



FEMA National US&R Response System Criteria for Screening Canine Candidates

- **Canine candidates should be one of the following breeds which have statistically proven successful in gaining certification in the US&R program:**
 - Labrador Retriever
 - German Shepherd Dog
 - Border Collie
 - Belgian Malinois
 - Golden Retriever
- **Canine candidate should be between 12 and 24 months of age when screened.**
- **Screening Process (Attachment B)**
 - Administered by two rostered FEMA evaluators
- **Medical Exam to be completed prior to acquisition (Attachment C)**

ATTACHMENT B

**FEMA National US&R Response System
Process for Screening Canine Candidates**

Canine: _____ **Date:** _____
Handler: _____ **Screeener:** _____

Canine screening candidates must be physically capable of performing the exercises described below.

Screening should be performed on FSA level rubble, unfamiliar to the canine, which is from easy to moderate difficulty and includes surface changes (e.g., concrete to wood pallets). Prior to screening, allow handler and canine 15 minutes to become acclimated to the rubble site. Handler should perform short retrieves and engage canine in play with a favorite toy. After the 15 minute acclimation to the rubble, canine should have at least 15 minutes of rest.

Tie-out

Set-up:

Tie out canine with 6 ft lead ensuring that the lead can be secured at the handle-end of the lead, not at the canine. Handler leaves canine, without issuing a command. After 1 minute, a person walks by with a canine unknown to the screened canine. On the first pass, the unknown canine is away from the tied-out canine. The person/canine walk laterally by the tied-out canine, then reverse direction and return, this time with the unknown canine on the inside. Make certain that the canines cannot physically contact each other.

A stranger approaches the tied-out canine, laterally, and unties the canine, at the end of the canine's leash, not at the collar, then returns the canine to its handler.

The canine must score YES to continue with screening.

Scoring (Borderline performance defaults to "No")

(circle score)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indifferent or friendly• Tail up, wagging or relaxed• Approaches in friendly way or completely ignores	YES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fearful or aggressive• Tail tucked, trembling, crouching, moves away• Rigid posture, growling, barking hackles up	NO

Notes

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Hunt on Rubble

Set-up:

The handler, canine and an assistant begin the exercise on the ground at the edge of the rubble in a different area from previous exercises. Select a start point that allows the canine to directly enter the rubble. The assistant throws the toy to an evaluator on the rubble. The evaluator gets the canine’s attention, then throws the toy to a second evaluator/assistant on the rubble and out of sight of the canine. That evaluator/assistant places the toy at least 10 yds from the perimeter, in specific locations as described below.

Ensure that the canine cannot see the handler while searching for the toy, unless the canine returns to the edge of the rubble.

Canine must hunt for the toy for a minimum of 1 minute on at least one of the throws. If the canine has not located the toy in 1 minute, the evaluator will locate the toy, show it to the canine, re-place the toy, and give the canine the opportunity to retrieve it.

- 1st. Immediate release, toy in obvious find on stable surface
- 2nd. 15 second delay release, toy in a depression in the rubble

All participants relocate to a different start point at least 15 yds from first 2 throws

- 3rd. 30 second delay release, toy on a different surface
- 4th. 60 second delay release, toy at least 20 yds from the perimeter of rubble

Scoring (Borderline performance defaults to the lower numerical value)
(circle score)

	Time Delay	0	15	30	60
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not enter rubble. 		0	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tentatively enters rubble • Does not hunt for the toy • Repeatedly comes back to look at handler or to return to handler • Avoids surface changes (e.g., concrete to pallets), unstable or unpleasant surfaces • Repeatedly traverses same route • Will not retrieve toy once it is located 		1	1	1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enters rubble by most direct route. • Hunts for toy at a moderate pace, a trot • Occasionally comes back to look at handler • Moves slowly and tentatively when surface changes (e.g., concrete to pallets) • Searches area thoroughly and locates toy or searches until the end of the time limit • Slow and tentative when returning to handler • Retrieves toy but drops toy due to lack of interest when returning to handler 		2	2	2	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enters rubble by most direct route without delay • Hunts for the toy at a fast pace, a run • Little or no hesitation on surface changes • Searches area quickly and locates toy or searches until the end of the time limit • Retrieves toy and carries it back to handler without dropping toy (unless toy is dropped in anticipation of more play) • Never leaves search area and stays focused 		3	3	3	3

