

PROCEDURE 10

Dog fight, aggression or attack

Purpose: End exposure without placing hands or bodies between dogs, provide medical care and preserve reliable facts.



SITE CUSTOMISATION REQUIRED. This national baseline must be adapted through a site risk assessment, worker consultation and advice from the relevant state or territory regulator, emergency services, council, insurer and veterinarian. Human life takes priority.

Business and site details

Business legal name		Trading name	
Site / branch		ABN	
Physical address		Emergency entry / cross street	
Site manager		Incident Controller	
Maximum dogs		Maximum people	
Operating hours		Main phone	

Document control

Issue date		Next review date	
Approved by		Position	

Activate this procedure when

- Threat display escalating beyond safe handling, contact fight, redirected aggression, dog attack on a person, resource guarding incident or barrier failure.

P Protect people	A Alert and activate	W Welfare and secure dogs	S Sign off accountability
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Step-by-step emergency response

- 1 Call for help and clear the area.** Remove bystanders and non-involved dogs. Close gates and stop new entries.
- 2 Use trained separation methods.** Use the facility's approved remote barriers, boards, gates, visual blocks or other trained method. Avoid hands near heads and collars during active contact.
- 3 Secure separately.** Once separated, use two barriers where possible, label each location and allow decompression. Do not immediately reintroduce.
- 4 Treat people first.** For serious bleeding, deep/large wounds or injury to the face/head, call 000. Provide first aid and obtain medical advice because bites can become infected.
- 5 Triage every dog.** Check both visible and hidden injuries and arrange veterinary assessment; punctures may be difficult to see.
- 6 Preserve facts.** Record sequence, locations, handlers, dogs, body areas, barriers, photos of the environment and witness accounts without assigning blame.
- 7 Notify.** Contact owners, manager, insurer and any council/WHS authority required by local law or the circumstances.

Do not

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|-------------|--|
| STOP | Reach between fighting dogs, grab collars near the head, or use a method staff have not been trained to use. |
| STOP | Punish, test or re-stage the dogs after the event. |
| STOP | Promise an outcome or admit liability before facts and obligations are reviewed. |

After the immediate danger

- Suspend group participation pending competent behavioural and veterinary review.
- Review dog matching, staffing, arousal triggers, barriers, intake disclosures and emergency tools.
- Support workers after a traumatic incident.

Assigned emergency roles

Incident Controller	Selects the safe action, liaises with emergency services and authorises recovery.	
People / Area Warden	Protects people, sweeps assigned areas if safe and reports status.	
Dog Movement / Canine FA	Secures, identifies, separates, triages and moves dogs within training.	
Communications / Recorder	Calls services and owners, maintains the time log and preserves records.	

Procedure readiness checklist

- ☐ Provide remote barriers, separation boards and gates that allow staff to avoid hands near dogs' heads.
- ☐ Train staff in the facility's approved separation methods and prohibit untrained improvisation.
- ☐ Use intake information, group matching, supervision and arousal controls to reduce conflict risk.
- ☐ Maintain secure decompression areas with two barriers where practical.
- ☐ Keep human and canine first-aid supplies accessible without entering the active conflict area.
- ☐ Preserve CCTV, witness accounts and environmental evidence after a serious attack or bite.

Site-specific arrangements

Separation tools location	
Decompression / isolation areas	
Human and canine first-aid kits	
CCTV / evidence retention	

Emergency contacts and notifications

Triple Zero for serious human injury		Veterinarian and owners	
Council, WHS regulator or insurer if required		Primary / emergency vet	

Recommended drill: Use barriers to separate simulated dogs, secure each behind two controls and complete injury triage.

Drill, review and authorisation record

Last drill date		Participants	
Corrective action owner		Action due date	
Procedure authorised by		Authorisation date	
Gaps identified / corrective actions			

Sources and further guidance

[3] [Safe Work Australia - First aid](#)
[5] [Triple Zero - Australia's emergency call service](#)
[20] [Healthdirect - Dog, cat, bat and human bites](#)
[21] [Agriculture Victoria - Boarding establishments code](#)

Review date: source links and national emergency numbers were checked for the master manual on 31 August 2026. Confirm local numbers, warnings, laws, codes, licences and veterinary arrangements before issue and at every review.

