



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
COLLIN COUNTY, TEXAS

JIM SKINNER, SHERIFF

Date: April 10, 2024

To: Commissioners Court

From: Jim Skinner, Sheriff *JOS*

Re: Acceptance of K9 Donation made by Operation Underground Railroad (O.U.R)

Operation Underground Railroad (O.U.R) is seeking to donate a specially trained K-9 for use by the Collin County Sheriff's Office Child Exploitation Unit (CEU) to detect volatile organic compounds found in electronic storage devices (ESD). The ESDs often contain multiple forms of child sexual assault material (CSAM).

The Sheriff's Office will absorb the related costs of K-9 care and maintenance within the existing M&O budget. A current CEU investigator is a certified K-9 handler and can assume this role with no adverse impact on his current assignment. Finally, transportation of the K-9 and handler can be accomplished through an existing properly equipped K-9 fleet vehicle.

We believe that the ESD K-9 will be a valuable addition to the CEU. Their unique ability to locate hidden electronic evidence will enhance our investigative efficiency, expedite case resolution, and ultimately serve as a powerful asset in combating digital crime.

We respectfully recommend acceptance of this donation.

JOS:TMS



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OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
COLLIN COUNTY, TEXAS

JIM SKINNER, SHERIFF

Date: 03/04/2024

To: Jeff Price, Assistant Chief

From: Andrew Hatch, Captain

Re: ESD K-9 Donation Acceptance – Operation Underground Railroad

As technology pervades every facet of our lives, so too does criminal activity migrate to the digital realm. From cybercrime and child sexual abuse material (CSAM) to intellectual property theft and financial fraud, vital evidence often resides on electronic storage devices (ESDs) like hard drives, USB drives, and smartphones. Effective law enforcement in this evolving environment necessitates innovative solutions for locating and securing this critical electronic evidence.

One such innovative solution is the deployment of a certified ESD K-9. ESD K-9s are specially trained to detect the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) emitted by all electronic devices, regardless of whether they are powered on or hidden within larger objects. This unique ability surpasses the limitations of human search methods and technological tools, enabling the efficient identification of concealed ESDs, even in complex environments. Additionally, these K-9s increase investigative efficiency through the rapid and accurate detection of ESDs, significantly reducing search times compared to traditional methods. This expedites the collection and analysis of evidence, leading to faster case resolution and potentially saving valuable resources. By facilitating the swift recovery of critical evidence, ESD K-9s play a crucial role in investigations involving CSAM, cybercrime, and other serious offenses. This can serve to expedite the identification and apprehension of perpetrators, ultimately contributing to enhanced public safety and the protections of vulnerable communities.

ESD K-9s represent a valuable addition to the modern law enforcement toolkit. Operation Underground Railroad (O.U.R.), a non-profit organization dedicated to combatting child sex trafficking and exploitation, recognizes the value the K-9s hold and are collaborating with law enforcement to place an ESD K-9 in each of the 62 Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task forces across the nation.

Operation Underground Railroad is seeking to donate a K-9 to be used by the Collin County Sheriff's Office Child Exploitation Unit for ESD detection.

As part of this donation O.U.R. will provide the following:

- ESD K-9 acquisition;
- Initial certification fees for handler and ESD K-9;
- Travel to/from the initial training, lodging, and vehicle rental for the two-week initial certification course;



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- Approved ESD K-9 gear and equipment for initial certification to include items such as leash, utility vest, chew toys, and bowls; and
- Annual recertification fees for the ESD K-9 only.

The Sheriff's Office will absorb the associated costs within the existing M&O budget. The K-9 will be placed with a certified handler eliminating initial onboarding costs. Transportation of the K-9 and handler can be accomplished through an existing properly equipped K-9 fleet vehicle.

The ESD K-9 will be assigned to the Child Exploitation Unit (CEU). We are fortunate to have within that unit a certified and experienced K-9 handler who can assume this role with no adverse impact to his current assignment.

It is our belief that ESD K-9 will represent a valuable addition to our investigative toolkit. Their unique ability to locate hidden electronic evidence will enhance our investigative efficiency, expedite case resolution, and ultimately serve as a powerful asset in combating digital crime and protecting our community.

We recommend acceptance of this donation and furtherance of this process through the Commissioners Court for approval.



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