tracking Facility Dog Use:** All activities of the Facility Dog will be documented on the appropriate Community Outreach activity reports.
- H. **Progress Reports:** The Facility Dog Handler will report as required by MOU or contract regarding the status of the Facility Dog, including, but not limited to, providing Canine Companions with progress reports regarding the Facility Dog and any additional information as requested. Updates will be required monthly for the first six months of the placement and annually for the remainder of the placement.

VI. Proper care of the Facility Dog

Each Facility Dog handler is responsible for the following:

- A. The Facility Dog Handler shall maintain the Facility Dog at their place of residence and shall be responsible to see that the Facility Dog is properly cared for. (CALEA 41.1.4.d)
- B. No Facility Dog Handler-related equipment, food, or medicine will be purchased without prior approval except in the event of an emergency.
- C. The University of Maryland Police Department will be responsible for all expenses associated with the Facility Dog.
- D. The Facility Dog handler shall make sure the Facility Dog attends regularly scheduled health check-ups, as recommended by a veterinarian, and receives all immunizations required by Maryland law. The Facility Dog Handler will maintain a record of registration for the Facility Dog as required by Maryland law. The Facility Dog Handler will maintain a record of all examinations, treatments and vaccinations given to the dog. The handler will ensure that medical examination forms are sent to Canine Companions, and as required by MOU or contract.
- E. Whenever there is an injury to the Facility Dog, the injury and cause of injury, if known, will be reported to the supervisor and to Canine Companions and as required by MOU or contract as soon as possible. The Facility Dog handler will take the Facility Dog to the established veterinarian for treatment and complete a report.
- F. The handler will be provided the following (CALEA 41.1.4.e):
 1. An appropriate size transportation and indoor carrier
 2. Food and other nutritional and feeding supplies
 3. Medications or equipment related to veterinary care
 4. Items related to training and enrichment needs
 5. Other equipment as deemed suitable for the proper upkeep or general contentment of the Facility Dog
 6. (2) leashes and a collar
 7. Identification vest
 8. Appropriate time, equipment, and compensation for essential maintenance and exercise of their department-issued Facility Dog and equipment.

VII. Facility Dog Retirement & Conduct

A. Retirement of Facility Dog

1. A department Facility Dog will be retired from service when it cannot mentally or physically perform to department and certification standards. The Facility Dog Handler will work with the Canine Companions Client Services Department in accordance with MOU or contract to form a retirement plan in advance. A retired Facility Dog may be adopted by the Facility Dog handler. The person who adopts the retiring Facility Dog – whether that is the handler or someone else – will assume ownership of the dog including all responsibility, financial and otherwise, for their care. At the time of retirement, the Canine Companions graduate logo vest and ID tag must be returned in person or by mail to the regional Client Services Program Department.
2. In the event the University of Maryland Police Department Facility Dog program is discontinued, Canine Companions shall determine all matters pertaining to the Facility Dog as per MOU and/or contract.
3. **Handler Injury:** A Facility Dog will be assigned to only one handler and the dog will live with that handler and family as a house pet. In the event the handler becomes ill or is injured and the handler or family is unable to care for the dog, it will be returned to Canine Companions per the terms of the MOU or contract, unless otherwise directed in writing by Canine Companions.

B. General Rules of Conduct

1. Department personnel will not tease, intimidate, or agitate the Facility Dog.
2. Personnel should pet the Facility Dog at the direction of the handler, permission and supervision of handler should be obtained.
3. Personnel should not feed the Facility Dog without the permission of the handler.
4. Personnel shall not transport the Facility Dog unless given prior permission by the handler.
5. Personnel will in no way indicate to the public that the Facility Dog conducts work typically related to other specialty police service dogs such as, but not limited to, patrol, apprehension, drug detection, or explosives detection.
6. The handler's next available supervisor may also provide any necessary authorization as listed above.

VIII. Media Guidelines

A. General Guidelines

1. No external promotion surrounding the new dog will take place without express permission from ISCOB command staff. The University of Maryland Police Department will consult with the Canine Companions client services program manager according to MOU/contract to discuss the best timing for promotion. This includes media opportunities, formal announcements of the facility dog, large public events, etc.
2. The Canine Companions facility dog must wear their Canine Companions logo vest in any photos or videos. The logo on the vest must be visible in all photos and videos used for publicity.
3. The vest cannot be altered in any way that would disrupt or distract from the Canine Companions logo and approved patches. The University of Maryland Police Department must check with the Canine Companions client services department before making any additions or alterations to the vest.
4. Canine Companions facility dogs should always be referred to as such, and never as therapy dogs, emotional support dogs, or any other title.

B. Media and Press Releases

1. Canine Companions must approve any press releases or publicity regarding facility dogs acquired through their organization.

2. Press releases must mention Canine Companions and credit Canine Companions with providing the facility dog to the facility at no cost.
3. The University of Maryland Police Department must follow photo and video guidelines for media opportunities. The Facility dog should always be wearing vest and be on-leash.

ⁱ [Facility Dogs - Canine Companions](#)