



Nottinghamshire

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

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Author: Kayt Radford
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Signed: _____ **Date:** April 2019
Name: Charlotte Radford
Post: Chief Finance Officer

Authorised (Head of Dept/FEG)

Signed: _____ **Date:** April 2019
Name: Kayt Radford
Post: Volunteer Manager

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SECTION 1 VERSION CONTROL

Version No.	Date	Post Holder/Author	Post	Reason for Issue
1	27/02/13	Jackie Nash	Volunteer Manager	Medical Retirement Policy for Police Dogs
2	01/12/15	Jackie Nash	Volunteer Manager	Revised and Updated.
3	01/05/19	Kayt Radford	Volunteer Manager	Revised and updated.

SECTION 2 BACKGROUND

When police dogs retire, in many instances they will remain with their handler at their family home.

Veterinary fees are paid for in respect of working dogs, but financial assistance ends when the dog retires. The responsibility for the dogs ongoing welfare transfers with ownership to the handlers (or others who take ownership).

Some dogs work up to their retirement age, but others who may have been injured on duty or are unable to carry out their duties due to illness and therefore, may retire earlier than expected.

The purpose of the Medical Retirement Scheme for Police Dogs is to assist with financial support in the provision of healthcare for retired police dogs.

SECTION 3 AIMS / OBJECTIVES

When a dog approaches retirement either due to ill health or old age, a retirement fund will ensure that medical expenses relating to work related injuries/illnesses are reimbursed for 3 years, up to £500 per year, based on an individual veterinary assessment. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

SECTION 4 DETAILS

4.1 Governance

Any scheme that is introduced needs to ensure it is fully independent with robust governance arrangements, which are regularly reviewed.

It is proposed that the decision making relating to this policy is undertaken by an independent panel.

In the interests of independence and fairness a report from a veterinary practice (not currently used by the Force for veterinary services) will be considered together with a report from the Dog Section Inspector. The policy and procedure will be reviewed every 3 years and alternative options, not already explored, will be considered for appropriateness to Nottinghamshire.

4.2 Panel

A Panel will be established made up of a Force Regional Representative (Supt) an Animal Welfare Visitor, the Animal Welfare Scheme Manager, the Chief Finance Officer and the Veterinary providing the assessment.

This Panel will meet annually and if necessary, during the year where additional retirement above those estimated needs to be considered.

4.3 Panel Decisions

The Panel are delegated authority to:

- Consider the reports of the Independent Vet and Dog Section Inspector on the dogs due to retire.
- Agree the specific payments that will be covered for each individual dog, up to a value of £500 per annum for 3 years.
- Consider and approve additional payments for exceptional circumstances up to a further £500 during the 3 years or for a further payment of £500 after the initial 3 year period.
- Make recommendations on potential changes to the Scheme.

4.4 Reports

4.4.1 Inspectors Report

Inspector notifies when a dog is approaching retirement. A Health Check is undertaken on the dog and where the Inspector feels he/she needs to can highlight exceptional issues that relate to individual dogs for the Panel to consider.

4.4.2 Veterinary Report

Following examination of the dog(s) and the medical records the Independent Vet will produce a report indicating what injuries, illnesses are a result of working as a police dog and what medication or treatment the dog is likely to need over the next 3 years as a result.

4.5 Illness after Retirement

During the first 3 years, for any dog developing illness or injury which could possibly be attributed to being caused by work as a police dog, the dog handler will make a report to the Inspector of the Dog Section. This report will be progressed to his/her line manager and ultimately to the Supt. The Supt, if supportive of the request will then submit the report to the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner to present to the Panel.

The dog will be reassessed by the independent veterinary as to whether the illness/injury is due to the age of the dog, an unrelated condition since retirement or a condition more than likely caused by working conditions.

A dog developing a condition after the first 3 years will be assessed on individual circumstances following an initial request to the Panel. The Panel will decide whether this is an exceptional circumstance and what course of action to take (eg further vet review).

Consideration of cases where the dog retired prior to this scheme will also be considered by the Panel following examination by the Vet.

4.6 Payment of Funds

A Revenue Reserve has been set aside to pump prime any scheme set in place.

The Panel will determine what payments are approved for each individual dogs treatment. This may reflect a percentage contribution where illness/injury cannot be fully attributed to being work related.

The owner of the dog will be responsible for taking the dog for veterinary treatment. Where the costs relate to the approved treatments the veterinary practice should be requested to invoice the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The invoice should detail specifically the treatment being invoiced.

The payment of this invoice will follow the usual procedure for creditor payments, once the Animal Welfare Scheme Manager has verified that this is an approved payment and within the financial and time limits of the scheme.

Where a contribution to total costs is awarded by the Panel, this will be reimbursed to the dog owner on providing evidence (i.e. itemised invoice) of total payment.

4.7 Current Veterinarian

For the purposes of this scheme the Independent Veterinary Advice Contract has been awarded to Minster Vets in Southwell.

4.8 Current Predictions

There are no dogs at this current time suffering any major illness or condition that will affect its working life.

SECTION 5 LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

This document has been drafted to comply with the general and specific duties in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Data Protection, Freedom of Information Act, European Convention of Human Rights and other legislation relevant to the area of policing such as, Employment Act 2002, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and Employment Relations Act 1999.