



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

NORFOLK DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

45 SHAWMUT ROAD | CANTON, MA 02021 | 781.830.4800 | F: 781.830.4801 | www.norfolkda.com

MICHAEL W. MORRISSEY
NORFOLK DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Press Release

Norfolk DA Provides Local Police with Community Resource Dogs

Contact: D.Traub, 781-830-4917



Officers from the Needham, Dedham, Weymouth, and Wrentham police departments joined Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey in Walpole this morning to hook up with the Community Resource Dogs that the DA has purchased for their departments.

"These dogs are being paired with School Resource Officers in these departments and will likely become fixtures in the schools in their towns," District Attorney Morrissey said, as puppies yapped and pulled at their leashes behind him.

"One thread of our ongoing criminal justice reform efforts is de-escalation and finding peaceful, constructive solutions – particularly in juvenile situations and school settings," DA Morrissey said. "The presence of a Community Resource Dog before, during, or after a stressful situation can be a game changer. As Dedham Chief Michael d'Entremont put it, a dog can make a student who has closed down open up instead."

The English Cream Golden Retrievers have been bred and trained by Golden Opportunities for Independence, in Walpole, Mass. "We offered grants to up to four departments to acquire Community Resource Dogs and pair them with officers. The ongoing care of the animals is a significant commitment, and we were thrilled to have these four communities step up," Morrissey said. "I commend those chiefs for their partnership and progressive thinking."

The Norfolk County towns of Walpole, Sharon, Brookline, and Franklin already have Community Resource Dogs, and Larry the Poodle joined the Randolph Police Department as a therapy dog in 2016. "We see the positive impact these animals are having on their communities. It made encouraging more towns to take part very attractive to us," DA Morrissey said. "These dogs will be in the schools, but I have no doubt they will be useful in a broad menu of situations."

The towns are still working on what to name the dogs, with several planning community or school contests to decide on a fitting name.

With the addition of these four dogs, one-third of the 27 communities in Morrissey's Norfolk District have support animals. "Norfolk County may be ahead of other areas on this, but I have no doubt that this is a practice that will spread and become more common across Massachusetts and the country," DA Morrissey said. "Good ideas spread. And this is a very good idea."