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Vicious & Restricted Ordinance Information – Updated 9-1-21

SBCAS may take and hold your dog under Santa Barbara County Ordinance, Chapter 7 Article VIII Sec 7-56. or Santa Maria Municipal Code Title 5, Article 2 Sec 5-3.202 or Lompoc Municipal Code Title 6 Article 4, Sec 6.08.190

Review the County Ordinance at:

www.municode.com/library/ca/santa_barbara_county/codes/code_of_ordinances

Review the City of Santa Maria Ordinance at:

<http://www.qcode.us/codes/santamaria/>

Review the City of Lompoc Ordinance at:

<https://qcode.us/codes/lompoc/>

Why is my dog being impounded?

Your dog is being impounded while Santa Barbara County Animal Services (SBCAS) investigates if its behavior falls under the definition of a “Vicious” or “Restricted” dog as defined by Santa Barbara County, Lompoc, or Santa Maria Municipal Code. An administrative hearing will be held if the investigation produces evidence that your dog’s actions may meet the definition of either a “Restricted” or “Vicious” dog.

When will I be informed of the hearing?

Within the next 15 days, you will receive advance notice of the hearing. You will also receive a copy of SBCAS investigation report and a copy of applicable ordinances. You are welcome to seek independent counsel and are encouraged, but not required, to attend the hearing. During the hearing, both you and the victim/reporting party may testify, provide medical records, photos, and witnesses (persons that observed the current incident or any previous incidents, and/or who know the people or animals involved).

What happens to my dog during this process?

Your dog shall be impounded and held at the following possible locations:

Shelter Impound:

SBCAS will care for your dog until a determination has been made by the Hearing Officer. Visitation is prohibited during this time. You will be responsible for all boarding expenses, regardless of the result of the hearing. If applicable, you will be required to meet any conditions of release prior to redeeming your dog. You are required to sign this form and must agree to the conditions set forth.

Home or Alternative Impound:

Under certain circumstances, SBCAS may permit the dog to be confined at the owner's expense in a department-approved animal or veterinary facility or at the owner's residence. In these cases, conditions of confinement must be met following a SBCAS inspection of your yard/home or veterinary facility. You will be responsible for any boarding expenses incurred, regardless of the result of the hearing. Whether at your home or veterinary facility, your dog shall remain confined on the property and in a secure area (inside or outside). The dog shall not be removed from the property, at any time, until a determination has been made by the

Hearing Officer following the hearing. If your dog escapes from your property or facility before the conclusion of hearing, SBCAS may remove it from the designated location and hold it at a County shelter. You are required to sign this form and must agree to the conditions set forth.

What if my dog is found to be Vicious or Restricted?

If your dog is determined to be Restricted, it will be returned to you once you meet the requirements established by the Hearing Officer within 14 days from the date of the decision letter and pay all fees due to SBCAS. Requirements may include, but are not limited to, a restricted dog license, additional secured fencing, having your dog wear a muzzle while in public, and proof of liability insurance. If your dog is determined to be Vicious, and it was impounded at home, it must be surrendered to SBCAS within six calendar days of the determination. If your dog is impounded at the shelter, it will not be returned to you. Any dog that has been deemed "Vicious" may be ordered euthanized by SBCAS. In rare circumstances, with SBCAS approval, your dog may be released to an approved lifelong sanctuary at the owner's expense. If released to a sanctuary, you must provide documentation from the sanctuary that reflects your dog's new permanent residence for the remainder of its life.

If a dog is found to be Vicious or Restricted, all charges and fines, including a Hearing Fee, for services performed by SBCAS must be paid within 14 days after the services are performed or after the fines are ordered to be paid.

Your dog will be housed at:

- Santa Barbara County Animal Services
- Home: _____
Address Owner/Custodian Initials
- Veterinary or Animal Facility: _____
Address Owner/Custodian Initials

For questions throughout this process, please contact the shelter marked below and/or the ACO assigned to the case.

- Santa Maria Animal Center
548 W Foster Rd
Santa Maria, CA 93455
805-934-6119
- Santa Barbara Shelter
5473 Overpass Rd
Santa Barbara, CA 93111
805-681-528

Activity #: _____ Investigating ACO: _____

Email Address: _____

Proof of Service

On _____ at _____ a.m./p.m. this letter was personally served to:
 _____ of (street/city/zip) _____
 by _____ (print name of ACO or staff).
 Signature of ACO or staff: _____
 Signature of Recipient: _____