

# Legal Tips For Dog Owners

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Owning a dog can expose you to significant legal liabilities. You are responsible for the dog if it commits property damage or injures someone, even if the injury wasn't caused by a bite.

You are exempt from liability if the person bitten was on your property as a trespasser, if they were a veterinarian treating the dog, if they provoked the animal or if they were committing a felony at the time.

If not, you will be responsible for their medical bills, loss of wages from being unable to work, psychological counseling, and be generally expected to compensate for the changes to the victim's life as a result of their contact with your dog.

As these expenses can top hundreds of thousands of dollars, dog owners should consider getting dog owner's insurance, especially if they possess a particularly surly breed.

Many states have a "first bite rule" stemming from English common law. This law says that an owner is not responsible for the first time his animal attacks someone, since he could have no previous knowledge of the animal's dangerousness and therefore cannot be expected to have taken measures to protect people from it. In these states, the owner is strictly liable for subsequent attacks.

Dog owners may also protect themselves by informing guests of the animal's dangerous propensities. Simply saying "be careful, he bites," may save a dog owner from a fortune in liabilities. Even a general reputation for viciousness may be enough to protect you, so don't feel bad about bragging of your dog's fighting prowess. [Check Out More Articles:](#)

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