

DOG COMPLAINTS

This order establishes policies regarding the Department's responsibility for handling various types of dog complaints and includes procedures for investigating and processing those complaints.

I. 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.
- 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.

II. PROCEDURES

- A. BARKING DOG.** When issuing a citation for a barking dog violation [Section 41. (i) of the Health Code], follow these procedures:
 - 1. Get the signatures 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. Issue 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. 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 the 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 refuses treatment, you will have to complete the form which is available at any district police station, San Francisco General Hospital, Department of Public Health, 101 Grove St., Department of Animal Care and Control, 1200-15th Street, and most emergency medical facilities.
2. CITATION. If the bite was unprovoked, cite the owner of the dog [Health Code Section 41.5.1 (a) (i)].
3. QUARANTINE BY OWNER. Tell the owner to quarantine the dog for at least 10 days and to immediately notify the Department of Public Health, Bureau of Epidemiology and Disease Control (554-2832) if the dog becomes sick, dies or gets lost.
4. EVIDENCE. Have photographs taken of the injuries, and book any clothing as evidence.
5. INCIDENT REPORT/DPH FORM. Prepare an incident report. 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.

6. 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.

C. CITATION PROCEDURES (See DGO 5.06, Citation Release).

D. OTHER VIOLATIONS (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.

E. ADVICE 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