

Preventing Dog Attacks and Dog-related Injuries



Understand the warning signs and dangers of dog interactions and take action to avoid this serious risk.

The rise of online delivery service has led to increased interactions between delivery drivers and dogs. With approximately 85 million dogs in the U.S., 38% of homes have at least one dog.¹ Annually, there are over 4.5 million reported dog bites.²

Dog attacks present a significant threat to delivery service professionals. Delivery drivers must be prepared to handle potential dog encounters to prevent dangerous situations.

Understanding how to assess a situation for potential danger and being prepared with strategies for handling aggressive dogs can help handle threatening situations.

Strategies to Help Prevent Dangerous Interactions with Dogs

1. Assess the delivery location:
 - Take your time to assess the location upon arrival.
 - Assume there is a dog at most locations.
 - Avoid wearing headphones to remain vigilant.
 - If a dog is present, notify other employees, especially if the dog shows signs of aggression.
2. Do not attempt delivery when aggressive and threatening behavior is present:
 - Back away and do not attempt the delivery.
 - Report the dog as the reason for the undelivered package.
 - Notify the recipient and ask them to meet you at the delivery vehicle or secure the dog inside.

3. Handling a delivery:

- Avoid handing a package to a person in the presence of their dog.
- If a dog is present at the door, ask the owner to put the dog away or step outside.
- If the recipient does not comply, leave the package at the front door if possible.

4. Avoid interacting with dogs:

- Do not pet or interact with unfamiliar dogs, as it can be unsafe and lead to injury.

Interaction With An Aggressive and/or Threatening Dog

1. Stay in control:

- Remain calm and avoid screaming, yelling, or reacting aggressively.
- Do not run away, as it may trigger the dog's prey instinct.

2. Avoid staring:

- Limit direct eye contact to avoid provoking the dog.

3. Claim your space:

- Claim your space while trying to exit the area.
- Use a package to take up more space if needed.
- Stay calm and project an assertive demeanor to demand the dog's respect.
- Use distractions like a water bottle or dog treats if the dog remains aggressive.

10 Warning signs in behavior of aggressive dogs

1. Defensive and backing away.
2. Ears or head pulled inwards.
3. Eyes rolled back showing the whites.
4. Tongue and jaw flicking.
5. Fierce stare.
6. Tail stiff and pointed upright.
7. Aggressive and tense stance.
8. Wrinkled brow and distressed face.
9. Yawning or howling.
10. Aggressive barking and hair standing up.

Steps to take after a dog bite at work

1. Put distance between you and the dog; get to a safe area.
2. Check wounds and apply pressure if bleeding.
3. Get examined by a medical doctor immediately.
4. Call 9-1-1 for medical help if necessary.
5. Report the injury to your employer without delay.
6. Complete an accident report once stabilized.
7. Take photos of your injuries from a safe distance.
8. Notify the dog's owner if possible.

In summary, be prepared for potential interactions with aggressive dogs. Stay aware of your surroundings, recognize warning signs, and follow proper procedures to ensure safety when dogs are present.

¹ American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) 2021; <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/reports-statistics/us-pet-ownership-statistics>

² World Health Organization; <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/animal-bites#:~:text=In%20the%20United%20States%20of,94%25%20of%20animal%20bite%20injuries.>

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