

DOG COMPLAINTS

6.07.01 PURPOSE

This order establishes policies regarding the Department's responsibility for handling various types of safe and appropriate response to emergency and non-emergency dog-related situations, complaints and includes procedures for investigating and processing those complaints

6.07.02 DEFINITIONS

- A. **Biting Dog** – “any dog that bites any person or other animal in the City and County of San Francisco, provided, however, that the person or animal bitten was not at the time either provoking or teasing the dog without cause” (SF Health Code 41.4.1).
- B. **Unleashed Dog** – “It shall be unlawful for the owner or guardian of any animal...to permit said animal to run at large [not under restraint by a leash, rope, or chain of not more than eight feet] within the City and County...” (SF Health Code 41.12(a)).
- C. **Vicious Dog** – “...any dog that when unprovoked inflicts bites or attacks a human being or domestic animal either on public or private property, or in a vicious or terrorizing manner, approaches any person in apparent attitude of attack upon the streets, sidewalks, or any public grounds or places; or any dog with a known propensity, tendency, or disposition to attack unprovoked, to cause injury or to otherwise endanger the safety of human beings or domestic animals; or any dog which engages in, or is found to have been trained to engage in exhibitions of dog fighting; or any dog at large found to attack, menace, chase, display threatening or aggressive behavior or otherwise threaten or endanger the safety of any domestic animal or person” (SF Health Code 42(a)(1-4)).

I 6.07.03 POLICY

- A. ~~DUTIES OF PATROL OFFICERS. It is the policy of the San Francisco Police Department that district station patrol officers investigate dog bite cases and enforce both local and state animal control laws.~~ The San Francisco Police Department shall effectively and efficiently *handle various types of dog complaints*, including the investigation and *processing of complaints*, while ensuring the rights of individuals as defined in the United States Constitution, Federal, State, and local laws are followed.
- B. ~~DUTIES OF THE SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL. The department of Animal Care and Control shall be responsible for impounding and quarantine of animals, investigating animal cruelty cases, and responding in emergencies for sick or injured animals.~~

~~C. COMMISSION OF ANIMAL CONTROL AND WELFARE. The chief of Police will designate one supervisory officer assigned to the Special Operations Division to serve on the Commission of Animal Control and Welfare. The officer will serve as the Commission's Hearing Officer and preside over hearings to determine actions in vicious and dangerous dog cases.~~

H. 6.07.04 PROCEDURES

A. Unleashed Dog – Members should cite or admonish and educate the owner or guardian of the dog regarding San Francisco leash laws (SF Health Code 41.12(a)).

B. A. Barking Dog. ~~When issuing a citation for a barking dog violation (Section 41. (I) of the health Code), follow these procedures: - the Department does not respond to calls about barking dogs, unless assistance is requested by Animal Care and Control (ACC). Members of the public may report a barking dog via 311 Customer Service Center.~~

- ~~1. Get the signature of two unrelated persons living at different addresses within 300 feet of the dog. Have them sign the back of the citation, making a private person arrest.~~
- ~~2. Issues a citation to the owner of the dog (see below).~~
- ~~3. If you are unable to locate the owner, write an incident report detailing the complaint and include the fact that the owner of the dog could not be located.~~

B. C. Biting Dog. ~~A biting dog is defined in Section 41.5.1 of the Health Code as ... any dog that bites **any person or animal** in the City and County of San Francisco, provided, however, that the person or animal bitten was not at time either provoking or teasing the dog without cause. When a person has been bitten by a dog, follow these procedures:~~

- 1. MEDICAL TREATMENT/DPH FORM.** Arrange for medical treatment. The treating physician is required by law to complete an Animal Bite Report form and forward it to the Department of Public Health. If the victim **medical treatment is refused**, you will have to **member shall** complete the **Animal Bite Report Form (SFPD Form 573)** which is available at any district station, San Francisco General Hospital, Department of Public Health, 101 Grove Street, Department of Animal Care and Control, 1200 15th Street, and most emergency medical facilities.
 - a. In the event of a severe injury or death, members will immediately contact their direct supervisor, the Department Operations Center, and the Vicious and Dangerous Dog Unit (VDDU) Officer.**
- 2. Citation/Arrest.** – Follow DGO 5.04, *Arrest by Private Persons*, and DGO 5.06, *Citation Release*, as appropriate **If the bite was unprovoked, cite the owner of the dog (Health Code Section 41.5.1 (a) (I).**

3. Quarantine ~~BY OWNER.~~ – **Inform** Tell the owner to ~~that~~ quarantine the dog **must be quarantined** for at least 10 days, and to ~~immediately~~ **they must** notify the Department of Public Health, Bureau of Epidemiology and Disease Control (554-2832) **ACC** if the dog becomes sick, dies, or gets lost.

- a. If the owner cannot quarantine their dog for any reason, contact ACC or VDDU.

