

Barking dogs

Information for affected neighbours

What to do if you are troubled by a barking dog?

1. Discuss

Efforts to resolve the issue by contacting the dog's owner is advised before making a complaint to Council. The dog owner may not be aware their dog is barking, particularly if it's only doing it when they are out. In most cases, owners will want to do the right thing and will cooperate.

Neighbours communicating with each other constructively can help stop the problem from escalating and making it easier to deal with other issues in the future.

If you cannot discuss your concerns directly, consider putting your concerns in writing to your neighbour. Be specific and tell the dog owner if the dog is barking at certain times or at certain things and give them an opportunity to correct the problem.

2. Contact the RSPCA

If you suspect the dog is being mistreated, contact the RSPCA on 1300 278 358 or visit rspca.org.au/report-animal-cruelty/

3. Wait

After contacting the owner about the barking, please wait to see if they are able to adjust the animal's behaviour.

4. Lodge a formal complaint to Council

If attempts to resolve the matter has not reduced the barking, a written complaint may be lodged with Council in the form of a Dog Nuisance Barking Diary that has been completed for at least 10 consecutive days. Council requires evidence to commence an investigation so completing the Diary is essential. If you have neighbours that are willing to complete a Diary this will help substantiate your complaint.

Council has a process for dealing with complaints about nuisance barking.

The Companion Animals Act 1998 defines nuisance barking as *"a dog that 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."* [Refer to the Companion Animals Act, Section 32A](#) to learn more about this legislation.

A Sample letter is available on Council's website. If you are unsure of where the dog lives, flyers are available to download and print if you wish to do a letter box drop in your neighbourhood.

If you'd like us to send you some flyers, please contact us.



Download a Dog Nuisance Barking Diary from Council's website.

Please note that Council will not become involved in neighbourhood disputes.

What happens after lodging a dog nuisance barking diary?

Council will speak with the owner/s of the dog/s in question and explain that a complaint has been received, provide the dog owner with self-help information and offer the owner advice and assistance to help them reduce the nuisance. The owner will be provided with a Dog Nuisance Barking Diary to record their own animal's behaviour over the following 10 days.

A Council Officer will contact the complainant to confirm the owner has been informed. The complainant must give the owner of the dog two weeks from this date to attempt to rectify the issue. During this time, it is required that the complainant continues using the Dog Nuisance Barking Diary for 10 consecutive days and then submit this to Council.

If Council is satisfied that the dog is causing or being a nuisance, then a **Notice of Proposed Nuisance Dog Order** will be issued to the dog owner.

Upon receiving this **Notice**, the owner will have seven days to respond to Council. After the seven days Council will determine if a **Nuisance Dog Order** is to be issued.

If a Nuisance Dog Order is issued, it remains in force for six months. It is not subject to any further appeal or review process. Penalties apply for non-compliance.

Both the complainant and owner will be advised in writing of the outcome.

Noise abatement order

If you wish to act independently of the Council process, you can seek a noise abatement order from the local court. The court may issue this order when a person satisfies the court that a neighbour's dog is making an offensive noise. Please note, there are fees for applying for a noise abatement order.



For more information about dealing with barking dogs, scan the QR code or visit www.epa.nsw.gov.au



To apply for an order, contact the registry staff at your local court, visit or speak to your legal advisor. For further information scan the QR code.