



## **SSPD Adds Lagomorph Specialist to Drug Detection Unit** 24-Hour K9 Coverage Strengthens Community Safety

**Steamboat Springs, Colorado-April 1, 2026**-The Steamboat Springs Police Department (SSPD) is proud to announce the addition of a new member to its drug detection team: Officer Hareison, a specially trained Lagomorph Specialist.

Officer Hareison joins the department's drug detection unit, designed to complement the K9 program by introducing a unique species capable of specialized scent detection work. While traditional K9s remain the cornerstone of the department's animal-assisted operations, rabbits' compact size, agility, and acute sense of smell allow them to access areas and confined spaces where larger animals cannot.

"Officer Hareison represents an innovative step forward in diversifying our detection capabilities and allows us to hop ahead of evolving challenges," said Chief Mark Beckett. "Our K9 team has consistently performed at the highest level, and now we are proud to introduce a Lagomorph Specialist to further strengthen the team."



During rigorous training, Hareison has demonstrated an impressive ability to identify concealed scents in controlled exercises, including plastic eggs, laundry baskets, confined compartments, storage areas, and other tight locations like inside shoes or slippers. Handlers report that positive reinforcement, and a steady supply of baby carrots are key to maintaining optimal detection performance.

"Our K9 officers have done a paws-itively amazing job serving the community," added Beckett. "Now we're excited to add a little extra hop-erational support to the team. The new program represents our commitment to always thinking outside the cage."

Beyond operational duties, Hareison is expected to assist with community engagement, providing educational demonstrations and strengthening public connections with the department's animal programs. Residents are encouraged to meet the newest member of the K9 Unit at upcoming events—but are reminded that, despite his small size and friendly demeanor, K9 Hareison is a fully working law enforcement officer.

"Community outreach is a cornerstone of our mission," said K9 Officer Brenden Andrews. "Officers Hareison and Amon in the expanded K9 Unit will help us share the important work of detection teams while adding a little extra spring to our efforts."

### **Happy April Fools' Day from SSPD & Officer Hare-ison.**

**In All Seriousness:** SSPD would like to build 24-hour K9 coverage that strengthens safety for the community. If you're interested in donating or becoming a sponsor, contact Chief Beckett.

[-WeServeTheCity-](#)

#### **Contact**

[Email Mark Beckett](#), Police Chief, or call 970-879-4344

[Email Patty Oakland](#), Criminal Investigator-Community Engagement Specialist, or call 970-879-4344

[Email Michael Lane](#), Marketing and Communications Manager, or call 970-871-8220