

Programmed is committed to ensuring all personnel are kept safe while on the job.

All workers should be aware of the hazards associated with dogs and how to keep yourself safe around dogs while carrying out business activities.

Planning your site visit

- Check to see if there are dogs present on the property prior to making the visit.
- Check if the front door has a security screen:
 - If NO**, don't attempt access as the dog may run out as soon as the tenant opens the front door – leave and call the tenant to restrain the dog.
 - If YES**, prior to knocking, ensure the security screen latch is engaged & put your foot against the screen door to mitigate the dog running out.
- Ask the tenant to ensure the dog is restrained when you arrive.

Means of restraint will be determined by where you will need to work and the duration:

- Dog to be put on a lead and tied to a structure – post etc....
- Inspect the lead and structure to verify the physical integrity is sufficient to restrain the dog for the duration of the service call (Noting: that we've experienced instances where the dog has managed to free itself from the restraint).

In all examples below, we have experienced incidents where the dog has either got out, freed itself or been released by the tenant:

- Dog put on a lead and held by tenant.
- Dog locked in a room.
- Dog locked outside in a designated area.

If a dog approaches your vehicle

- Attract the attention of the owner by sounding the horn or phoning the property.
- Stay in the vehicle until you feel it is safe to step out.
- Return to the property at a later time, if it is not safe to leave the vehicle.

As you approach the property

- Scan the area for dogs.
- Be aware of your surroundings and ensure you have an escape plan and a clear escape route.
- Make a habit of rattling gates and fences and waiting to see if there is any response.
- Always approach the front of the property first and knock on the front door.
- If no one is home then return to the property at a later time.
- Don't enter the rear of the property.

If a dog approaches you on the property

- Don't panic and run, this can excite dogs and trigger an attack.
- Stand still, side on to the dog
- Walk slowly and calmly away from the dog and return to your car or safe place.

- Don't ever hold direct eye contact with a dog. This is a dominant stance and may prompt an attack
- Don't touch the dog.

What should I do if I am attacked by a dog?

- Get to a safe place.
- Apply pressure to the wound with a clean towel to stop bleeding.
- Wash the wound gently with soap and water.
- Apply a sterile bandage to the wound if possible.
- Seek immediate medical attention as wound may become infected if left untreated by a medical practitioner.
- Report the incident to your Supervisor/Manager or Programmed Representative.

The key points of dog awareness

Be aware when approaching a property:

- Check your job sheet for known dogs at the property.
- Look for signs of a dog.
- Rattle the gate.

Signs of Aggression:

- Barking, growling, snarling, showing teeth, ears laid back, legs stiff, tail up, hair standing up on its back.
- A wagging tail does not always mean the dog is happy to see you.

Approached by a Threatening Dog:

- Remain calm and still.
- Place an object between you and the dog.
- Keep hands by your sides.
- Turn so you are "side on" to the dog.
- Keep the dog in sight but don't stare directly at it
- Look down at your feet or the dogs feet
- Try firm and simple commands such as "No", "Down" or "Go Home" in a calm voice.
- Slowly and quietly back away from the dog, keeping it in sight.

Attacked by a Dog:

- If a dog leaps at you, cover your face and neck with your hands and arms.
- Don't turn your back or scream.
- Never lie down. If you are knocked down, lie with your face down, curl up in a ball and put your hands and arms over the back of your head and neck.
- If a dog bites you, wash and disinfect the area and seek medical treatment immediately.
- Report the incident to your Supervisor/Manager or Programmed Representative.