

Chico Police Department/Animal Services
530-897-4960

Barking Dog Complaints

Chico Animal Services is here to work with you to try and solve your barking dog complaint. We encourage you to work out any barking dog issues with your neighbors. **A formal complaint should be filed only after your attempts to resolve the problem have been unsuccessful.**

Not all barking is considered nuisance barking. A dog barking at someone coming onto private property where the dog is located such as a service person, a visitor or an intruder, or a dog barking because they are being teased or provoked by someone (other than the owner), would not be considered nuisance barking. Complaints about barking happening on private property (within an apartment complex or mobile home park) should be handled by the apartment or park manager.

Before you take any action, be sure the barking is truly a problem:

Keep a Barking Dog Log listing the date, time and duration of when the dog is barking. Is there a pattern? Is it every day when the dog owner is at work, or does the dog bark all evening once the owner comes home? Is the owner home when the dog is barking or away? The owner may not be aware their dog is barking at all. Are there triggers like the mailman or trash collector, does the dog bark at every little thing, or for long periods for no apparent reason at all? Has the dog just started barking, and if so, has something changed like new construction in the neighborhood or the owner's work schedule? Have you contacted other neighbors to see if the barking bothers them? If the dog is not bothering anyone else then the barking may not actually meet the criteria for being a nuisance.

If after assessing the situation, you feel the barking is truly a nuisance, the first step is to contact the dog's owner. Call, visit or write a letter (posted or mailed) to your neighbor explaining that their dog is barking, and be as detailed as possible using the information from your log. Your neighbor may not even know their dog is barking and quite often this is all that is needed to resolve the issue. Be willing to keep an open dialog with your neighbor to give them feedback on what is or isn't working. It may take time for the dog's owner to correct the problem. Note the day and time you called or visited, or keep a copy of the letter you sent for your records.

If your attempts to resolve the barking dog issue directly with the dog owner have been unsuccessful, you may file a written complaint on the Initial Barking Dog Complaint Form. Animal Control will not respond to anonymous or incomplete forms or phoned in complaints.

You must be certain on the complaint form that you have identified the correct address and dog(s). Your information is required on this form. If it is not provided, we will be unable to assist you. Be advised that once you have filed this form as a complaint, your name and address could be made known if the matter goes to court.

Once you make a written complaint, Animal Services will send a notice to the dog owner to make them aware of the complaint. The owner will receive tips to reduce the barking and inform them of the consequences for not complying. Often this may be enough to resolve the barking dog issue.

If no other complaints are received from any other households within 14 days from the date of the first complaint, no further action will be taken by Animal Services.

If a second written complaint is received from another household **within 14 days** of the first complaint, then a written notice will be sent to the dog owner advising them that there has been a second complaint and that they have 14 days to correct the barking, or they may be subject to a citation. They will be informed that logs will be kept by the parties making the complaint, and they can also keep a log of their dog's activities. Both you and the other person making a complaint will receive a letter to keep a Barking Dog Log for 14 days.

Before a citation can be issued, you will be required to sign an affidavit under penalty of perjury that what you are attesting to is true and you must submit the Barking Dog Log. There must be enough information in the log to warrant a citation. You will also be required to attend an administrative hearing if the person that was cited contests the citation. If you do not attend the hearing, the citation will be dismissed in the dog owner's favor, ending the complaint process.