

Guidelines For Barking Dog Complaint

Background:

Barking is one way that dogs communicate, but excessive barking can disturb neighbours and cause annoyance. Barking can signify anything from playfulness to danger. Council receives a large number of requests regarding barking dogs.

Approach To Enforcement:

The *Companion Animals Act 1998* defines that a dog is a nuisance if the dog makes a noise, by barking or otherwise, that persistently occurs or continues to such a degree or extent that it unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of any person in any other premises.

Before Council commences an investigation into a barking dog, there are alternate ways in which the issue can be addressed.

- **Talk To The Dog's Owner**
The dog's owner may not have realised that their dog is bothering you, and will often be happy to work with you to solve the problem. Alternatively, you can use the attached example and send the dog owner a letter. [Download the letter here.](#)
- **Contact A Community Justice Centre**
If the problem persists, you may contact a Community Justice Centre (CJC). These government funded but independent centres specialise in settling differences between neighbours through mediation, where you meet with the dog's owner and a Community Justice Centre Representative to try and solve the problem. This process will not cost you any money and has a high success rate.
- **Seek A Noise Abatement Order**
If you want to take action independently of the council, you can seek a noise abatement order under section 268 of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* from the local court.
- **Contact Your Local Council**
If mediation is unsuccessful and the noise problem persists, contact your local council. You may be required to provide evidence substantiating your complaint.

Regulatory Response:

Council staff will take appropriate regulatory action when the outcome of an investigation substantiates a nuisance. Such action may include warnings, Orders and/or fines for repeated nuisance behaviour

Useful Links:

- [Environmental Protection Authority](#) - additional information on how to deal with barking dogs.
- [Laws and responsible pet ownership](#) - provides information about companion animal legislation.
- [Responsible Pet Ownership](#) - Office of Local Government website with information about registration and microchipping for pet owner