

Reporting of a dog bite

Once Toronto Animal Services receives information about a dog bite, the following happens:

- If the dog is still on the loose, an officer will respond within two hours
- If the dog is with the owner and under control, an officer will respond within 24 hours

Toronto Animal Services staff will support you by walking you through the process after you've been bitten by a dog. An Animal Care & Control Officer will confirm the bite, request the victim and any witness prepare a written statement detailing the biting incident, request medical documentation describing the bite wound/injury and continue the investigation.

A public health inspector will attend within 24 hours of receiving the report to quarantine the offending dog. For more information, call 311. The following are actions that may be taken:

Issue a Notice of Caution:

- Where this is the first bite on record – recommend precautions to prevent future biting incidents

Issue a Notice to Muzzle:

- Where the bite is severe, and/or the bite is the second subsequent bite on record

Under Municipal Chapter 349, Toronto Animal Services can issue a notice to muzzle. A Notice to Muzzle requires that the dog be muzzled at all times when off of the owner's property.

Dog Safety Tips

- Children are the most frequent dog bite victims. It is important to teach them dog behaviour and respect for animals. They should not pull a dog's tail or take its food, bone or toys away.
- Dogs should not be disturbed while sleeping or eating.
- Dogs need human interaction. Leaving a dog constantly chained and alone may cause aggressiveness.
- Always keep your face away from dogs.
- If you are being chased while riding a bike, get off the bike and keep it between your body and the dog.
- Never break up an animal fight, even if it is your own pet.
- Do not approach stray dogs. Instead, stay away and notify Toronto Animal Services by calling 311.
- Ask permission before petting a dog.
- If approached by a dog you don't know, stand tall and still.

For more information on pet owner responsibilities, applicable laws and other helpful information, visit

**toronto.ca/animalservices
416-338-PAWS (7297)**

What to do when a dog bites



What to do when a dog bites

Dog bites should be reported to Toronto Public Health (416-338-7600) and Toronto Animal Services (311) as soon as possible. In the event that the bite victim is transported to the hospital, a bite complaint should be made as soon as possible after treatment is complete.

If a dog bites you and breaks the skin:

- Seek medical attention (call 911 if serious)
- Report the bite to 311
- Try to provide a clear description of dog
- Obtain the dog owner's name and address
- Write down the date, time and location where the bite occurred
- Information about anyone who witnessed the bite
- Take a clear photo of the bite injury – document the date and time of the photo
- As soon as practical in your own handwriting make clear concise notes on what happened and document the date of the notes.

If a dog bites you and does not break the skin:

Call 311 and provide:

- A clear description of dog (if possible)
- Dog owner's name and address
- Date, time and location where the bite occurred
- Witness information, if possible



If you are the owner of a dog that has bitten:

- Leash your dog and isolate it from causing further threats
- Provide your contact information to the person who has been bitten
- Clear concise notes of the incident in your own handwriting
- If the person's skin has been broken, isolate your dog until contacted by Public Health.
- If necessary, consult an expert about your dog's behaviour.

What happens next?

Toronto Public Health will:

- Initiate an animal to human exposure investigation
- Contact the person who has been bitten to take a Rabies Exposure Report
- Contact the dog owner (if known) and issue an order to confine and isolate the animal

To learn more about what you can do if you are bitten by a dog or about the responsibilities of a dog owner under the Dog Owner's Liability Act and Municipal Code, Chapter 349, please visit our website at toronto.ca/animalservices