



Risk Management Checklist for Humane Societies and Veterinary Hospitals

PURPOSE: This checklist serves as a guideline for veterinary hospitals and humane societies to minimize the risk of workers' compensation claims related to dog bites inflicted on employees.

1. Employee Training

- Comprehensive Training Program:** Implement a thorough training program for all staff on safe handling techniques for dogs.
- Regular Refresher Courses:** Schedule periodic refresher courses to reinforce best practices and update staff on new handling techniques.
- Behavioral Recognition Training:** Train staff to recognize signs of stress or aggression in dogs to prevent potential bites.

2. Safety Protocols

- Develop Safety Protocols:** Create and distribute clear safety protocols for dog handling, including procedures for managing aggressive dogs.

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Provide staff with appropriate PPE, such as gloves, muzzles, and bite-resistant clothing.
- Incident Reporting System:** Establish a clear procedure for reporting and documenting any dog bites or near-misses, regardless of severity.

3. Facility Design and Equipment

- Secure Areas:** Designate specific areas for handling dogs that are known to be aggressive or fearful to minimize risk to staff.
- Fencing and Barriers:** Ensure all areas where dogs are housed or treated have secure fencing and barriers to protect staff and visitors.
- Restraint Equipment:** Provide appropriate restraint equipment, such as leashes, muzzles, and handling gloves, for staff use during examinations and treatments.

4. Dog Assessment Procedures

- Behavioral Assessments:** Implement behavioral assessments for all dogs upon arrival to identify any potential aggression issues.



- Documentation of Behavior:** Maintain records of each dog's behavior assessments and any prior bite history to inform staff.
- Controlled Introductions:** Use controlled introductions for new or high-risk dogs to assess their behavior in a safe manner.

5. Incident Response and Support

- Emergency Response Plan:** Develop a clear emergency response plan for handling dog bites, including first aid procedures and access to medical care.
- Support for Affected Employees:** Provide immediate support and counseling services for employees involved in bite incidents.
- Regular Incident Reviews:** Conduct regular reviews of incidents to identify trends and implement corrective actions.

6. Communication and Signage

- Internal Communication:** Establish clear communication channels for staff to discuss concerns about specific animals.
- Warning Signage:** Post signage in areas where dogs are handled, alerting staff to potential risks and safety measures.
- Safety Reminders:** Include regular safety reminders in staff meetings and internal newsletters.

Implementation

- Assign Responsibilities:** Designate a safety officer or team to oversee the implementation of this checklist.
- Staff Involvement:** Involve staff in developing and reviewing safety protocols to ensure buy-in and practical applicability.
- Regular Reviews:** Schedule regular assessments of the checklist to ensure that it remains effective and relevant.

Documentation

- Maintain Records:** Keep detailed documentation of all training, behavioral assessments, incident reports, and safety protocols.
- Workers' Compensation Awareness:** Ensure that all employees understand the workers' compensation process and their rights in the event of an injury.

NOTE: Regularly review and update this risk management checklist to adapt to new regulations, best practices, and feedback from staff and management.



Contact Us

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