

Dog Encounter Task Force at San Diego AWOL

Safe Dog Encounter Training Program Outline

Importance: *“Dogs communicate through body language – their own and reading and reacting to yours. Unless you have background or training in these body languages, mistaken interpretations can cause tragic events. How an officer reads and responds to a dog’s behavior is the most important factor in determining whether a dog will bite, attack, or withdraw.”*

The Problem of Dog-Related Incidents and Encounters COPS, U.S. Department of Justice

Our training package, at Dog Encounter Task Force, is quite comprehensive and has the ability to give officers/first responders a whole new skill set through the ability to better understand canine behavior within most all circumstances including: whether there is actually a threat or if the dog is just displaying distance creating behavior, how to project the correct body language in order to diffuse a large percentage of situations with a canine and most importantly no less than 19 less-lethal methods of controlling a dog encounter without the use of lethal force.

An outline of our training would include the following:

Why is this such an issue in our country today?

Statistics with information such as:

- Households with dogs and their role in the household
- % of encounters with dogs for first responders
- % of vicious dogs
- % of shootings that involve dogs
- % of shootings reduced after safe dog encounter training
- Bite statistics

Core Solutions from Dog Encounter Task Force at San Diego AWOL (The entire structure of our training, at Dog Encounter Task Force, is built around these 9 Core Solutions.)

- Learn about dog behavior/body language in order to have the ability to accurately assess a real threat.
- Do not give total “buy-in” to the language describing event involving a dog as many times it is inaccurate and exaturated.
- Have your Dispatch inquire about the presence of dog/s and request dogs be secured in a bathroom or bedroom with the doors closed.
- EXPECT to find a dog at every law enforcement contact – 40% of all residences have dogs and you will encounter dogs on many calls other than residential.
- Have an advance non-lethal plan for each type of call.

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- Project the correct body language as your body language has the power to totally diffuse a dog encounter.
- Learn additional appropriate uses for the less-lethal tools you already have on your body or in your car.
- When ACO's arrive let them do their job.
- Use only amount of force necessary and objectively reasonable to neutralize the threat.
- A deputy's/officer's actions during a dog encounter cannot be based on personal bias against dogs or a particular breed of dog.

Language (reporting party, dispatcher and/or people on scene) – It's importance in appropriately dealing with dog encounters.

Common triggers for canines' "displays of aggression"

Checklist on how to safely approach the dog

Checklist on accurately assessing the dog

Department of Justice Dog Encounter Videos

- Overview
- Communicating with Dogs
- Tactical Considerations
- Use of Force Considerations
- Legal Considerations

Dog/People body language slides and discussion. These are real photos of dogs and dog body language – NOT just drawings.

Canine stress escalation ladder and what to do when....

Solutions for loose dogs

Barking/ lunging/retreating and quick movement – what it all means

19 Non-Lethal Options for Dealing with a Dog Encounter

The Hawthorne, CA (video) dog shooting incident – In-depth analysis of dog/people body language and what went wrong

Types of police calls and advance plans for successful dog encounters with safety for all