4. Evidence: – **Take** ~~Have~~ photographs ~~taken~~ of the injuries, and book ~~any clothing~~ as evidence.

5. Notify ACC – Members shall contact ACC Dispatch at the scene of all incidents regardless of response.

6. ~~5. INCIDENT REPORT/DPH~~ **Complete** Forms:

- a. Email SFPD Form 573 to ACC (ACCDISPATCH@sfgov.org), if completed by member.

- b. **Prepare Complete** an incident report **and not proof of ACC notification.** Forward the Animal Bit Report and a copy of the incident report to the Department of Public Health, Bureau of Epidemiology and Disease Control, 101 Grove Street, Room 402, San Francisco, CA 94102.

- i. Assign and email incident report to VDDU (SFPDdangerousdogs@sfgov.org), regardless of whether there was a puncture wound.

- ~~7. IMMEDIATE IMPOUND AND QUARANTINE.~~ Occasionally it is necessary to ~~immediately impound and quarantine a biting dog.~~ Contact the Department of Animal Care and Control through Communications Division (or call 554-9400) 24 hours a day and have the dog immediately impounded when:

- ~~The dog is a stray.~~

- ~~The dog cannot be securely confined and quarantined by the owner.~~

- ~~The dog poses an immediate threat to public health and safety (e.g., the dog is vicious and dangerous, used as a fighting dog, the bite is particularly severe, etc.).~~

- a. ~~Remain at the scene until the Deputy Animal Control Officer arrives and impounds the dog.~~

~~B. CITATION PROCEDURES (See DGO.5.06, Citation Release)~~

- D. Vicious and Dangerous Dog** – in addition to the steps for Biting Dog, members will:

1. Immediately impound dog, if necessary, and stay on scene until ACC arrives.

2. Notify VDDU about the incident.

3. Follow the procedures for After-Hours Response and Notification as necessary.

E. After-Hours Response and Notification

1. Possession of Dog
 - a. If the dog can be controlled and safely transported, members shall:
 - i. Take possession of the dog. ACC will retrieve the dog when they have coverage, or members may transport the dog to ACC during their regular business hours (0600 – 0000 HRS).
 - ii. Transport the dog to SAGE Veterinary Center located at 600 Alabama St. (415) 566-0540.
 - b. If the dog cannot be safely transported, attempt to confine the dog in a space where it can do no further harm to the public and alert ACC during regular work hours.
2. Notification
 - a. ACC – Leave a message with ACC Dispatch.
 - b. VDDU – Members may email VDDU about the incident or call them during regular work hours.

F. Vicious and Dangerous Dog Hearing

1. A hearing may be requested by the victim, owner, SFPD member, Animal Control Officer, or Department of Public Health (DPH) representative by submitting SFPD Form 584 to VDDU (SF Health Code 42.3).
2. The Hearing Officer, a designated representative of DPH or the Police Department, will determine if the dog is deemed vicious and dangerous, which could result in restrictions upon the dog and owner.
3. If a member receives a Notice of Hearing via email, the member shall attend and present their observations of the incident to the Hearing Officer.

G. Hearing Order Violation(s)

1. When a member is aware of verified vicious and dangerous dog restrictions, the member shall follow and enforce the terms of the Hearing Order.
2. If a member observes that a vicious dog violates its restrictions, the member shall:
 - a. Cite the owner (SF Health Code 42.4), and
 - b. Notify VDDU that the dog is in violation. VDDU will notify ACC and request them to seize the dog to protect public safety.

H. ~~C. Other VIOLATIONS~~ Complaints (see S.F. Health Code Section 42). ~~Even though a dog has not bitten a person or another animal, you have the authority to immediately impound any dog that is vicious and presents a threat to public health and safety. A hearing will be held to determine the disposition of the animal.~~ All other dog-related incident reports (e.g. stray dogs, dog or animal fighting, abandonment, animal cruelty, animal poisoning, animal without proper care or attention) should be emailed, but not assigned, to VDDU.

1. Members should direct the public to ACC for all complaints or incidents that do not require a police report.

- I. Case Management** – VDDU, under the supervision of the Officer in Charge, shall be responsible for the management and oversight of records. VDDU is responsible for ensuring data is entered into the Case File Tracking System and that case assignment criteria are consistent with Department Policy.
- J.** VDDU will continuously communicate and collaborate with Station Platoon Commanders and Commanding Officers.

~~D.ADVISE AND QUESTIONS. If you require any additional information or need clarification on animal control ordinances or medical procedures for various types of animal bites, contact the Department of Animal Care and Control, 1200 15th Street, telephone 554-9400 (24 hours).~~

References

~~41. (I) Health Code
41.12. (d) Health Code
42-42.7, Health Code
41.12. (e) Health Code
41.5.1(a) (I) Health Code~~