

What Constitutes A Noisy Dog?

Without provocation:

- A dog barking continuously for 10 minutes or
- A dog barking intermittently for 20 minutes within a 30-minute period.

Remedies:

Step One: NOTIFICATION TO DOG OWNER

- By letter, email or in person.
- Document the notification and all attempts.
- If the dog continues to bark and proper notification was made or,
- All reasonable attempts to notify the owner fail, go to Step Two.

Step Two: SOLVE THE PROBLEM (*Optional, but highly recommended*)

- Contact the COH Animal Control at (808) 327-3558.
- An enforcement officer will meet with the owners of the dog to assess the situation and suggest solutions so that long drawn out court appearances can be avoided.
- If the problem persists, go to Step Three.

Step Three: ENFORCEMENT

In accordance with Hawaii County Code §4-4-25 and 4-4-26, when the dog is actively barking and exceeding the time limits, report the incident to the police non-emergency number, 808-935-3311. Be prepared to present documentation of notification and to give a statement for court purposes.

Fines for keeping a noisy dog are \$25 for the first offense, \$75 for the second, \$100 for the third, and \$200 for any subsequent violation(s).

For Dog Owners – Causes and Solutions

The first step in obtaining peace and quiet in the neighborhood is to realize that lots of barking is caused by the dog being lonely, bored, frustrated or frightened. Barking is a dog's natural means of communication and as such, is not considered a behavioral problem unless it occurs in excess.

Causes of Problem Barking:

- Improper confinement. This might include leaving a dog alone in a locked room, a too-small kennel, restricted tethering outdoors, or in a setting without proper shelter. All can cause frustration which may lead to excess barking.
- Environmental sounds. These might include perception of potential danger such as an intruder, people walking on the street, loud noises such as thunder, construction, or other barking dogs.
- Other causes might include separation anxiety, the dog's own temperament, over-aggressiveness, being strongly territorial or needing food or water
- Inadequate exercise can easily result in a dog that has pent-up energy and barks out of frustration. A well-exercised dog is more likely to sleep when you're not there.

Tips for Dog Owners to Help Control Barking:

The key to solving the problem of excess barking in your dog begins with an understanding of what is causing this behavior. Once you have determined a cause, you have a greater chance of choosing the most effective solution or behavioral modification.

- Always ensure access to fresh water, shade, shelter and exercise. Feed once per day, at minimum.
- Give your dog something to do with lots of toys such as balls and chewy toys.
- If your dog is seeing or hearing something that is causing him to bark, move him to the other side or back of the house. If inside the house, close the curtains and leave a radio on for company.
- In the event your dog is barking in response to environmental noises or the barking is simply due to its temperament, behavioral modification methods should be used. These methods can include reconditioning using a verbal reprimand such as "No!" and leash correction. Corrective actions should be applied while the barking is occurring in order for your dog to associate the unwanted behavior with the positive reinforcement instead of punishment. Reward your dog when it stops barking.
- Indirect intervention methods can also be applied. These techniques can range from spraying your dog with water while it is barking or using anti-bark collars such as a citronella spray collar or one which emits loud or high frequency sounds that interrupt and deter barking. These devices can be controlled by the owner or triggered by the dog's barking. These devices are particularly effective when barking occurs in the owner's absence.

*COH Animal Control does not recommend shock collars and reminds you to **never** strike an animal!*