

HOW TO BECOME A CANINE HANDLER

PART 2: CONTRACTOR PATH

From Military Service to High-Demand Security Contracts



AI K9 CODEE SERIES

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

READ THIS FIRST

Every guide is a field manual, not a promise.

EDUCATIONAL DISCLAIMER

- This guide is educational. It is not legal, military recruiting, employment, medical, tax, housing, or financial advice.
- Rules change. Always verify with the official agency, employer, school, local VA, PHA, IRS, SBA, state government, or qualified professional.
- No guide can guarantee selection, employment, housing approval, voucher approval, nonprofit approval, or contract award.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- Read one section per day or one section per week.
- Turn every checklist into a binder tab.
- Do not skip documents, proof, logs, or follow-up calls.
- The win is not just reading. The win is taking the next step.

ACTION NOTES

- Next action:
- Proof or document needed:
- Person or agency to contact:
- Deadline:

FIELD GUIDE SECTION

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

MISSION BRIEF

Private-sector K9 work is a contract, not a fantasy.

This guide is for trained handlers, veterans, security professionals, and future entrepreneurs exploring private K9/security work. Contractor roles can be powerful, but the contract world rewards documentation, flexibility, and business awareness.

A good offer can open doors. A bad offer can damage your home life, finances, and reputation. The mission is to evaluate before you jump.

FOUNDER NOTE

Private K9 work gave me a second doorway after the military path. I worked major venues and learned that readiness is more than skill. It is paperwork, schedule, vehicle, pay, dog care, and family impact.

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CONTRACTOR K9 LANES

Private work can include explosive detection, narcotics detection, event security, transit screening, corporate security, stadiums, ferry terminals, logistics sites, and surge assignments.

Lane	Where it happens	Questions
Explosive detection	Venues, airports, corporate sites	Who owns dog and vehicle?
Event security	Stadiums, concerts, conventions	How are travel and overtime handled?
Transit	Ferries, terminals, loading areas	Permanent post or temporary contract?
Subcontract	Prime contractor support	Insurance and payment terms?
Company handler	Assigned site	What happens if contract ends?

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

EMPLOYEE VS SUBCONTRACTOR

Many handlers confuse employee jobs and subcontractor business opportunities. The difference affects taxes, insurance, liability, equipment, scheduling, and control.

- Employee: company usually controls schedule, pay structure, equipment, and policies.
- Subcontractor: you may need insurance, business entity, invoices, taxes, equipment, and contract review.
- Prime contractor: you pursue work directly and carry the most responsibility.

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

DOCUMENT STACK

Contractor K9 hiring moves fast. The person with documents ready often beats the person with experience buried in old emails.

- Resume.
- DD214 if veteran.
- Training certificates.
- Security licenses.
- Firearm credentials if required.
- Driver license and record.
- References.
- Training log sample.
- Dog assignment history if appropriate.

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

RESUME UPGRADE

A contractor resume should show mission capability without revealing sensitive details. Focus on site types, duties, professionalism, and outcomes.

- Performed detection sweeps in high-traffic public and private environments.
- Coordinated with security teams, event staff, law enforcement, and client representatives.
- Maintained dog care, readiness, and documentation.
- Adapted search patterns to vehicles, loading areas, entrances, open spaces, and restricted zones.

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

PORTFOLIO BUILDER

A portfolio helps you prove readiness without over-sharing. It should be clean, professional, and privacy-safe.

- Handler bio.
- Training certificates.
- Redacted work history.
- References.
- Capability statement.
- Photos that do not reveal sensitive sites.
- Documented strengths and available travel radius.

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

OFFER EVALUATION

Before accepting, slow down and evaluate the offer like a parent, operator, and business owner.

Offer item	Green flag	Red flag
Dog	Provided with clear care plan	Unclear ownership or medical responsibility.
Vehicle	Provided or reimbursed	You absorb major fuel/maintenance cost.
Schedule	Written and realistic	No coverage and constant changes.
Pay	Clear rate, overtime, travel	Vague bonus promises.
Contract term	Defined start/end	No clarity between assignments.
Supervisor	Responsive and professional	Dodges basic questions.

