



# Resolving Barking Dog Nuisance

Information about barking dogs

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## *Helping to keep our community safe*

Dogs that bark excessively often become a major problem in our community. They become an intrusion and create conflict between neighbours.

### *What does the Law Say*

A dog is regarded as a nuisance if it creates a noise, by barking or otherwise, which persistently occurs or continues to such a degree that it unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of any person in any other premises.

A Dog Owner must not allow the dog to create a nuisance.

### *Councils' Position*

Council takes all allegations of dogs causing a nuisance very seriously where a complaint is substantiated. Council will pursue a complaint until it is resolved.

### *First Steps*

Council will recommend that the aggrieved neighbour directly approach the offending Dog Owner and request that they take action to control their dogs barking.

### *Advice and Assistance for the Dog Owner*

It is recommended that as the Dog Owner you consider obedience and socialisation training for your dog, so that you can better understand the needs of your dog.

Council also recommends that you consult your Vet to establish if the barking may be caused by a medical condition.

Council further recommends walking your dog daily, altering feeding times and providing toys at different intervals to alleviate any boredom your dog may have from living in a backyard.



The following organisations can assist with training:

Bark Busters 1800 067 710

Dog Tech 1300 650 739

### *Use the internet*

There are a number of devices that can be purchased to assist with training and education of your dog. There are also a number of dog trainers within Mitchell Shire that can assist with retraining and education of the dog owner and the dog. We advise that you be proactive and engage help.

### *Follow Up Action*

Where a direct approach to a Dog Owner is unsuccessful or the aggrieved neighbour does not feel comfortable in approaching the Dog Owner, Council will:

- > Contact the complainant to confirm details of the complaint
- > Familiarise itself with the circumstances of the alleged nuisance
- > Endeavour to identify the subject dog
- > Visit the property
- > Advise the Dog Owner of the complaint without naming the complainant



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### *Enforcement Action*

When Mitchell Shire receive a complaint, the following activities will commence:

- > Within the first 2 days, the complainant will be contacted by the investigating Local Laws Officer to get an understanding of the barking concern.
- > The owner of the alleged offending dog will also be contacted within 2 days, and sent a letter making them aware that a complaint about dog/s at their property causing an alleged nuisance by barking.
- > The complainant will be requested to call back before the within 7-days to make Mitchell Shire aware if there are any improvements.
- > After 7 days if the complainant has called back and there is still a concern, a dog barking log will be sent to the complainant requesting that the diary be completed for 7 days.

### *Once the log has been sent back to Council*

- > Once the log has been sent back to Council, the investigating Local Laws Officer will determine if the dog barking log indicates that there is an unreasonable nuisance.

### *No Nuisance*

- > If it is determined that there is no nuisance a letter will be sent to both the complainant and dog owner indicating that there is "No Nuisance".

### *If it is deemed that there is a nuisance*

- > Advise the owner of the dog that the issue has not been resolved and that a "Notice to Comply" will now be issued allowing 14 days to rectify the nuisance.
- > If there is still a nuisance after 14 days the investigating Local Laws Officer will take a statement from the affected resident, if it is determined that there is a nuisance an infringement will be issued.

### *Further Advice:*

#### *Some Simple Tips for Reducing Barking*

- > Make sure you do not reward your dog for barking too much. Don't let the dog inside or give it attention when it barks. Instead, give the dog attention when it is quiet.
- > If the dog is barking at people or noises on the other side of a fence, move the dog to another part of the



- yard, or put up a barrier to keep the dog away from that area.
- > If the dog barks at regular disturbances such as children walking to school or rubbish trucks, keep the dog inside or in an enclosed area at these times.
- > If the dog races along a path or fence barking at passing distractions, put barriers or obstacles in the dog's way to slow it down.
- > Ensure that the dog has adequate exercise and obedience training.
- > Make sure that the dog has food, water and shelter from the weather.
- > If the dog is barking at gaps and cracks in the fence, fill them in.
- > If the dog is barking at people it can see passing by, try blocking the dog's view.
- > Teach the dog to stop barking on command. When the dog is barking give a firm command such as "cease" and call the dog to you. Praise the dog when it stops barking.
- > Attend accredited dog obedience training.

Dogs bark for many reasons and, if these simple tips do not help you, seek further advice.

### *Contact Council*

If you require any further information please contact Mitchell Shire Council's Local Laws Department on 5734 6200.

### **Mitchell Shire Council**

t: (03) 5734 6200

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