



Mark Speakman
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MEDIA RELEASE

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NOISE DISPUTES PUT MAN'S BEST FRIEND IN THE DOGHOUSE

When it comes to neighbourhood noise disputes it's often dogs driving NSW residents barking mad, but the NSW Government's free mediation service Community Justice Centres (CJC) is helping to restore peace.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said the service dealt with 6362 neighbourhood disputes in 2018-19, including 1394 where noise was a contributing factor.

"Animals account for more than half of noise disputes between neighbours – and the culprit is usually a barking dog," Mr Speakman said.

"Dogs are sociable creatures and tend to bark when they're lonely, bored and looking for attention – so it's important for owners to schedule a daily walk and provide toys for their pets to play with when they're on their own."

RSPCA NSW Chief Inspector Scott Meyers said there can be many reasons for a dog's excessive barking and every dog is different.

"Treatment can vary from supplying enrichment toys and activities, to behaviour-modifying training, which should be reward-based and use positive reinforcement," Ch Insp Meyers said.

The top five causes of neighbourhood noise disputes are:

- Animals (mostly barking dogs) – 436
- People (mostly children, visitors and party guests) – 207
- Motor vehicles – 101
- Renovations – 84
- Machinery (including air conditioners) – 81

Aside from noise, other issues contributing to neighbourhood disputes involved fences, trees, privacy, trespass and access to property. More than 80 per cent of CJC mediations achieved a resolution.

CJC Director Katrina Spyrides said mediations provide a safe and neutral environment for people in dispute to put forward their point of view and listen to the concerns of others. The service is confidential and available statewide.

"The sessions are free and less stressful and time consuming than going to court. Our clients often tell us they were relieved to talk about the effects of the dispute and understand their neighbour's perspective," Ms Spyrides said.

For more information about CJCs, visit: www.cjc.justice.nsw.gov.au.