



What is a Dog Attack?

A dog attack does not always lead to physical injury or illness. A dog attack can be an incident where a dog has acted in a way that caused fear to a person or animal. This can include being chased by a dog, a dog rushing at the fence to bark aggressively at passers-by, or “almost” being bitten. A dog attack against a person or other animal (e.g. another dog) is considered and investigated in the same manner.

If Your Dog Attacks

If you are the owner of a dog, you are legally responsible for their actions. Dog attacks are not only frightening for all involved, but can result in serious injury to people and animals.

Be proactive!

There are simple steps you can take to minimise the risk of your dog attacking a person or other animal.

- ✓ Ensure that your dog cannot leave your property. If fencing a yard is not an option due to renting or financial difficulty, you are still required to provide an enclosure to adequately contain the dog. The majority of dog attacks are committed by wandering or unrestrained dogs.
- ✓ Leash laws are in effect in Longreach Regional Council, so always walk your dog on a lead when in a public place to ensure you have full effective control.
- ✓ Supervise children around dogs – particularly when the dog is sleeping, feeding or recovering from injury or illness.
- ✓ Train and socialise your dog to reduce the chance of aggression while in public areas and when around people, other dogs, or other animals.

Penalties

There are significant penalties for allowing your dog to attack a person or other animal. This includes in instances when an attack occurs because of an owner’s failure to maintain an adequate enclosure to contain their dog, allowing the dog to wander at large.

Dog attack offence maximum penalties as of July 2020 are:

- If the attack causes the death of or grievous bodily harm to a person - \$39,900.00
- If the attack causes the death of or grievous bodily harm to an animal - \$13,300.00
- If the attack causes bodily harm to a person or animal - \$6,650.00
- Other lesser attacks on a person or animal - \$2,660.00
- In addition to these penalties, your dog may also be seized and destroyed.

(Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008)

On-the-spot fines that may apply:

1 penalty unit = \$133.00 (as of July 2020)

- If the attack occurred while the dog was wandering at large – 2 penalty units = \$266.00
- If the dog is not registered with the Council – 2 penalty units = \$266.00
- If the dog is not microchipped – 2 penalty units = \$266.00

The dog owner’s ramifications:

- You may also be fined for breaches of Local Law, e.g. inadequate containment, effective control, and wandering at large.
- You can be prosecuted in Court resulting in convictions and substantial fines.
- Your dog may be declared as a regulated dog – either dangerous or menacing. If the dog is declared, the following implications and requirements will apply:
 - Higher annual registration fees.
 - Constructing specified fencing or containment, bearing all the associated costs.
 - The dog will be required to wear a muzzle in public, and cannot be lead with other dogs, or by a child.
 - The dog must wear a regulated dog identification tag at all times.
 - Installation of approved warning signage at all entry points to your property.
 - If the regulated dog escapes again, it can be seized and destroyed immediately under the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*.
- Depending on the circumstances, you may also face Police actions.
- You can also face civil action and be sued for other damages. These costs may include vehicle damage if the dog being at large causes an accident, or medical and veterinary expenses.