

## **SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AGGRESSIVE ANIMALS**

- All animals have the potential to bite. The only way to absolutely guarantee no aggression is euthanasia.
- Animals usually give preliminary warning postures prior to an actual bite; all warnings should be heeded and all interaction with the animal discontinued.
  - Dog aggression warnings: body tensing/stiffening, intense stare, pupils dilated, growling, snarling (lifts their lip and shows teeth), lunging, snapping
  - Cat aggression warnings: tail rapidly flicking, ears pinned back, pupils dilated, hiss, growl, swat
- Interaction with the animal should only be resumed again when the animal is no longer aggressively aroused, which may be difficult to determine, so caution is needed.
  - The aggressively aroused pet should be segregated in a secure location with necessary resources and minimal stimulation until the pet is calm again. Periodic visits to the containment may allow owner to assess the animal's reactivity and ability to rejoin the household.
  - For cats, there may be a prolonged recovery period; it can take hours or days for them to return to a calm state.
- To decrease aggressive episodes, avoid all known situations that trigger aggression.
  - If your pet exhibits warning signals or actually bites when you physically interact with them, then this interaction must be avoided. This may include: petting, hugging, pushing, stepping over them, grabbing by the collar, picking them up, wiping feet, cleaning ears, etc.
  - If your pet exhibits warning signals or actually bites when you approach his/her food or when in possession of a toy, chew bone, or stolen item, this must be avoided.
  - If your animal is aggressive around human food, they should not be in the room while food is being prepared and consumed. Children must not walk around the home eating food if the animal is in the house.
  - If your pet is aggressive around their pet food then one should:
    - Prepare the pet's food when the pet is outside or contained in another area of the house.
    - Place the prepared food in a room that can be closed/locked.
    - Let the pet into the room with the food.
    - Close and lock the door, allowing the pet to eat without any contact.

- Once the food is consumed, let out the pet and put outside or contain in another area of the house.

- Once the pet is contained away from the feeding room, the human can go into the room and retrieve the food bowl and put it away.

- If your pet is aggressive toward children, they must never be left alone with the children. An adult must closely supervise all interactions. If close supervision is not possible, the pet needs to be confined away from the children. Muzzles may be appropriate in some situations.

-If your pet aggresses toward visitors to your home, the pet must be confined before visitors are allowed in the house.

- The pet should be placed in confinement by an adult.

- The confinement must be some place secure such as a room with a lock, a kennel or crate, or a fenced back yard.

-If your pet exhibits aggression when outside in the yard, they must not be outside alone. They should be supervised by an adult and preferably on a leash for additional control. They must never be left outside when no one is home.

-The yard should be securely locked at all times so that people cannot get in and dogs cannot get out.

-Do not tether aggressive dogs in the yard or any public place.

- Electronic containment systems should not be used with aggressive animals.

-If your dog shows aggressive behavior to other dogs, avoid walks in high traffic areas or where you are likely to encounter other dogs.

-If your cat shows aggressive behavior to other cats in the neighborhood, outdoor access is not advised.

■ ***Avoid all physical reprimands, as these are likely to increase rather than decrease aggressive response.***