



## **DOG ATTACK FACT SHEET**

### **What to do if a dog attacks**

After a dog attack, you should be to seek medical or veterinary treatment as a priority.

When safe to do so, you must report the attack to the relevant council. You can contact our animal management team on 08 8768 2003.

If you're not sure which Council to contact, you can find a map of South Australia's Council boundaries [here](#)

### **Report the incident ASAP**

Like all serious incidents, time is a critical factor in dealing with dog attacks. This is especially important if the offending dog is wandering at large and still poses a risk to the public or other animals. To help council investigators, please try to gather the following information before contacting us:

- the date, time and exact location of the attack. If you're not sure, use your GPS equipped smart phone to check on a map
- a description of the offending dog - registration disc, name tag, breed, colour, sex, markings, collar size and colour
- a description of the owner - name, address, contact phone number, male or female, age, hair colour, clothing
- if a car was involved and the offender drove away with the dog - car registration number, make, model, colour
- a description and photographs of any injuries and location on your body or your pet's body.

You should also keep copies of any medical certificates, vet or doctor bills as evidence.

### **What happens when a dog is reported?**

- Authorised Council investigators may take a statement or affidavit from you
- Photos may be taken of any injuries to yourself, or your animals or birds.
- The dog's owner may be contacted to get their side of the incident.
- Investigators could seek witness statements and other evidence
- Investigators assess the circumstances and evidence and make a decision for action
- Council will then issue legal notices as required, and;
- Inform the parties of the outcome.

## **Who is responsible?**

You are responsible for your dog's actions. It is an offence for a dog to attack, harass or chase a person, another animal or a bird owned by a person.

[Find out more from the Dog and Cat Management Act, 1995](#)

### **Depending on the severity of the attack, councils can:**

- issue a warning
- impose an on the spot fine of \$315.
- take direct court action (in more serious cases)
- impose a control order (Nuisance, Dangerous Dog, Menacing Dog, or Destruction Order)
- The maximum penalty for a dog attack is \$2,500.

If you have any questions contact us on 08 8768 2003.

## **Preventing dog bites**

Dogs bite for many reasons. The most common reasons are fear, pain or confusion when mixing with people and other dogs. Ignoring signs of aggression can result in serious injury to you, a member of your family or others. You can discourage biting by:

- socialising your dog from an early age so that it learns how to mix with other dogs and other people in public
- avoiding situations that may cause your dog to become nervous or anxious
- training your dog - obedience classes help you learn about your dog, its body language and how you can communicate with it
- desexing your dog. Research shows that, on average an entire dog is more aggressive. Note that desexing dog will be mandatory (with exemptions) from 1 July 2018.
- asking your vet for advice if your dog shows any signs of aggression towards people.

**For more information on being a good dog owner, visit the [Dog and Cat Management Board website](#)**