

DOG ATTACKS

Owner responsibilities



An owner may be responsible for any injury or damage caused by your dog if it attacks a person or animal regardless of whether the attack

occurs on your own property or any other place. Your dog may be declared 'dangerous' or destroyed in certain circumstances.

Dangerous dogs must by law be desexed. It is an offence to sell or give away a dangerous dog or sell or give away a dog subject to a notice of intention to declare dangerous.

While the dog is on the property on which it is ordinarily kept, the dog must be kept in an enclosure that complies with the requirements prescribed by the regulations.

If your dog is declared dangerous, strict controls apply. You must:

- Restrain and muzzle your dog when on your own land to prevent it from attacking any person or animal.
- Erect signs on your property which are clearly visible from outside saying 'Warning Dangerous Dog'.
- Leash your dog at all times when outside your property WITHOUT exception.
- The dog must not at any time be in the sole charge of a person under 18 years of age.

- Be muzzled in a manner that is sufficient to prevent it from biting any animal or person.
- Follow any other laws laid down by Council as a result of your dog being declared dangerous.

Causes of aggression

Some breeds are naturally more aggressive than others however in most cases aggression is a result of poor pet management and training.

Dogs will be more aggressive when their basic needs are not met. For example, they are not exercised sufficiently, not trained, not socialised, not given enough time and affection. Refer to Councils fact sheet on 'Choosing and Managing Your Dog' for further information.

How to reduce risk of dog bite

- Never approach a dog unless the owner is present, always ask permission before petting.
- Never approach a dog when it is eating, sleeping, in a car or tied up alone.
- Always check for dogs before you enter a property and refrain from entering if you are unsure.
- There are no fail-safe rules when it comes to dogs so treat every encounter with a strange dog, regardless of breed, as a potentially dangerous situation.
- Stay calm, never scream or squeal, never run, stand still and don't make any sudden movements.
- Don't stare directly at the dog, however don't lose sight of the dog.
- Never corner a dog, always allow room for escape