UPWDA Obedience Certification

Amended 10/11/2021

The Obedience Certification Test is used to determine the police service dog's ability and proficiency in performing off-lead obedience exercises; as well as, the handler's total control of his or her K9. K9 teams must obtain Obedience Certification prior to testing for Aggression Control Certification.

Obedience will be conducted off lead.

The K9 team will start in heel/sit position, and must complete the following in order to become certified:

- A minimum of two right and left turns and one about face.
- Each leg must be a minimum of thirty feet in distance.
- The team must walk forward, and at a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler, while walking without breaking stride, must down/stay their dog and continue walking. The Master Trainer will then notify the handler when to call his dog to the heel position.
- The team will stop once the dog is in heel position. The handler will stay their dog and walk away from their dog. The handler will turn and face the dog at a distance of at least twenty-five feet.
- The Master Trainer will advise the handler to complete the following commands: sit and down by voice, and/or sit and down by hand signals.
- The Master Trainer will advise the handler to call his dog to heel and stop/down him at the halfway point. Once the dog has stopped, the Master Trainer will advise the handler to call his dog to heel.
- Gun fire will be tested in the obedience phase and will include four rounds of .22 or .38 caliber blank ammunition to be fired by the handler with two rounds standing, and two rounds moving. The dog must not be aggressive towards the handler, and must not flee the scene.

The police service dog team will be tested in the following three phases:

- Heeling phase
- Walking phase
- Distance phase

There is no specific order to the three phases, and they may be tested in any order. They will be judged on a pass or fail basis.

Under no circumstances will cruel or abusive corrections be tolerated. Any Master Trainer who observes cruel or abusive corrections will document and forward violation information to the United Police Work Dog Association Headquarters.

Heeling Phase

This phase will consist of the following exercises:

- Normal pace
- Fast pace, double-time slow pace, or half step
- A minimum of two right turns, two left turns, and two about turns
- Each leg must be a minimum of thirty feet long
- Different phases may be conducted during any leg. During one leg, the team must heel through a minimum of three stationary people.

Walking Phase

- The handler and his or her canine will start from the ‘finish’ position and walk forward together.
- At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler, without breaking stride, will ‘stay’ his or her canine (sit or down) and continue walking.
- At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler, while continuing to walk away from his or her canine, will command his or her canine to ‘heel’.

- The Master Trainer will instruct the team to ‘about turn’ and then to walk forward.
- At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler, without breaking stride, will ‘stay’ his or her canine (sit or down) and continue walking.
- At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler will turn and retrieve his or her canine and return to the original starting position.

Distance Phase

- At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler will leave his or her canine in ‘stay’ at a distance of no less than twenty-five feet, or more than fifty feet.
- The handler will be directed to turn and face his or her canine.
- The Master Trainer will advise handler to complete the following commands: ‘sit’ and ‘down’ by voice, and/or ‘sit’ and ‘down’ by hand signal.

Note: Choice and order of commands or signals will be at the discretion of the Master Trainer.

- The Master Trainer will advise the handler to recall his or her canine by hand signal or by voice command.
- Prior to the canine reaching the handler, the Master Trainer will advise the handler to ‘stop; his or her canine by hand signal or by voice command. Stopping the canine may be a ‘down,’ ‘sit,’ or ‘stay’ command.
- After the canine has stopped, the Master Trainer will advise the handler to recall his or her canine to the ‘heel’ position by hand signal or by voice command.

This test will be conducted on a pass or fail basis.

Upon completion of the test, the Master Trainer will determine if the team should be certified. If certified, the handler and canine are certified as a team. In the event the canine changes handlers, a new team will then exist, which

will immediately invalidate the previous certification. The new team will then need to be certified.

So long as the member remains in good standing and his or her membership dues are current, this certification will be valid for one year from the date of issue.