

Animal Noise – Other Animals

Brisbane City Council

Council recognises the benefits of responsible pet ownership and supports the keeping of companion animals in our community and in our homes. Animals, like people, like to communicate and make noise in their day to day lives for a variety of reasons, so a reasonable level of noise should be anticipated. However, excessive animal noise is something that can have significant impacts on surrounding residents of your property, and therefore we need to ensure that we are conscious and proactive in managing the noise levels of our companion animals.

In Brisbane, the *Animals Local Law 2017* (the Local Law) specifies a person must not keep an animal if it causes a noise nuisance. Animal noise can be considered a nuisance when it unreasonably disrupts or inhibits activities at adjoining premises or nearby residential land.

Triggers for excessive noise

All animals make noise from time to time and solutions to correct the behaviour will vary from one animal to the next. Correcting an animal's noisy behaviour is not a quick fix and it is not realistic to expect the animal to cease making noise altogether. Knowing when and for how long the animal makes noise will assist in identifying possible triggers and solutions to resolve the noise to an acceptable level (for example, birds always make noise when the sun rises, so if you want them to sleep for longer keep them in the dark). The goal should be to decrease, rather than eliminate, the amount of noise.

It is important to remember that all animals are covered by the Local Law requirements, so it is important to research the noise your animal may make. The following table identifies possible triggers for animal noise and provides some possible solutions to assist in resolving the issue:

		Possible solutions					
		Exercise	Training	Enrichment	Change routine	Change environment	Vet check
Trigger for noise	Lack of stimulation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Over stimulation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Excessive energy	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Separation Anxiety	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Health Issue		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TIP 1: Understand why the animal is making noise – find the trigger for the behaviour.

TIP 2: Attempt to change the behaviour – this could be simple reward based or positive reinforcement obedience training.

TIP 3: Engage a professional. There are times excessive barking may have an underlying cause not known to you and by consulting your vet, they may be able to provide expert advice and other alternatives.

If your specific animal has not been mentioned within this document, please contact the person you purchased the animal from, complete research into that specific animal, or feel free to contact Council's Animal Services Team for support.



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Birds/ Poultry

Birds can sometimes be known to make excessive noise, common reasons for this include:

- celebrating the sunrise / sunset
- communicating with other birds around/ warning other birds of possible danger
- singing and entertaining themselves/ cheer themselves up
- loneliness and boredom.

Some varieties of birds are more likely to make noise than others, so doing some independent research into the breed of your bird can provide suggestions for triggers and solutions. Identifying what causes the extra noise will assist in finding options to reduce that trigger. For example, if chickens are clucking when the sun is rising, consider making their home darker so they sleep for longer and are unaware the sun has risen.

Livestock / Other animals

Brisbane is home to a variety of animals, some of whom are permitted in areas deemed rural and residential. If you have livestock or other animals, please ensure you have the proper infrastructure and permits to have these animals on your property. Some triggers in livestock noise include:

- inadequate housing
- boredom/ happiness / elation
- social behaviour (for example: goats are big vocalisers).

If you have the correct infrastructure for these animals, please consider what is triggering them to make noise and find a solution for that concern. If you have a good amount of space on your property, please consider relocating the animal's pens to an area that is further away from neighbours, to reduce any impact.

Council's Investigation Process

Council investigates all reports of animal noise to determine if the complaint is substantiated under the Local Law. In many instances, the complaint investigation process for animal noise can be lengthy as Council works directly with the animal keeper and complainant to find practical, long term solutions.

Approach your neighbour

Council encourages residents affected by animal noise to contact the keeper of the animal to discuss the matter, the noise, its affects and potential solutions. The keeper of the animal may not know there is an issue and a resolution may be easily achieved by simply letting the keeper know exactly what is occurring. Once the issue has been discussed Council recommends allowing 28 days for the animal keeper to implement strategies to alleviate the noise.

Notification Letter and Noise Diary

When an amicable solution is unable to be achieved, Council will write to both the animal keeper and affected person(s) to suggest methods for reducing animal noise. The affected person(s) are also asked to complete a noise diary for a minimum of seven consecutive days and return it to Council.

Engagement

If a noise diary is returned to Council, our Animal Services team will contact the affected person(s) and discuss the matter. Where sufficient evidence has been attained, the officer will contact the animal keeper to provide education and practical problem solving about the noise nuisance.

Compliance Investigation

Should the matter not be resolved through education, formal compliance action against the animal keeper may be taken if Council confirms a Local Law noise nuisance is occurring. Animal keepers may face penalties including fines and Compliance Notices. There will also be situations where there is no breach of the Local Law, and no action will be taken.



For more information visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au and search 'Animal Noise' or call Council's 24-hour contact centre on (07) 3403 8888.

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