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Annapolis, MD letter carrier Thomas Tyler takes a protective stance against an approaching dog

## U.S. Postal Service Releases Dog Attack National Rankings National Dog Bite Awareness Week Starts June 12

WASHINGTON, DC — More than 5,800 postal employees were attacked by dogs in the United States in 2020. From nips and bites to vicious attacks, aggressive dog behavior poses a serious threat to postal employees and the general public. To highlight the enormity of this serious issue, the U.S. Postal Service is providing the public with information on the do's and don'ts of responsible dog ownership as part of its annual National Dog Bite Awareness Week public service campaign.

The campaign runs Saturday, June 12 through Friday, June 18. This year's theme is "Be Aware: Any Dog Can Bite." Spread the news of the campaign by using the hashtag **#dogbiteawareness**. Dog bites are entirely preventable. One bite is one too many.

"Raising awareness about dog bite prevention and how to protect our letter carriers as we deliver the mail is paramount," said USPS Acting Employee Safety and Health Awareness Manager Jamie Seavello. "Dogs are instinctive animals that may act to protect their turf and that why's it's important to inform the public about this campaign."

### Prevent the bite

Dog owners are responsible for controlling their dogs. The best way to keep everyone safe from dog bites is to recognize and promote responsible pet ownership. Most people know the approximate time their letter carrier arrives every day and having their dog secured as the carrier approaches their property for delivery will minimize any dog carrier interactions.

Pet owners should:

- Remind their children not to take mail directly from a letter carrier as the dog may view the carrier as a threat.
- When a letter carrier comes to the home, keep dogs:
  - Inside the house or behind a fence
  - Away from the door or in another room
  - On a leash

Also, Informed Delivery is a great tool for customers. It's a free service that gives customers a digital preview of the mail and packages that are scheduled to be delivered so that they can take precautions and secure their dog when parcels are delivered to the door. Sign up at [informedelivery.usps.com](https://informedelivery.usps.com).

### **Carrier and the Canine**

Letter carriers are trained to observe an area where they know dogs may be present. They are taught to be alert for potentially dangerous conditions and to respect a dog's territory.

Letter carriers know:

- Don't startle a dog.
- Keep your eyes on the dog.
- Never assume a dog won't bite.
- If entering a yard, make some noise or rattle a fence to alert the dog.
- Never attempt to pet or feed a dog
- Place your foot against an outward swinging door.

If a dog attacks, carriers are also trained to stand their ground and protect their body by placing something between them and the dog — such as their mail satchel — and use dog repellent, if necessary. Even though postal officials ask customers to control their dogs, unfortunately dog bites still happen, which may cause injuries to our carriers and costly medical expenses for dog owners. Please heed the above best practices to help stop dog bites and protect your letter carrier.

Kansas City, KS letter carrier James Michael Benson recognizes the importance of the safety training he's received as a letter carrier to help protect himself from dog attacks while delivering the mail. However, even though he diligently follows dog bite safety protocols while on his route, he was recently attacked by a dog.

"I knocked on a customer's door to pick up a package and as a young child answered, a dog came bursting out of the door and bit my forearm, knocking me to the ground " said Benson. "I was in shock and struggling with the dog, when he lunged and bit me again on my face, under my ear."

Benson stated the attack was so fast and forceful he couldn't react to get his dog repellent and it was one of the most terrifying moments of his life. The attack happened in seconds before the dog was abruptly restrained by the owner.

Carriers do have tools to remind them about dogs on their routes. There is a dog alert feature tool on their handheld scanners to remind them of a possible dog hazard and they use dog warning cards as reminders when they sort their mail for their routes that a dog that may interfere with delivery.

Lastly, when a carrier feels unsafe, mail service could be interrupted, not only for the dog owner, but for the entire neighborhood. When mail service is interrupted, mail must be picked up at the Post Office. Service will not be restored until the dog is properly restrained.

### 2020 Dog Attack Rankings by City

More than 5,800 USPS employees were attacked by dogs in 2020. The top 25 rankings comprise 47 cities, as some cities reported the same number of attacks:

Office City	State	2020	Rank
HOUSTON	TX	73	1
CHICAGO	IL	59	2
LOS ANGELES	CA	54	3
CLEVELAND	OH	46	4
DENVER	CO	44	5
BALTIMORE	MD	43	6
DALLAS	TX	38	7
COLUMBUS	OH	37	8
SAN ANTONIO	TX	36	9
SAN DIEGO	CA	35	10
DETROIT	MI	35	
LOUISVILLE	KY	34	11
KANSAS CITY	MO	32	12
ST LOUIS	MO	28	13
PHOENIX	AZ	26	14
INDIANAPOLIS	IN	26	
CINCINNATI	OH	26	
PHILADELPHIA	PA	26	
LAS VEGAS	NV	23	15
SACRAMENTO	CA	22	16
JACKSONVILLE	FL	22	
MINNEAPOLIS	MN	22	
TOLEDO	OH	22	
MIAMI	FL	21	17
LONG BEACH	CA	20	18
ALBUQUERQUE	NM	20	
SHAWNEE MISSION	KS	19	19
CHARLOTTE	NC	19	
DAYTON	OH	19	
CANTON	OH	18	20

NEW ORLEANS	LA	17	21
OMAHA	NE	17	
FORT WORTH	TX	17	
WICHITA	KS	16	22
MEMPHIS	TN	16	
RICHMOND	VA	16	
FLINT	MI	15	23
TULSA	OK	15	
SAN FRANCISCO	CA	14	24
ROCKFORD	IL	14	
SYRACUSE	NY	14	
ARLINGTON	VA	14	
JAMAICA	NY	13	25
ROCHESTER	NY	13	
PITTSBURGH	PA	13	
SALT LAKE CITY	UT	13	
SEATTLE	WA	13	

#### Top 10 Dog Bite States:

State	2020	2019
CA	782	777
TX	402	491
OH	369	378
NY	295	323
PA	291	320
IL	290	238
MI	253	237
FL	198	229
NJ	179	169
VA	169	162

For more information, contact your local [USPS public relations professional](#).

The Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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