



# PRESS RELEASE

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July 8, 2021

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## SEAL BEACH POLICE ANNOUNCE NEW PATROL CANINE PROGRAM

Seal Beach, CA – The Seal Beach Police Department is introducing a new four-legged member to their ranks with the introduction of a new police canine unit.

For the first time in almost 40 years, the Seal Beach Police Department will have its very own police K-9 unit helping to protect the community. “A police K-9 is an incredibly important tool that we can use to address crime in Seal Beach,” said Chief of Police, Philip L. Gonshak. “The police service dog is a force multiplier and is instrumental in building searches, article searches, and apprehensions.”

The last official Seal Beach Police K-9 unit went into service and ended in the mid-1980s. Since then, the Seal Beach Police Department has relied on neighboring police departments to provide K-9 services when needed. By re-implementing a K-9 program within the Seal Beach Police Department, response times where a K-9 was needed before will be reduced. In turn, this will allow officers to get back into service and be available for other emergency calls.

### **Officer Victor Ruiz and K-9 Saurus**

In 2020, the Seal Beach Police Department took steps to reestablish the K-9 Unit by selecting its first K-9 handler, Officer Victor Ruiz. Officer Ruiz has been a police officer for nearly eight years, three of which have been with the Seal Beach Police Department.

Officer Ruiz holds a bachelor's degree from California State University, Fullerton and lives locally with his wife and young son.

Officer Ruiz's new partner is Saurus, a 14-month-old German Shephard. Saurus was trained by Gold Coast K9 located in Ventura, California. Officer Ruiz and Saurus spent several weeks in training where they learned to conduct building searches, apprehend fleeing felons, and assist in overcoming the resistance of violent subjects. These skills are especially important as they reduce the risk and injury to police officers and the community. Officer Ruiz also received training on case law, use of force, de-escalation tactics, community-oriented policing, and bias-based policing.

Saurus has also been trained to detect firearms. This important tool will help ensure that if a suspect attempts to conceal or discard a firearm, the dangerous weapon is not left for an innocent person, child, or other criminal to locate.

The purchase of the K-9, equipment, and all associated training costs were paid for via a generous donation by the Seal Beach Police Foundation. "This has been a community effort to return this worthwhile program back to the Seal Beach Police Department," said Chief Gonshak. "It would not have been possible without the support of Mayor Joe Kalmick, Mayor Pro Tem Varipapa, Council Member Sandra Massa-Lavitt, Council Member Schelly Sustarsic, Council Member Thomas Moore, City Manager Jill Ingram, and the generous donation from the Seal Beach Police Foundation."

For more information about the Seal Beach Police Department and the K-9 Unit, please follow us on social media @sealbeachpolice.

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