

# Arson Canine Training Scholarship Application

## Funded by State Farm Insurance®



### General information:

Each year, billions of dollars worth of property and hundreds of lives are lost as a result of fires set by arsonists.

State Farm® has been a sponsor of the program since 1993 and works in conjunction with Maine Specialty Dogs and the Maine Criminal Justice Academy to train ten canines and handlers a year. Over 200 teams have been placed in departments and law enforcement agencies throughout the U.S. and Canada.

State or local governmental agencies responsible for arson/fire investigations may apply for participation in the program. All applications are reviewed to determine eligibility and suitability to handle arson dogs.

Once eligibility is determined, accepted applicants will be notified of the dates for the five-week training program. The application deadline for next year's class is August 1<sup>st</sup>. The application review process will be completed by October 31<sup>st</sup>. All applicants will be notified by November 30<sup>th</sup> if they have been selected for the program. There are two, five-week training sessions conducted annually. One in April and May and one in August and September.

### Training and certification:

The training is conducted by Maine Specialty Dogs located in Gray, Maine. Maine Specialty Dogs develops the curriculum and oversees all training and instruction for the program. The highly intensive five-week course includes classroom instruction, fire scene investigation, as well as various physically demanding training exercises. The canines are trained to work around physical obstacles and discriminate scents of various accelerants used to set fires during the intensive training.

At the end of the five-week course, the teams are evaluated by the Maine Criminal Justice Academy and a chemist certifies that each canine is capable of discriminating a variety of scents from substances used to start fires. This certification is crucial because the evidence uncovered by the canine and handler may become a key point in subsequent criminal and civil trials. A five-year commitment by the department to the program is required.

After completing the initial five-week training, the canine and the handler become a team. Each team must recertify annually at one of the recertification locations. If the canine is not recertified yearly or the department doesn't complete the five year commitment, the canine will be returned to the program or retired to the agency/handler. This decision will be made by Maine Specialty Dogs.

### Scholarship information:

State Farm underwrites the program due to the problem of arson in our society. Arson dogs provide an invaluable tool for law enforcement officials to combat the costly and deadly crime of arson.

State Farm pays for:

- The canine,
- Training fees,
- Room and board during training,
- Certification by chemist and evaluation by the Maine Criminal Justice Academy and
- Reimbursement of transportation for the initial five-week class.

### Application:

First and Last Name:

Full Title, Rank or Position:

### Agency information:

Name of Employing Agency:

Phone:

Fax:

Street:

E-mail:

City, State, ZIP

Web site:

### Home information:

Street:

Phone:

City, State, ZIP:

**Required information:**

- Is there an accelerant dog in your area? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know  
If yes, where is the team located:  
If the canine team went through the Maine Specialty Dogs school you will need to attach a recommendation from that team.
- Attach fire load numbers for the previous two years for **all areas** the canine team will be responding, breaking down the **types of fires into suspicious, incendiary and other**, excluding EMS runs. Department or coverage area should have **more than 50 structure fires each year**.
- Attach a current resume of the applicant describing their job and training history including a list of certifications and agency/department work experience.

**Applicant must complete the following:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, in consideration of my participation in the Arson Dog Program, do hereby release State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, Maine Specialty Dogs, and any and all other departments or agencies associated with the Arson Dog Program, from any and all liability for any illness or other bodily injury sustained by, or alleged to have been sustained by me arising in any way from my participation in the Arson Dog Program.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency/department must complete the following:**

- The applicant is a full-time employee of the agency named above, in good health and can complete all phases of training.
  - Ability to walk three to four miles a day.
  - Ability to walk backwards bent over in order to throw targets.
- The agency named above
  - Is responsible for arson/fire investigations,
  - Supports the applicant named above,
  - **Five-year commitment to the program** and
  - Will be responsible for the K-9s care which includes but not limited to veterinarian care, food, yearly recertification at one of the sites designated by Maine Specialty Dogs and general care for the K-9.
- If the canine is not recertified annually or the department does not fulfill the five year commitment requirement, the canine will be returned to the program. This decision will be made by Maine Specialty Dogs.
- Maine Specialty Dogs recommends that the canine lives at the handler's personal residence.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the Chief/Department Head of the Department noted above, in consideration of the participation by \_\_\_\_\_ (here give the name of the applicant) ("Applicant") in the Arson Dog Program, do hereby on behalf of the Department release State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, Maine Specialty Dogs, and any and all other departments or agencies associated with the Arson Dog Program, from any and all liability for any illness or other bodily injury sustained by, or alleged to have been sustained by Applicant arising in any way from her/his participation in the Arson Dog Program.

Signature:  
Title:  
Printed name:  
Date:  
Address:  
City, State, ZIP:  
Phone:  
E-mail:

**Submit application to:**

**Arson Dog Program**  
PR/Marketing Unit, B-4  
State Farm Insurance Companies  
One State Farm Plaza  
Bloomington, IL 61710-0001

**Phone:** 309-766-2259 or 309-766-8866  
**Fax:** 309-766-7861  
**E-mail:** dawn.fones.cv9s@statefarm.com or rich.pingeton.sqvi@statefarm.com