



# Coorong District Council Information Guide

## Animal Management

### My Dog Barks - What Can I Do?

#### Introduction

All dogs bark, but excessive barking can become a real neighbourhood nuisance that can greatly reduce the quality of life for your neighbours and increase neighbourhood disputes. Barking dogs is the most common animal behavioural problem Councils are requested to deal with.

If a dog barks frequently it is often a sign of another associated problem. Taking the time to understand what makes your dog bark can be a big step towards solving the problem, for you and your neighbours.

#### Why your dog may bark

- Your dog maybe barking as a result of boredom and frustration;
- Your dog is a social animal that craves company. Dogs often bark when they are lonely;
- Your dog may only bark out of stress when separated from you;
- Your dog maybe barking to seek attention from you;
- Your dog may bark because it is afraid, this could be of other people, objects or other dogs;
- Your dog may bark when there is a threat to its territory;
- Your dog maybe stimulated to bark when playing;
- You may need to change your dogs diet to include more natural foods like lean meat, vegetables, rice, pasta etc.;
- Your dog breed maybe be particularly sensitive to barking;
- Your dog may have an underlying illness, or maybe in pain.

#### Controlling the Barking

Once you have found out why your dog is barking, you can find the cure. Barking can be controlled through many small behavioural changes. The following are helpful hints to consider:

- Ensure your dog is walked twice a day to relieve boredom. Dogs crave attention from their owners. They are social, pack animals and love attention from their family. If your dog only seems to bark when you are away from the premises, it could be due to loneliness. Provide your pet with stimulants such as balls, chews, raw meaty bones, chew toys and hidden foods. It can also prove handy to have a radio on to provide some soothing voice noises. Also give the dog something old which has the smell of a family member, like a rug. Be careful not to give old shoes or similar items, these can often be a green light to a dog to steal a new pair of shoes and chew them!
- Try giving your dog a bone when you leave the house. This will teach your dog that you leaving does not always mean a negative

situation. A fence that restricts your dog's vision of the street, can often be of assistance to stop your dog from barking at external stimulants. Training and discipline can also assist a barking problem.

- A dog can be trained to be alone, and to only bark when there is somebody on your premises.
- Separation anxiety is a major issue, and one that normally requires professional advice. Vets may administer drugs to control anxiety. This may not resolve the issue, but may help to reduce the stress on your dog. There are many dog behaviourists, trainers and professionals that can offer a more natural assistance in this area.

If you have tried all of the above, and you are still receiving information that your dog is a problem, you may need to seek the services of a professional. Your local vet can assist by diagnosing any medical condition that may be causing your dog to bark.

If action is not taken to relieve problem barking and this causes justified problems for your neighbours, Council may take action against you.

**For further information on Animal Management within the Council area, please contact Council's General Inspector on 1300 785 277.**

#### Helpful links

Animal Welfare League  
Phone - 08 8348 1300  
Website - <https://awl.org.au/>

*Information Guides are intended to help. The information provided is intended as a general guide only and applicants are encouraged to refer to Coorong District Council's Development Plan and to seek advice from our staff where necessary.*