



## REDUCING THE RISK OF DOG BITES

Dog bites and dog bite lawsuits are on the rise. Learn how to prevent dog bites from happening to protect you, your dog, and those around you, and avoid dog-related liability damage.

### Understand Why Dogs Bite

- Feeling like it needs to defend itself, you, or its territory.
- Being scared or feeling threatened.
- Provoking a dog. This can include children who don't intend to provoke a dog, but can be too rough or insistent by accident.
- Unsupervised time with kids.
- Roughly waking or scaring a sleeping dog.
- Pain or not feeling well, especially when poked or treated roughly.
- Overexcitement or overstimulation, especially if paired with wrestling or rough play with humans or other dogs.

### Educate Your Family on Safe Dog Activities

- Always approach a dog calmly, or let the dog come to you. Never run up to a dog.
- Ask permission before approaching or petting someone else's dog. Let them sniff your hand before you pet them.
- Dogs should always be on a leash when in outdoor or public spaces.
- Learn how to read a dog's body language and how to act in response.
- Have a designated safe space for your dog that is theirs to relax in, such as a gated off area, dog bed, or kennel.
- Young children should always be supervised with dogs and animals.
- Teach respect and care for dogs. Never pull on a dog's tail, ears, or legs, ride on your pet, startle them while sleeping, or taunt them with food or toys.
- Keep your dog happy and healthy with proper exercise. Dogs with enough exercise have less pent-up energy, and can help mitigate aggressive behavior.



### Other Prevention Tips

- Socialize young, and keep training going.
- Keep your dog up to date on vaccinations and records.
- Take proactive action correcting aggressive dog behavior.
- Post a sign alerting others there is a dog on the premises.

### What to Do if a Dog Bite Occurs

- Restrain, remove, and confine your dog.
- Make sure the person is okay, that they clean and bandage the bite, and you have given them proof of rabies vaccination.
- Call 911 if needed.
- Report the dog bite and your dog's behavior to your veterinarian and as local laws require.
- To prevent further issues, seek your vet's advice and behavioral training for your dog to correct issues in your dog's behavior and your own.