

**GOVERNING RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR  
CERTIFICATION - FIREARMS DETECTION CANINES  
& Optional Crowd screening**

The purpose of this test is to evaluate the ability of a canine to detect and find firearms and ammunition (both live and expended) concealed in various locations. All certifications are good through December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. (I.E. If you certify on April 1st, 2023, your certification will not expire until December 31st, 2024). **Firearms testing is not offered at a National Trial.** \*Approved 6-12-22

**\*FIREARM SAFETY IS A MUST. The USPCA mandates that all guns used be unloaded. A safety officer designated by the Chief Judge will confirm that all guns used during this test be checked and confirmed to be unloaded. The USPCA will not sanction a test without a safety officer.**

**\*ALL Judges for the FIREARMS TEST should safely secure ALL personal weapons and ALL live or spent ammunition away from the testing venue to avoid interfering with the canine's detection of the hidden testing aids.**

**\*ALL canines performing this test SHALL be passive alert canines for safety reasons.**

**1. TESTING:**

A. The test will consist of three parts, **vehicle search, interior room search and area search**. For certification purposes at least one odor from each group (Firearm, Live Ammunition, and Expended Ammunition "casings") shall be represented in the operational testing. No combination of live ammunition or firearms shall be placed in the same hide location. **Live ammunition and casings must be placed in scent box or left in its original container, magazine or carton.** All firearms used for testing must be secure with a trigger locking device or cable lock.

B. Amounts- A minimum of one firearm **or** six rounds of ammunition (live or expended) for each hide will be used for testing. All firearms used for certification must have been fired within 24-72 hours of certification (verified by Chief Judge). Expended casings will then be collected and also used for operational testing.

C. Soak time- Time placed of the operational testing odors, will be one half hour (30 minutes) before the first search.

**GROUP 1: FIREARMS (UNLOADED)**

Shotgun, pistol or rifle. (Any caliber, no minimum barrel length, semi-automatic or revolver) Must be secured with a trigger locking device or a cable lock.

**GROUP 2: LIVE AMMUNITION**

Shotgun, pistol or rifle. (Minimum of six rounds) Must be placed in scent box or left in its original container, magazine, or carton.

**GROUP 3: EXPENDED AMMUNITION (SHELL CASINGS)**

Shotgun, pistol or rifle. Expended ammunition is defined as spent ammunition (shell casing) that has been

fired within **24-72** hours of certification. (Minimum of six rounds)

#### **FIREARMS OPERATIONAL VEHICLE TEST:**

- A.** Five vehicles will be used. The vehicles may be of any type or model and may include autos, trucks, buses, airplanes, boats etc.
- B.** The order of the vehicles will be approved by the chief judge and will permit team's easy access for searching.
- C.** The operational testing odors can be placed inside or on the outside of the vehicles.
- D.** There will be two hides used for this phase. No two hides will be placed on the same vehicle.
- E.** If only the outside of the vehicles are searched, there will be a ten (10) minute time limit total with a two-minute warning at the eight (8) minute mark. If the interior of a vehicle is searched there will be an additional one minute per vehicle added to the total time. If all five vehicle interiors are searched the maximum time limit will be fifteen (15) minutes with a two-minute warning.

#### **FIREARMS OPERATIONAL INDOOR TEST:**

- A.** The indoor search will consist of three (3) separate rooms. Each room will be a minimum of 200 square feet. There will be a time limit of one and one half (1.5) minutes for every 100 square feet. Large rooms can (optional) be sectioned off with a makeshift or temporary barrier to reduce the room to the 200 square foot minimum. The unused part of this room cannot be used as one of the three required searchable rooms. (I.E. a large classroom can be divided off to create a 200-foot search area, but the rest of the room cannot be used for the trial).
- B.** The rooms utilized will contain furnishings compatible with room type. No empty rooms will be searched.
- C.** There will be two hides contained within the three (3) rooms, with no more than one hide per room used.
- D.** For inside/room searches, no hide may be higher than six (6) feet from the ground or floor.
- E.** There will be a two (2) minute warning before time expiring for the exercise. The handler can indicate the location of the hides after time expires.

#### **FIREARMS OPERATIONAL AREA TEST:**

- A.** Separate search areas will be provided to each team when available. There will be two hides in each search area.
- B.** The area will be approximately 30 yards by 30 yards. The search area may have brush, trees and/or foliage covering the area. **It should be thick enough as to hide the visual location of the hidden item.**
- C.** This test will have fifteen (15) minute time limit with a two (2) minute warning. The handler can call the location of the testing aids after the time limit has expired.
- D.** Care should be taken to use areas that will allow the canine to work off lead safely. The handler may enter the search area to direct the canine. The canine must be able to work with judges accompanying the handler, however if the judges can observe without entering the area this may also be done as not to interfere with the working canine. The judges will stay in back of the handler and work under the direction of the handler if the judges enter the area.

