

## **Adults At Risk - Questions and Answers**

**Q. Why is sending out an appointment form before you visit a property a good idea?**

A. To find out if there are any dogs living on the property. If so you need to tell the occupant to ensure the dogs are confined when you visit.

**Q. Why do you need to have the appointment form with you when you visit the property?**

A. So you have all the information in front of you including the phone number of the occupant. Check your form to see if dogs live on the property. If so, you can phone to make sure they are confined.

**Q. If the property you are visiting is fenced and has a gate – what should you do before opening the gate?**

A. Rattle the gate to make a noise. Also call out – “Is anyone there?” If a dog is on the property it will normally bark or if loose come to investigate. If a neighbour is outside their property – ask them?

**Q. What are the signs to look for that will give you an indication that a dog may live on the property?**

A. Old bones, a kennel and or dog run, chewed objects like shoes, dog poo, dog bowls, chain or rope tethered to a pole or tree.

**Q. If the property is unfenced what should you do before walking onto the property to let you know if a dog lives there?**

A. Stop on the edge of the property, close to your vehicle if possible and call out – “Is anyone there?” Look for signs such as dog poo, dog bones, etc.

**Q. If you are visiting a property in a vehicle what should you do before leaving your vehicle?**

A. Get as close to the property as possible. Look around. Toot your horn – if a dog is on the property or roaming nearby it would normally bark. If possible, ring the occupant before leaving the vehicle to let them know you are there and to confine any dogs. Keep your window up – a stray dog may jump up at you and your vehicle.

**Q. What equipment could you have with you that will help you fend off a dog if it attacks you?**

A. A document locker, briefcase, umbrella or heavy clipboard. Hold any of these in front of you and be ready to feed into the dog’s mouth if it attacks.

**Q. When leaving a house that has dogs what should you ask the occupant/dog owner to do with the dogs?**

A. Ask the occupant to ensure the dogs are still confined as they may have put the dog out the back door when you came in the front!

**Q. What should you always carry with you so you can contact others in an emergency?**

A. Your mobile phone. You also need to make sure that any emergency numbers you may require are on your phone. If this is a problem have your Staff Booklet with you and make sure you have written in the emergency numbers. Don’t rely on your memory. When you are in a stressful situation often even well known numbers may elude you!

**Q. If a dog approaches you what should you do?**

A. Stand still and stay calm. Do not run away or yell and scream. Talk quietly to the dog – “good dog”, “go home”, etc. If the dog walks behind you turn to face it but do not stare at it. Let it sniff you.

**Q. Why is it important not to raise your arms up to a dog or to pat it on the top of its head?**

A. A raised arm can be seen as a threat. If you are happy for it to sniff your hand then offer your hand, keep it down and have the palm facing upwards. Don't pat an unknown dog on the top of the head. This is an area where other dogs would grab in a fight or other dominance situations.

**Q. Is it OK for a dog to sniff you?**

A. Yes it is OK for a dog to sniff you. Usually they approach and sniff you around your feet and ankles or on your hand if you offer it. Sniffing is the way dogs greet other dogs and humans. Be aware that if you have a dog of your own or you have visited lots of homes that day that have dogs you will be very interesting to another dog!!

**Q. Why is it important for dog owners to keep their dogs confined to their own property and not let them roam the streets?**

A. Stray dogs cause all sorts of problems from attacking or chasing people and other animals to ripping open rubbish bags and running onto the roads. It is against the law for dogs to roam the streets. Dogs that are allowed to roam outside their property also become territorial with that extended area. Therefore if anyone enters the area that they have made their territory they may bark or attack to defend it.

**Q. If a dog has hackles raised and lips drawn back, what is it likely to do next?**

A. This is a sign of aggression and is often a warning that the dog is about to attack.

**Q. What does it indicate if a dog's tail is carried low between the back legs?**

A. This stance is usually a sign of submission, fear or illness.

**Q. What does a dog's tail sticking up and wagging indicate ?**

A. A wagging tail does not necessarily mean a happy, friendly dog. It usually indicates alertness, increased arousal or excitement.

**Q. What types of behaviour can result from staring at a dog?**

A. A submissive dog will usually look away when stared at by another dog or a person. However a dominant dog may become aggressive when stared at by another dog or a person.

**Q. If you are attacked by a dog what should you do?**

A. Seek medical help. Dog bites normally become infected so even if the bite is minor you need to see your doctor. If the bite is serious then call for help and get medical help as quickly as possible.

Report the incident to your local animal control as soon as you can. Animal Control Officers will take the required action.

If possible, complete the 'Dog Incident Report Form' that is in your Staff Booklet or can be downloaded from our website. ([www.animalmanagement.co.nz](http://www.animalmanagement.co.nz) )

**Q. Should I report any other incidents?**

A. If you have any problems or incidents with stray dogs that are causing you to be unable to fulfil your duties efficiently then certainly contact animal control. You can either ring them or complete the 'Dog Incident Report Form' and forward this to them.

Remember if you are having problems with stray dogs then others will be too and your action in reporting incidents may result in saving a child or another person from being harassed or bitten.