

VICIOUS AND DANGEROUS DOG UNIT



CITY & COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Police Department

May 21, 2026

OVERVIEW OF SFPD ROLE

Vicious and Dangerous Dog Unit (VDDU) Responsibilities

- Investigates reported aggressive dog incidents
- Reviews bite reports and supporting evidence
- Coordinates with SF Animal Care & Control (ACC)
- Makes recommendations regarding disposition of animals
- Prepares cases for Vicious & Dangerous Dog hearings

Organizational Structure

- VDDU housed within General Work, Investigations Bureau
- Staffing:
 - Officer
 - 960 Retired Lieutenant



INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

Investigations generally include:

- incident reports
- victim/witness interviews
- review of bite history/prior incidents
- medical/veterinary records
- photographs/video evidence
- coordination with ACC

Referral Process: Cases meeting Health Code criteria are prepared for VDD hearings. Possible outcomes may include:

- registration requirements
- obedience/behavioral training
- containment/muzzling conditions
- other restrictions authorized by law



HEARING PROCESS

SFPD investigates and prepares cases. Hearing administration is separate from VDDU investigative operations.

SFPD's Role in Hearings:

- prepares investigative file
- presents evidence/recommendations
- coordinates witnesses
- maintains records/audio recordings

Other Agencies' Roles:

- ACC: Provides animal behavior assessment, custody records, and input on public safety risk.
- Hearing Officer: Presides over hearings and issues determinations/orders.



CURRENT DATA

Dog Bite Incidents

- 438 reported dog bite incidents year-to-date in 2026
- 1,027 reported incidents in 2025

Geographic Concentration – higher activity observed in:

- Tenderloin Police District
- Mission Police District
- Southern Police District
- Bayview Police District

HEARING BACKLOG

Current Status

- Approximately 66 dogs currently awaiting VDD hearings
- During hearing pause, VDDU continues:
 - investigations
 - evidence collection
 - referrals
 - coordination with ACC

Operational Impacts

- delayed adjudication
- delayed mitigation measures
- delayed final case resolution



Questions?

SAN FRANCISCO
POLICE DEPARTMENT