

CITY OF LAWTON
PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION

DANGEROUS DOGS

WHAT ARE DANGEROUS ANIMALS ?

LAWTON CITY CODE 5-2-201 – Definitions

A. As used in this article, the following terms shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them in this section

1. "Dangerous animal" means any animal that:

- a. Has *inflicted severe injury on a human being or another animal without provocation on public or private property*, or
- b. *Endangers the safety of humans or other animals by aggressively attacking in an apparent attempt to inflict severe injury*, or

c. Animals *shall not be declared dangerous if the threat, injury or damage was sustained by a person who, at the time, was unlawfully present upon the premises occupied by the owner or keeper of the animal, or was tormenting, abusing, or assaulting the animal or was committing or attempting to commit a crime under any federal, state or local law.* For the purpose of this article, a person is considered to be lawfully present upon the property of an animal owner or keeper when he is on such property in the performance of any duty imposed upon him by the laws of the state, or by the laws of the United States, or the postal regulations of the United States, or when reading meters, or making repairs to any public utility or service located on the premises, or when working on said property at the request of the owner, keeper or any tenant having a lease upon any portion of said property, or when on such property upon the invitation, expressed or implied, of the owner, keeper or lessee of such property;

2. "Provoke" or "provocation" means, with respect to an attack by an animal, that the animal was hit, kicked, agitated by teasing or struck by a person with an object or part of a person's body or that any part of the animal's body is pulled, pinched, or squeezed by a person;

3. "Severe injury" means any physical injury that reasonably results in hospitalization or medical treatment;

YEAR	CASES	# DOGS
2009	4	4
2010	37	34
2011	26	37
2012	32	33
2013	9	9
2014	17	24
2015	18	18
2016	4	5
2017	15	16
2018	20	24
2019	21	26
2020	11	24
2021	21	21
2022	28	29
2023	9	22
2024	13	22
	285	348

CURRENT STATUS OF OPERATIONS

- 1. There are 3 separate investigations currently on-going involving a total of 29 Pitt Bull dogs**
- 2. One of these investigations involves a “puppy mill” operation where the owners are breeding and advertising for sale “fighting Pit Bulls”.**
- 3. This operation was uncovered when Federal and State Officers served a search warrant at an address here in Lawton and were unable to gain entry due to the viciousness of the Pit Bulls in the house. They contacted Lawton Animal Welfare and the ACO’s were finally able to seize, control and take the dogs to the Lawton Animal Shelter.**
- 4. Three “catch poles” were damaged by the dogs during the seizure.**
- 5. Dangerous Dog proceedings are on-going but have been delayed by the recent increase in Dangerous Dog activities. The owners of the dogs are in Jail awaiting Federal Charges for different criminal activities.**
- 6. Meanwhile the dogs are in the Lawton Animal Shelter having puppies and endangering the staff.**
- 7. In another case, a current ACO was required to undergo serious surgeries to her hand and arm due to being attacked by a Pit Bull she was trying to capture and take to the Shelter.**
- 8. Recently, on 1/15/2025, two (2) Dangerous Dog Petitions were heard in Municipal Court wherein three (3) dogs were found to be dangerous and were ordered to be euthanized.**
- 9. Another Dangerous Dog Petition is filed with a hearing set for 1/29/2025**
- 10. More detailed information can be provided by Cliff Blasengame, the current Animal Welfare Director.**

FAQ'S

1. IS THERE A SPECIFIC BREED OF DOG WHICH CAUSES THE MOST INJURIES?

Yes. The American Staffordshire Terrier (Pit Bull) and mixes of this breed caused over 90% of the attacks listed herein.

2. IS THERE A SPECIFIC AGE GROUP WHO ARE VICTIMS?

No. Victims have been from 3 years to 84 years of age.

3. ARE THERE PRIMARY CAUSES OR REASONS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE ATTACKS?

Yes. A. Poor fencing and enclosures

B. Lack of supervision and control by the dog owner

C. Lack of appropriate disciplining by the dog owner

D. Propensities of the Breed

4. SOLUTIONS?

Yes. A. Lawful ban of Pit Bulls within the City Limits if legal approval can be obtained

B. Increased involvement by LPD to identify owners of banned breed during normal operations and assist ACO's with confiscation as needed

C. Hire 2-3 additional Animal Control Officers (ACO's)

D. Increased Public awareness of dangers and preventative measures such as repellent sprays and walking sticks

E. Awareness briefings to Lawton Public Schools and bus drivers (some attacks occur against children walking home from school bus stops)