

Everyday Hero Series

Paul the Police Officer



by Kari Lawson



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by Kari Lawson

This is Paul. Paul is a police officer. He works for his local police service. Paul is part of the canine unit and works as a canine handler. A canine handler is a police officer who works with a highly trained dog to protect people or property. At his police service, there are two canine handlers.

Paul has been a police officer for six years. He has been a canine handler for two of those years. Paul had to work very hard to become a police officer and a canine handler.



To become a police officer, Paul graduated from high school. He then chose to go to university. He earned a four year degree from Wilfred Laurier University. While he was going to university, Paul worked part time to earn money to pay for his tuition and gain work experience. He also volunteered in his community for several organizations to serve his community and gain life experience.

When he graduated from university he started working full time. He also kept volunteering in his community. When his local police service was hiring, Paul decided to apply.



In order to apply to become a police officer there were a lot of steps Paul had to take. He had to submit a resume and job application. He had to take a fitness test, a vision and hearing test and pass an aptitude test. He also had to go through five interviews before he was chosen.



Once Paul was hired as a police officer, he had to go to the Ontario Police College for three months of training. The program is called the Basic Constable Training Course.

After four years of being a police officer, Paul applied to be a canine handler. When Paul was chosen to be a canine handler, he joined the canine unit at his police service.



Paul was given a dog, who would become his new partner. His dog's name is Mack. Mack is a German shepherd. When Paul got Mack he was only one and a half years old. Paul and Mack had to do a lot of training together.

Mack had to be trained to follow commands, track criminals, missing people or property and locate items that may be used as evidence.



Paul and Mack trained every day for three months before they were ready to start their new job.

They had to train during the day and at night. As well, they trained in all types of weather. Their training prepared them for working under any weather conditions and any time of day.



When Mack completed his training he became a working member of the police service's canine unit. Paul and Mack work twelve hour shifts. Their shifts are day shifts, afternoon shifts and night shifts. They are a very important part of the police service. They have special skills that are sometimes needed outside of their regular shifts. Sometimes they are called in on their days off.

Paul and Mack also continue to train on a weekly basis. Mack needs to practice his skills so he is ready for action at any time.



Paul drives a police cruiser that has a kennel built into it for Mack. The kennel is large enough for Mack to move around or lay down if he wants to. It also has air conditioning and heat to keep Mack comfortable if the weather is hot or cold.

The cruiser has a sticker on it that says K9. K9 is a short form for canine unit. This sticker is used to inform other officers and the public that there is a working dog inside the cruiser.

Paul carries a switch he can use to open Mack's car door and let him out. If Paul or someone else is in danger, Paul will push the button to release Mack quickly.



At the beginning of every shift, Paul checks his cruiser over to make sure everything is working. He tests the lights and the sirens. He makes sure Mack's kennel is clean and safe. He turns his police radio on to ensure he has a fully charged battery and a clear signal.

Next, Paul logs into the police service's computer system. Once he is logged on, the dispatchers will know he is on duty and ready to respond to calls for service.

There is a computer in every police cruiser. The computers are used so the officer's can see information about calls for service and respond quickly. The computers are also used as a GPS system to help the officers get to addresses they are not familiar with.



When a call for service comes in, Paul will get an alert on his computer system. If the call is urgent, Paul will also be called on his radio.

Paul and Mack respond quickly and safely to every call they get. If someone is in danger or injured, Paul will turn the lights and sirens on. Other drivers will pull over to the side of the road to let Paul get through quickly and safely.

If a crime has just taken place, Paul and Mack might need to track the suspect. The suspect is the person who the police think committed the crime.



To track the suspect, Paul will show Mack an item the suspect has touched. Mack will smell the item. This allows Mack to pick up the scent. Mack will then follow the scent until he finds the suspect.

When Mack has found the suspect he is trained to stop the suspect from getting away. He will stop the suspect by pulling or knocking him or her to the ground. Sometimes the suspects get bit.

When Mack and Paul are training for this type of situation, someone wears a bite suit and pretends to be a suspect. The bite suit is a protective suit or arm covering used to protect the trainers from getting bit. Mack will be commanded to catch the pretend suspect. He practices stopping the suspect as safely as possible.



Sometimes Mack has to track a missing person. Mack will track a missing person the same way he tracks a suspect. He is given an item of the missing person's to pick up a scent. They will then follow the scent until they hopefully find the missing person. When Mack finds the missing person or a piece of evidence that may help the police find the missing person, Mack alerts Paul.

Paul and Mack also work together to search people and locations for illegal items such as drugs or weapons. Mack has been trained to alert Paul if he can smell drugs on a person or in a place.

Paul will use a specific command to tell Mack what to search for. Mack will then sniff the person or around the location until he finds what the police are looking for. When he finds what they have asked him to search for, he will alert Paul.

Each time Mack has completed a task, he is rewarded. His reward is some play time with his favourite toy.



Other patrol officers may ask Paul and Mack to help them search for a person or evidence that may have been dropped by a suspect.

Detectives may ask Paul and Mack to help search locations for evidence or suspects.

The emergency response team will sometimes use Paul and Mack to help someone who is in danger or catch a dangerous suspect.

Paul and Mack also work with the community services officers to teach the community about safety. They also teach the community about Mack's job and how he helps the police service.



There are many other skills that are important for a police officer to have. Some of those skills include a strong work ethic, communication skills, good moral character and being trustworthy.

Policing is a very difficult job. It is also a very important job. Police officers keep our community safe. This is why a strong work ethic is important. Work ethic is a belief that work is important and a desire to work hard.



Police officers must have strong communication skills. This includes verbal communication and written communication. They must be able to communicate with members of the community, suspects, and fellow employees. They must also be able to write reports.

Every call for service an officer responds to, he or she must write a report. The report has to include a timeline of events, as well as details about how the call was dealt with and how it was resolved.



Police officers must be of good moral character. This means they must have a personal history of honesty, fairness, respect for others and for the law. Paul and Mack have this quality and are looked up to by citizens of their community.

Paul and Mack's police service and community trusts them to uphold the law and keep them safe. They are highly regarded members of the community. Some may even call them everyday heroes.



Paul enjoys serving his community while working with Mack as a canine handler. Mack is the best partner he could ask for.

His favourite part of the job is when he and Mack are successful at finding a suspect or missing person. It is very rewarding for Paul and Mack when they help the community by catching a suspect or helping a family find a missing loved one.

Paul's least favourite part of being a police officer is the paperwork. With every task he finishes, comes at least one report or document he must complete. Although it is his least favourite part of the job, he knows it is a very important part of his job.



Paul has been a canine handler officer for two years. He will continue to be a canine handler as long as Mack is healthy enough to work. When Mack is ready to retire, Paul will no longer be a canine handler, he will return to being a regular police constable.

If Paul chooses to, he can apply for other positions within his police service. Some of the positions he can apply for may include being a detective, a sergeant, or a community services officer.

With any position Paul chooses to apply for, he will have to submit a resume and attend job interviews. Some positions even require him to take additional courses at the Ontario Police College or write a test.



Police officer's are an important part of every community. They work hard to become officers and they risk their lives every day to keep their communities safe. Paul and Mack are especially important to their police service. They have skills that make other officer's jobs easier sometimes.

Paul and Mack go to work every day to keep their community safe. Paul and Mack are every day heroes.



Check back for our activity pages! They will be added in 2023!

