



## PREVENTING DOG BITES

*Prepared by Chief Executive Office, Risk Management Branch Loss Control and Prevention Section*

Contact [LossControl@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:LossControl@ceo.lacounty.gov) for additional information

Each year, 800,000 people seek medical attention for dog bites. Of those injured, 386,000 require treatment in an emergency room. Dog bites are a serious public health problem that can inflict considerable physical and emotional damage on victims. The following recommendations are made to assist in preventing dog bites.

### **If you encounter a strange dog:**

- Do not scream. Speak calmly and firmly. Do not give the dog a reason to become excited or aggressive.
- Do not throw things at the dog.
- Do not run or turn your back on the dog.
- Remain motionless and avoid making eye contact with the dog. Once the dog loses interest, slowly back away until the dog is out of sight.
- If the dog attacks, “feed” it a jacket, purse, backpack or any other object to create a barrier between you and the dog. This may buy you enough time to escape.
- If the dog knocks you down, curl into a ball, protect your ears, back of your neck and your face with your arms. Remain motionless.
- If you are bitten, immediately wash the wound with soap and water and see a doctor. Report the bite to your supervisor and local animal control agency.

### **More safety tips:**

- Do not run past a dog.
- Never approach a dog that is tied up in a yard.
- Do not reach through a fence to pet a dog.
- Never bother a dog that is eating, sleeping or caring for puppies.
- Do not try to help a dog that is hurt or frightened.

### **When you pet a dog:**

- Always let the dog see you first.
- Let the dog come to you.
- Make a fist and hold your hand out towards the dog’s nose so it can sniff your hand.