



**Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr.**

CITY ATTORNEY

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE • COLUMBUS, OHIO

## INFORMATION ON THE PROBLEM OF EXCESSIVE DOG BARKING

**The problem of excessive dog barking has been a long unaddressed issue. The Columbus City Prosecutor's Office, under the leadership of City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr., is committed to addressing this quality of life issue.**

The first action to take when dealing with a barking dog problem is to contact First Assistant Prosecutor Bill Hedrick at (614) 645-8874. Mr. Hedrick can also assist you with other dog issues.

Excessive dog barking solutions may include the following:

1. A noisy animal warning letter can be mailed to the address where the dog in question resides. We do not disclose the identity of the person who has called our office to complain about the noisy animal. A vast majority of barking dog issues are resolved at this step.
2. Mediation can be scheduled in our office to allow the parties to discuss the matter. Our Night Prosecutor Mediation Program has a long history of successfully handling this type of neighborhood problem.
3. If the problem persists despite a warning letter and mediation, prosecution exists as a final option. Noise Animals is a minor misdemeanor under the Columbus City Code and a violation is punishable with a fine of up to \$150. To prosecute this offense, our office requires the following types of evidence:
  - A. The barking must happen within the city limits of Columbus. You must also provide the dog owner's name. If the owner's name is not available, our Intake Unit can attempt to acquire the information.
  - B. To prosecute a case, you must provide exact dates and times the barking has taken place. Simply stating "the dog barks everyday" is NOT sufficient evidence to file a criminal charge. The evidence you submit should also include one or two other households in the area that will confirm the dates and times the barking occurred. Video and/or audio tape recordings of the barking are also very helpful. Generally, 20 minutes or more of audio demonstrating continuous barking is needed to create a strong case.

Please note: Dogs will bark. Unless the barking is excessive, it is NOT considered criminal. Be advised that in order to pursue a criminal charge (as explained in #3 above), you will need to file a complaint through the Intake Unit at the Columbus City Prosecutor's Office, 375 South High Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor. If charges are approved, you may be required to appear in court several times.

**Civil Division**  
90 W. Broad Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614/645-7385  
Fax 614/645-6949

**Claims Division**  
90 W. Broad Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614/645-7717  
Fax 614/645-6949

**Prosecutor Division**  
375 S. High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614/645-7483  
Fax 614/645-8902

**Real Estate Division**  
109 N. Front Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614/645-7712  
Fax 614/645-3913

**Police Legal Advisor**  
120 Marconi Blvd.  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614/645-4530  
Fax 614/645-4551