## SCORING

A maximum total point score of 300 is possible with certification (passing) at 210 points. To certify the canine team must find 5 of the 6 training aids.

Please note that the **GENERAL RULES AND DEFINITIONS** of Detection tests will be used as a general guideline for Firearms testing.

*Teams failing to successfully certify will not immediately be given a second chance. Multiple tests of the same team will not be conducted. The team has to undergo a period of retraining, documenting successful performance, before any attempt at re-certification. Only official Certificates of Certification (provided by the national Office) will be issued to participants who successfully pass a USPCA Certification test.*

**Chief Judges are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the paperwork.**

Mail or E-mail completed trial paperwork to include: (within 30 days of the trial)

- Original Master score sheet
- Judges and Scorekeepers list with events judged
- The high-low sheets showing the scores of all judges.

Email or upload all trial paperwork at [www.uspcak9.com](http://www.uspcak9.com) or email [secretary@uspcak9.com](mailto:secretary@uspcak9.com)

## **CROWD SCREENING ENDORSEMENT (OPTIONAL) FIREARMS**

This testing will be offered to all participants of the existing USPCA Firearms Detection Certification test. Participants must participate in and pass all existing Firearms testing and would then receive a certificate of certification as a "Firearms Detection Dog". If the team wishes to take the optional Crowd Screening testing, this would be offered at the conclusion of the firearms certification and the Certificate of Certification would be marked: "Firearms Detection Dog with Crowd Screening." **NO APPREHENSION TRAINED DOGS WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN A CROWD SCREENING TEST.**

A. Odor- The Chief Judge shall select a handgun or pistol from the above list shown earlier in #1.

B. The Crowd Screening phase involves one venue with one find. The dog will demonstrate the ability to locate a moving or static odor, which is person born, while searching (straight line as well as at an angle) a crowd of people. This phase requires at least three judges, with pass/fail scoring.

C. **A minimum of 1 handgun/pistol and maximum of 2 handguns/pistols, fired within 24-72 hours of the certification** (verified by the Chief Judge) will be worn or carried (hidden) on a decoy pedestrian. The gun (**again, safety is a must, and this gun will be double checked by the safety officer to ensure that it is unloaded and safe**) will be placed on the decoy by the decoy himself, or by an assistant who will **not** be in the venue during testing. The handgun must be placed or secreted on the decoy in such a way as to not be visually detected by the handler or the canine. If a backpack is used, other pedestrians must also carry backpacks. Ensure that there are no other guns or ammunition on any backpacks, purses or bags (other than the target) on the pedestrians and the pedestrians should not have recently worn or handled a duty weapon.

D. The soak time or set time will be a minimum of 30 minutes. Care should be taken to ensure that the "target decoy" does not mingle with the other pedestrians or judges. If the target decoy has to be exchanged with a 2<sup>nd</sup> decoy, the exact same odor and amount will be used. The original target decoy is exempt from further participation as a pedestrian.

E. There should be a minimum of 15 (counting the target decoy) pedestrians. (Maximum number being 40) Pedestrians can be other dog handlers (who are not testing in the crowd screening) and other volunteers or other judges. Pedestrians can walk around, either alone or with other pedestrians, or they may choose to stand and talk with other pedestrians. Pedestrians and volunteers should behave normally,

walking at a normal pace, with other pedestrians or by themselves- or they may choose to stand in a group of people. (**never alone when standing**) They will not attempt to avoid the working k9, but if walking, should continue progress as they would if they were walking through an airport, mall or sports venue.

F. The venue will be a minimum of 5,000 square feet. This can be a long hallway, warehouse, gym, stadium area, etc.

G. When a K9 indicates on the decoy, the handler will tell the judge that their dog has alerted to a trained odor and will identify the specific decoy by description or by pointing at the decoy. If the K9 is correct, the judge will say "yes" or "reward your dog". If the dog is incorrect, the judge will say "do not reward your dog" or "no". (this will be considered a false alert)

H. The team is allowed ONE false alert. A second false alert will be considered a fail of the crowd screening endorsement. (no Certification) Crowd screening testing should be conducted within 48 hours of the Firearms testing. (after obtaining USPCA Firearms Detection certification)

I. The Crowd Screening test has a 15- minute time limit.

J. Firearms and Crowd Screening for Firearms will not be an option at National Dog Trials.