

Protocol For Dogs With A History Of Biting:

Ganley/Lyon 2002

Evaluating whether dogs surrendered to UVHS with a bite history can be trained to exercise bite inhibition:

This standard scale has been developed by Ian Dunbar to judge the severity of dog bites, based on damage inflicted. The scale is:

- Level One: Bark, lunge, and no teeth on skin.
- Level Two: Teeth touched, no puncture.
- Level Three: 1-4 holes from a single bite. All holes less than half the length of a single canine tooth.
- Level Four: Single bite, deep puncture (up to one and a half times the depth of a single canine tooth), wound goes black within 24 hours.
- Level Five: Multiple bite attack or multiple attack incidents.
- Level Six: Missing large portions of flesh.

Any dog admitted to UVHS with a level 1-2 bite history will go through the regular evaluation process and if the dog passes will be placed into an appropriate home. These dogs show they have some bite inhibition but maybe less tolerant than those who choose not to bite. One must remember that many things can lead to a snap or bite that might be truly justified. We must do our best to find out why this dog decided to bite in the first place. Was it ignorance of its handler, tormented by a child, fearfulness, or just too pushy. With no one to properly be its leader. Most of these types of dogs can be rehabilitated with our program.

Dogs whose bite history is level three and up will not be evaluated and placed into any home. Their bite history indicates no bite inhibition. This dog will be euthanized* after the mandatory 10 day waiting period has been met. Most of these dogs have now shown they have little regard for humans and want to be left alone. Usually their social skills are not prevalent unless we have something that they want. Therefore these dogs become a liability to place into normal pet homes. Some times if we have the space and this dog has huge potential to become a working dog we might hold onto this dog for US customs. (Unless humans needed stitches.) Then this dog should not be held and should be euthanized by its owner if possible and not come into UVHS.

* If the UVHS Behavior Manager and ED feel the dog bite was to protect itself from an assault of some sort, then this dog might be evaluated - if there has been only one or two small punctures that did not require any stitches.