



California Police Chiefs Association

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PRESS RELEASE

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New Legislation Introduced on Police K9s

SACRAMENTO, CA – Today, new legislation was introduced to standardize the use of police K9s across California. Assembly Bill 400, authored by Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco (D-Downey), is sponsored by three of the largest statewide law enforcement organizations in the state – the California Police Chiefs Association (CPCA), the California State Sheriffs' Association (CSSA), and the Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC). AB 400 will require all law enforcement agencies with K9 units to maintain policies that meet or exceed the recent guidelines released yesterday by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

“AB 400 represents a significant step forward in standardizing law enforcement K9 programs,” states Tracy Avelar, President of CPCA. “As a result, we can elevate the bar for the use of these critical public safety partners that provide irreplaceable protection to our officers and communities.”

“AB 400 will ensure uniformity, accountability, and excellence in the use of police canines throughout our state, enhancing both officer and community safety,” said Assemblywoman Blanca Pacheco (D-Downey). “By implementing these comprehensive standards, California will continue to lead the nation in responsible and effective law enforcement practices.”

The updated [POST K9 guidelines](#) follow a year of conversations regarding the use of police K9s that began during the 2023-24 legislative session. The guidelines were then developed with input from stakeholders across California, including legal experts, K9 trainers, law enforcement professionals, and members of the public. The guidelines include legal standards regarding the use of force, minimum training requirements, necessary skills to be demonstrated, and more.

“This measure is reflective of the law enforcement community’s unwavering commitment to ensure the highest level of training and accountability for K-9 programs,” states CSSA President, Orange County Sheriff Don Barnes.

“Whether searching for a violent suspect, or identifying a potential threat, police K9s play an exceptional role in protecting their partners and communities, which is why our officers stand in such strong support of AB 400,” states PORAC President, Brian Marvel.

AB 400 will next be assigned to the relevant policy committee in the Assembly and scheduled for a hearing in the coming months.