

Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standard Board

Narcotic Detection Canine

Minimum Certification Requirements

To meet the “minimum certification requirements”, all canine narcotic detection dogs must be trained to the following standard:

1. Initial Training

- Training shall be conducted by a competent, qualified narcotic detector canine training agency which utilizes a structured curriculum with specific training and learning objectives. Such training agencies must be approved by the ILESTB staff.
- The narcotic detection training course shall include training the canine to detect marijuana/hashish, cocaine, heroin/opiate derivatives and methamphetamine.
- Training shall include varying quantities of the substances listed above.
- Training shall include exposing the canine to a variety of different types of searches and locations.
- Initial training shall represent all conditions that could be encountered during the certification process which is detailed immediately below.

2. Certification

- Certification for narcotic detection dogs should be comprised of a comprehensive assessment, which includes elements of odor recognition as outlined in SWGDOG General Guidelines.
- Certification should not be conducted in areas in which narcotics detection canine teams have recently trained or certified.
- Natural distracters are normally present in the testing area.
- Placement of distracters in the certification area is required when no natural distracters are present.
- Care must be taken not to place artificial distractions in a manner that causes contamination of the test substance odor.
- Proofing/Verification of certification area should be conducted prior to the actual certification using a certified canine team who is not participating in the certification.
- The narcotic detection canine shall be tested on the substance odors for which it is trained.
- All odors for which the dog will be certified must be tested.
- The test shall be designed to resemble normal operational searches by using vehicles, buildings, parcels, baggage, etc. to conceal substances.
- Certification testing shall be conducted with no less than 5 grams of the actual substance to be detected. Pseudo-narcotics shall not be used during certification.

- The test shall include a variety of searches designed to evaluate the canine’s ability to recognize and respond to the odor.
- The test shall include scenarios resembling searches within the normal operational environment and include at least 3 different searches (see categories below) designed to evaluate the canine’s ability to recognize and respond to the odor. Not all odors will necessarily be in each type of search and some search areas shall contain no odors (blanks).
- Types of searches and suggested maximum search times are listed below:
 - Parcel/baggage searches with 2-6 articles per odor should take 1 minute to search 2-6 parcels.
 - Building/room searches (the room may contain zero to three aids depending upon the size and environmental conditions.)
 - Rooms that are 18.6 –111.5 m (200-1200 sq. ft.) with furniture should take 1.5 minute per 9.3 m / 28 m (100 sq.ft./1000 cu.ft.).
 - Motor vehicle searches including interiors and exteriors (3-6 vehicles per search using passenger cars and trucks, 3 minutes per vehicle).
 - Open area/perimeter searches of 93 – 930 m (1,000-10,000 sq.ft.) per search, should take 1-3 minutes per 93 m (1000 sq. ft.).
- The canine must demonstrate the ability to detect all trained odors.
- For successful certification, the canine shall achieve at least a 90% confirmed alert rate for certification, and a false alert rate not to exceed 10%, as defined and calculated in SWSGDOG General Guidelines.
- Disqualification due to time should be left to the discretion of the certifying authority. The test should end if the certifying authority determines that the canine is no longer working (e.g. observable behaviors to be added in final annotated version).

All training courses attended must relate to the above outlined “minimum certification requirements”.