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FAMILY FILTER

Some K9 contracts create money but remove you from your household. That trade may be worth it for some families and impossible for others.

- Who covers emergencies if you are the only handler?
- Can you leave for a childcare or medical emergency?
- Does travel make sense?
- Does the company respect family realities?
- What is the backup plan if you are fired or the contract delays?

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT REALITY

A company vehicle can change the entire value of an offer. Without it, fuel, insurance, maintenance, and distance can crush the margin.

- Ask if vehicle is assigned, shared, or reimbursed.
- Ask if kennel transport is approved.
- Ask who pays fuel and maintenance.
- Ask what happens if the vehicle breaks down.
- Ask what equipment you must supply.

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STATE LICENSING AND FIREARMS

Security work is regulated differently by state. Firearms, guard cards, armed security, insurance, and employer sponsorship may all apply. Do not assume your military record replaces state rules.

- Research your state security license.
- Research firearm permit requirements.
- Ask employer who pays for licensing.
- Keep copies of every credential.
- Track renewal dates.

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

SAM.GOV AND UEI

If you want to subcontract or compete for federal-related work, learn the federal registration world. SAM.gov registration and UEI are key building blocks.

- SAM.gov is free.
- UEI is the federal entity identifier.
- Registration status must be maintained.
- Keep business name and banking accurate.
- Do not pay random companies that pretend registration is required through them.

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SBA VETERAN CERTIFICATION

Veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned certifications can open set-aside opportunities. They do not replace performance, pricing, insurance, or capability.

- Research VOSB and SDVOSB eligibility.
- Verify ownership/control requirements.
- Prepare documents before applying.
- Update capability statement after certification.

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

CAPABILITY STATEMENT

A capability statement is your one-page business resume. It should be clean, direct, and easy for a prime contractor to forward.

- Core competencies.
- Differentiators.
- Past performance.
- Codes and certifications.
- Contact info.
- Insurance status.
- Service area.

PITCH

Veteran-led K9/security support for event, transit, corporate, and high-risk environments with documented handler experience and rapid deployment readiness.

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INTERVIEW SCRIPTS

A strong contractor interview proves you understand logistics. You are not just asking for a dog. You are asking about the work system.

- Is this employee or subcontractor work?
- Is the dog and vehicle provided?
- What is the schedule and coverage plan?
- What credentials are required before start?
- How are training and recertifications handled?
- What is the first 30-day expectation?

ACTION NOTES

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

30-60-90 PLAN

Use this plan to move from scattered applications to focused readiness.

- 30 days: resume, documents, target companies.
- 60 days: capability statement, license research, applications.
- 90 days: interviews, offer comparison, family plan, business path decision.

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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

OFFER EVALUATION WORKSHEET

Use this as a printable worksheet.

Pay and schedule

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Vehicle and dog details

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Travel/lodging

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Emergency coverage

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Contract term

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

FIELD GUIDE SECTION

CAPABILITY STATEMENT NOTES

Use this as a printable worksheet.

Core competencies

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Differentiators

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Past performance

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Codes/certifications

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Insurance status

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

FIELD GUIDE SECTION

CONTRACTOR FAMILY FILTER

Use this as a printable worksheet.

What this job costs at home

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Backup childcare plan

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Income gap plan

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
- Deadline:

Travel limit

WRITE IT DOWN

- Answer:
- Evidence:
- Next action:
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FIELD GUIDE SECTION

OFFICIAL SOURCE NOTES

Verify every major decision before acting.

SAM.gov Entity Registration

Official registration and UEI source. SAM.gov states registration and UEI are free.

<https://sam.gov/entity-registration>

SBA Veteran Small Business Certification

Official portal for VOSB/SDVOSB certification research.

<https://veterans.certify.sba.gov/>

SBA Veteran Contracting Assistance

Official SBA guidance on veteran contracting assistance programs.

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/veteran-contracting-assistance-programs>