



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 109:2-7-03 Minimum standards for certification of law enforcement canine units.

Effective: [September 14, 2026](#)

(A) Pursuant to division (A)(10) of section 109.73 of the Revised Code, the commission has established minimum standards for the certification of law enforcement canine units, which include the successful completion of an examination for certification. In order to be eligible for the required certification examination, the canine unit must meet the listed requirements.

(B) Patrol-related canine units

- (1) The unit must have successfully completed a training program approved by the executive director designed to prepare canine units to perform law enforcement duties. Such program must include training in those areas tested in the examination for certification.
- (2) Documentation of successful completion of the training program must be provided to the evaluator before the unit is eligible to be tested for certification. Such documentation shall include a letter or certificate of completion from the trainer or other official representative of the training program attesting that the unit has been trained in all the areas which are listed in paragraph (B)(4) of this rule, and that the unit successfully met the standards of the program.
- (3) The executive director may, upon request from a law enforcement agency which employs a patrol-related canine unit, consider comparable training of the canine and the handler. Such a request shall be accompanied by documentation of the training received by both the canine and the handler which must be sufficient in the aggregate to meet or exceed the minimum standards required by paragraph (B)(4) of this rule. Approval of the request shall be granted in writing and shall apply only to the unit for whom the request was filed. Should the executive director deny the request, he shall comply with the provisions of rule 109:2-7-06 of the Administrative Code.
- (4) Those units which meet the minimum eligibility requirements shall be eligible to complete the examination for certification of patrol-related canine units. The certification examination shall include testing in the following areas:
 - (a) Obedience
 - (b) Building search
 - (c) Area search
 - (d) Criminal apprehension

(C) Special purpose canine units



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- (1) The unit must have successfully completed a training program approved by the executive director designed to prepare canine units to perform special purpose law enforcement duties. Such program must include training in one or more of the areas which are tested in the examination for certification, as listed in paragraph (B)(3) of rule 109:2-7-02 of the Administrative Code.
- (2) Documentation of successful completion of the training program must be provided to the evaluator before the unit is eligible to be tested for certification. Such documentation shall include a letter or certificate of completion from the trainer or other official representative of the training program attesting that the unit has been trained in one or more of the areas which are listed in paragraph (B)(3) of rule 109:2-7-02 of the Administrative Code and that the unit successfully met the standards of the program.
- (3) The executive director may, upon request from a law enforcement agency which employs a special purpose canine unit, consider comparable training of the canine and the handler. Such a request shall be accompanied by documentation of the training received by both the canine and the handler which must be sufficient in the aggregate to meet or exceed the minimum standards required by paragraph (C)(4) of this rule. Approval of the request shall be granted in writing and shall apply only to the unit for whom the request was filed. Should the executive director deny the request, he shall comply with the provisions of rule 109:2-7-06 of the Administrative Code.
- (4) Those units which meet the minimum eligibility requirements shall be eligible to complete the certification examination for special purpose canine units. Certification can be granted for one or more of the following special purposes:
 - (a) Tracking
 - (b) Article search
 - (c) Narcotics detection
 - (d) Explosives detection
 - (e) Any other topic designated by the executive director

(D) Crisis response canine units

- (1) The unit must have successfully completed a training program approved by the executive director designed to prepare canine units to perform as crisis response canine duties for law enforcement.



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- (2) Documentation of successful completion of the training program must be provided to the evaluator before the unit is eligible to be tested for certification. Such documentation shall include a letter or certificate of completion from the trainer or other official representative of the training program attesting that the unit has been trained in one or more of the areas which are listed in paragraph (D)(4) of this rule.
- (3) The executive director may, upon request from a law enforcement agency which employs a crisis response canine unit, consider comparable training of the canine and the handler. Such a request shall be accompanied by documentation of the training received by both the canine and the handler which must be sufficient in the aggregate to meet or exceed the minimum standards required by paragraph (D)(4) of this rule. Approval of the request shall be granted in writing and shall apply only to the unit for whom the request was filed. Should the executive director deny the request, he shall comply with the provisions of rule 109:2-7-06 of the Administrative Code.
- (4) Those units which meet the minimum eligibility requirements shall be eligible to complete the certification examination for crisis response canine units. Certification can be granted for:

Crisis response canine unit when the curriculum integrates training following the crisis intervention team principles, co-response models, peer support strategies, and advanced handling techniques, ensuring crisis response canine teams are prepared to safely and appropriately support individuals experiencing trauma or crisis.

- (E) All examinations shall be conducted by commission-certified evaluators in a manner prescribed by the executive director.