

Barking dogs

Dogs that bark excessively can be a source of great irritation for neighbours. Dogs bark for a reason, and there are many ways that excessive barking can be managed.

Why dogs bark

Barking is one of the ways dogs communicate. It can mean anything from playfulness to danger. And as you can imagine, excessive barking can be very annoying for neighbours. Even though they appear to be 'barking for no reason' they are in fact trying to communicate something to their owner or anyone who is willing to pay attention.



The following are some of the main reasons why dogs bark:

- lack of exercise
- inadequate yard space
- boredom
- not enough human companionship
- hunger or thirst
- inadequate shelter
- disturbances
- movement outside the dog's property

Dogs also bark to alert their owners of trouble, such as an intruder entering the property. Remember, a dog's idea of an 'intruder' may differ to that of the owner. It could include cats, possums, other dogs, or even birds flying across the property. While it is acceptable for a dog to bark to warn its owner of an intruder, it is the owner's responsibility to train the dog not to bark at 'normal' occurrences such as possums, cats or birds.

Got a barking dog complaint?

Try talking to the dog's owner about the problem first.

They may not even be aware of the problem if the dog is only barking when they are out. You may be able to help them identify why the dog is barking.

The Dispute Settlement Centre provides free advice to help neighbours sort out problems such as barking dogs, phone 1800 658 528.

If you want to make a complaint to Council, we ask that you to keep a diary for a week to record how often the dog is barking. This is so we can determine whether the barking is causing an unreasonable disturbance.

Council may issue a warning to the dog's owner, or a formal Notice to Comply to stop the barking. If this is not complied with, Council can issue an infringement notice. If the problem still persists, Council may proceed with legal action and seek a Court Order.

Council is unable to pursue any barking dog complaints without the following diary and statement completed accurately. If you are not willing to attend the Magistrates Court, Council cannot legally pursue the matter any further.

For more information about barking dogs, or if you own a dog that barks, visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au

Example

To lodge a complaint with Council, a seven day barking dog diary needs to be completed to keep records of barking patterns and to register your complaint.

DAY 1	NUISANCE BARKING		HOW DOES THE NOISE AFFECT YOU?	Where are you?	
Date:	Constant <small>(All the time)</small>	Intermittent <small>(On and off)</small>	Eg: Sleeping, Working from home, Reading, Watching TV, Gardening, Entertaining etc.	Inside	Outside
Start Time: 7:00am End Time: 7:15am		Intermittent	Sleeping	✓	
Start Time: 9:00am End Time: 9:30am	Constant		Cleaning the house	✓	
Start Time: 4:00pm End Time: 4:45pm		Intermittent	Children playing in the backyard		✓
Start Time: 6:00pm End Time: 6:20pm		Intermittent	Watering the garden		✓
Start Time: 7:00pm End Time: 7:30pm	Constant		Eating dinner	✓	

DAY 1	NUISANCE BARKING		HOW DOES THE NOISE AFFECT YOU?	Where are you?	
Date:	Constant (All the time)	Intermittent (On and off)	Eg: Sleeping, Working from home, Reading, Watching TV, Gardening, Entertaining etc.	Inside	Outside
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					

DAY 2	NUISANCE BARKING		HOW DOES THE NOISE AFFECT YOU?	Where are you?	
Date:	Constant (All the time)	Intermittent (On and off)	Eg: Sleeping, Working from home, Reading, Watching TV, Gardening, Entertaining etc.	Inside	Outside
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					

DAY 3		NUISANCE BARKING		HOW DOES THE NOISE AFFECT YOU?		Where are you?	
Date:	Constant (All the time)	Intermittent (On and off)	Eg: Sleeping, Working from home, Reading, Watching TV, Gardening, Entertaining etc.			Inside	Outside
Start Time:							
End Time:							
Start Time:							
End Time:							
Start Time:							
End Time:							
Start Time:							
End Time:							

DAY 4		NUISANCE BARKING		HOW DOES THE NOISE AFFECT YOU?		Where are you?	
Date:	Constant (All the time)	Intermittent (On and off)	Eg: Sleeping, Working from home, Reading, Watching TV, Gardening, Entertaining etc.			Inside	Outside
Start Time:							
End Time:							
Start Time:							
End Time:							
Start Time:							
End Time:							
Start Time:							
End Time:							

DAY 5	NUISANCE BARKING		HOW DOES THE NOISE AFFECT YOU?	Where are you?	
Date:	Constant (All the time)	Intermittent (On and off)	Eg: Sleeping, Working from home, Reading, Watching TV, Gardening, Entertaining etc.	Inside	Outside
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					

DAY 6	NUISANCE BARKING		HOW DOES THE NOISE AFFECT YOU?	Where are you?	
Date:	Constant (All the time)	Intermittent (On and off)	Eg: Sleeping, Working from home, Reading, Watching TV, Gardening, Entertaining etc.	Inside	Outside
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					

DAY 7	NUISANCE BARKING		HOW DOES THE NOISE AFFECT YOU?	Where are you?	
Date:	Constant (All the time)	Intermittent (On and off)	Eg: Sleeping, Working from home, Reading, Watching TV, Gardening, Entertaining etc.	Inside	Outside
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					
Start Time:					
End Time:					

Name:

Address:

.....

Phone:

Email:

Please submit diary and Statement to Council:

City Laws Department
Hume City Council
PO Box 119
Dallas Vic 3047

A City Laws Officer will contact you and keep you up to date with the progress of the investigation. If you would like further information regarding your complaint, please contact Council on (03) 9205 2200.

STATEMENT

I, (name)

Of (address)..... state,

that the enclosed diary and this statement are a true and correct record of the nuisance barking caused by the dog I describe as:

Breed: Colour:

I have identified the dog as living at: (address).....

(suburb).....

The nuisance barking has been ongoing for (period of time)

I have been affected by the nuisance barking in the following ways:

.....
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.....
.....

I hereby request the Hume City Council to initiate legal proceedings if the barking does not stop, and I will undertake to:

- (a) give full information to the Council as to this matter; and to
- (b) appear in Court to give evidence as a witness to the truth and validity of this complaint.

SIGNED:

I hereby acknowledge that this statement is true and correct and I make it in the belief that a person making a false statement in the circumstances is liable to the penalties of perjury.

SIGNED: **DATE:**

Acknowledgement made and signature witnessed by me

(name) **on**

SIGNED: