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DOG BITE

Michigan law allows a claim against the owner, keeper or possessor of a dog for biting an individual. Generally the owner of the dog is responsible for any injury caused by the dog biting, even if it is the first and only time that the dog bit anyone. A keeper or possessor of a dog may be responsible for a dog bite if the person is aware of the "vicious propensities" of the dog.

Please note the difference between the terms "**owner, keeper, and possessor**" of the animal: 1) the **owner** is the person with whom ownership is vested; 2) the **keeper** is the harbinger of a dog; and 3) the **possessor** is the one who has possession. The facts of each incident must be reviewed and assessed to provide direction as to potential defendants.

As with most personal injury actions in Michigan, an assessment is made of the actions of the injured person. If the injured person causes the bite by the dog through provocation (i.e. the dog was defending itself), the injured person may not be allowed to recover against the owner of the dog. Provocation is a question of fact and, as such, is determined on a case by case basis.

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

An action must be commenced within three (3) years from the date of the injury, except under special circumstances.

THE PLAINTIFF

The Plaintiff is the person who suffers the personal injury and/or the spouse or child of the injured person.

THE DEFENDANT

The Defendant would be the owner, keeper and/or possessor of the dog responsible for the injuries suffered by the Plaintiff.

DAMAGES OR AWARDS

Damages include both economic and non-economic damages. Economic damages include medical expenses, loss of earnings, and any other expenses associated with the care, treatment and rehabilitation from the injury. Additional damages include non-economic damages (i.e. pain and suffering and, disfigurement).

IT IS SUGGESTED THAT PERSONS BECOME AWARE OF THEIR RIGHTS BY CONTACTING THIS OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BY CALLING 586-752-5640.