

Union Contract
Between the K9s and Conservationists
Effective: September 2, 2024

Preamble

We are thrilled to announce that the K9s and Conservationists have come to an agreement on the first-ever contract for the newly formed K9 Union. This agreement affirms our commitment to the welfare, dignity, and working conditions of our canine colleagues. While we acknowledge that some of the terms reflect our collective sense of humor, our dedication to species-appropriate care and organized labor is sincere.

Article I: Scope and Purpose

This contract applies to all canine workers employed under the Conservation Canine Program (hereafter referred to as "K9s"). The purpose of this agreement is to ensure that K9s are treated with the respect, care, and working conditions they deserve, in line with best practices for working dogs and labor rights.

Article II: Working Hours

- **Section 1: Maximum Nose Time**
K9s shall not exceed 20 hours per week of olfactory labor ("nose time") during deployment periods.
 - **Section 2: Minimum Rest Time**
K9s are guaranteed a minimum of 12 hours of rest per 24-hour period.
 - **Section 3: Recreation Time**
K9s shall receive at least 4 hours of unstructured free time daily for play and species-typical behaviors, year-round.
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Article III: Compensation and Benefits

- **Section 1: Travel, Housing, Food, and Healthcare**
All expenses related to travel, housing, food, and healthcare shall be fully covered by

the Conservationists.

- **Section 2: BarkBox Pension Plan**

K9s shall be enrolled in the BarkBox Pension Program, with monthly enrichment packages provided for their enjoyment and well-being.

- **Section 3: Field Rations**

In-the-field rations will be increased by 30–50% based on caloric needs and activity levels.

- **Section 4: Snacks**

K9s are entitled to 10% of all snacks in the field, with toxic or unsafe snacks exempted from this clause.

Article IV: Living Conditions

- **Section 1: Bed Space Allocation**

K9s are entitled to no less than 50% of available bed space. In multi-dog projects, this space shall be allocated based on seniority.

- **Section 2: Camp Chef**

A Camp Chef shall be designated on all overnight deployments to prepare meals for the human and canine teams.

Article V: Wellness and Support

- **Section 1: Physical Therapy and Massage**

K9s shall receive daily physical therapy or massage sessions to support recovery and prevent injury.

- **Section 2: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Appropriate PPE will be provided for all working environments.

- **Section 3: Trash Rights**

K9s reserve the right of first refusal on any trash encountered during the course of their duties.

- **Section 4: Bowl Licking**

Bowl licking privileges are to be shared equitably among K9s unless otherwise agreed

upon through consensus.

Article VI: Training and Supervision

- **Section 1: Job Training**
Comprehensive job training will be provided for all new K9 hires, tailored to individual aptitudes.
 - **Section 2: Supervisory Standards**
All supervising Conservationists must hold certifications in dog training with a demonstrated focus on positive reinforcement techniques.
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Article VII: Employment Terms

- **Section 1: Minimum Guaranteed Employment**
All K9s are guaranteed a minimum of 3 months of employment per calendar year.
 - **Section 2: Seniority and Assignment Rights**
Project assignments, rest areas, and privileges shall be determined in part by seniority, which shall be maintained in good standing.
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Article VIII: Statement of Values

We affirm that dogs have a right to work, play, eat, rest, and goof off. We believe in the importance of supporting species- and breed-typical behaviors. We acknowledge that rest and play are as critical as work for long-term well-being and performance. This contract reflects our commitment to ensuring a sustainable, respectful, and mutually beneficial working relationship between K9s and Conservationists.

Signatories

 *Barley, Union Steward*
 *Scottie, Suki, Ellie, Niffler, Members of the K9 Bargaining Unit*
 *Kayla Fratt, Rachel Hamre, and Heather Nootbaar*
 *K9 Conservationists*