

# Health and Safety Policy

**Barking Buds Limited**

**Last updated: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

## **1. Policy Statement**

At **Barking Buds Limited**, we are committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of our employees, volunteers, clients, and members of the public who may be affected by our dog training activities.

We recognise that dog training, especially in public places or clients' homes, presents unique health and safety risks. This policy sets out how we will manage those risks in compliance with the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**, the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**, and other relevant legislation.

Health and safety is everyone's responsibility, and we aim to maintain a culture of awareness, risk reduction, and continuous improvement.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all:

- Employees and volunteers of Barking Buds Ltd
- Contractors working on behalf of Barking Buds Ltd
- Clients attending training sessions (public or private)
- Visitors or members of the public who may come into contact with our activities

## **3. Responsibilities**

### **3.1 Barking Buds Ltd (Employer)**

We will:

- Provide a safe working environment and safe equipment
- Conduct regular risk assessments and reviews
- Provide training and instruction to manage hazards effectively
- Maintain adequate insurance cover
- Monitor compliance and investigate incidents

### **3.2 Employees & Volunteers**

All trainers and team members must:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety
- Follow all safety procedures and training
- Use equipment and tools appropriately
- Report hazards, accidents, or near misses immediately
- Not misuse anything provided for health and safety

## **4. Risk Assessment and Prevention**

We will carry out and review **risk assessments** regularly for the following environments:

### **4.1 Public Training Spaces (e.g. parks, open fields)**

- Risk: Aggression from off-lead dogs, trip hazards, traffic
- Controls: Use of lead/leash, safety cones, public awareness, choosing safe training zones

### **4.2 Clients' Homes**

- Risk: Unknown environment, aggressive behaviour from dogs, lone working
- Controls: Pre-assessment forms, lone working policy adherence, exit strategy, known medical/emergency info

### **4.3 Training Equipment**

- Risk: Faulty or inappropriate use
- Controls: Regular equipment checks, proper storage, safe use demonstrations

### **4.4 Dog Behaviour Risks**

- Risk: Bites, scratches, injury to other dogs or humans
- Controls: Behaviour assessments before training, use of muzzles or barriers where needed, immediate control techniques

### **4.5 Environmental Hazards**

- Risk: Slips, trips, poor lighting, weather conditions
- Controls: Suitable footwear, weather-appropriate gear, alternate venues for extreme conditions

## **5. First Aid and Emergencies**

- A **basic first aid kit** will be available on-site or carried during off-site sessions

- All trainers will be encouraged to undergo **basic first aid and canine first aid training**
- In an emergency:
  - Dial **999** immediately
  - Notify the office or designated contact
  - Record and report the incident within 24 hours

## 6. Incident Reporting

All accidents, injuries, near-misses, and dangerous occurrences must be reported using our **Incident Report Form** and submitted to the designated Health & Safety Lead at [beth@barkingbuds.co.uk](mailto:beth@barkingbuds.co.uk).

Serious incidents may also need to be reported to the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** under **RIDDOR** (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013).

## 7. Training and Supervision

We will provide all employees and volunteers with:

- Health and safety induction
- Specific training in safe dog handling techniques
- Lone working and safeguarding training
- Refresher training as required

No one should undertake tasks they are not trained or qualified to perform.

## 8. Safe Handling of Dogs

Dog trainers must:

- Assess each dog's temperament before beginning training
- Avoid using aversive methods or equipment that could cause harm
- Be aware of and prepared for dog aggression or fear responses
- Use positive reinforcement techniques and avoid putting themselves or others at risk

## 9. Lone Working

Dog trainers often work alone. Refer to the **Lone Worker Policy** for detailed safety measures including:

- Appointment check-in/check-out protocols
- Carrying a charged phone
- Avoiding high-risk environments

## **10. COVID-19 and Communicable Diseases**

If necessary, we will:

- Follow government guidance on infection control
- Provide hand sanitiser and PPE when needed
- Encourage clients and staff not to attend sessions when unwell
- Adapt to remote or socially distanced training where appropriate

## **11. Monitoring and Review**


This policy will be:


- Reviewed annually or after a significant incident or legislative change
- Communicated to all new staff and volunteers upon induction
- Available on request to clients and partners

## **12. Contact and Reporting**

### **Designated Health & Safety Lead:**

Bethany Kent

 Email: [beth@barkingbuds.co.uk](mailto:beth@barkingbuds.co.uk)

 Phone: 07842516667

## **13. Related Policies**

- Lone Worker Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Privacy Policy
- Code of Conduct