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INTRODUCING MIDDLEBOROUGH POLICE K9 OFFICER MILLIE
Yellow lab to become 22nd K9 member in Plymouth County Comfort Dogs Program

MIDDLEBOROUGH – Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz and Middleborough Police Chief Robert Ferreira are proud to introduce Millie, a comfort dog to support students and residents in town.

The Town of Middleborough recently acquired Millie, a yellow Labrador Retriever, from Professional Canine Services in Middleborough, where she will also perform her comfort dog training. Millie is 4 months-old, and was acquired by Middleborough Police with assistance from federal grant funding secured by the Plymouth County District Attorney’s Office (PCDAO).

Millie’s handler is Middleborough Police School Resource Officer Brian Wiksten. Millie will be used to reduce stress and promote wellness for students in Middleborough Public Schools, and residents at town events.

Back in March, 2021, after researching some of the benefits that a comfort dog could provide to law enforcement and the community, PCDAO was able to provide Hingham Police with a mini-grant to start a pilot project with their comfort dog, Opry. After witnessing the success of Opry, PCDAO decided that other towns could benefit from having a comfort dog, and the Plymouth County Comfort Dogs Program was born. Our office received \$447,000 in grant funding to create a county-wide regional response team of comfort dogs to provide mutual aid to all Plymouth communities. Funding is provided for a case study through Bridgewater State University, cruiser equipment, training for the dogs and handlers, and veterinary care and insurance. Today, with the addition of Millie, the program boasts 22 dogs working in 17 police departments here in Plymouth County, and at Bridgewater State University, and the Plymouth House of Correction.

“Millie is the first ever comfort dog to serve with Middleborough Police, and she is a great addition to the department and the school community,” DA Cruz said. “We know all too well the traumatic effect that stress can have on young people. Already

commanding smiles wherever she goes, Millie and Officer Wiksten are devoted to working hard together at training.”

Middleborough Police Chief Ferreira said, “I would like to thank District Attorney Tim Cruz and all the staff at the DA’s office for the opportunity to participate in the comfort dog program. School Resource Officer Brian Wiksten and Millie will be available to the entire Middleborough School District as well as attending community events. I am very excited to have Millie as part of our department and am looking forward to the positive impact she will have in our community.”