Vicious & Restricted Ordinance Information

Your dog is being taken and held under Santa Barbara County Ordinance, Article VIII Vicious and Restricted Dogs You can view the County Ordinance at: www.municode.com/library/ca/santa_barbara_county/codes/code_of_ordinances

Why is my dog being impounded?
Your dog is being impounded while we investigate if his/her behavior falls under the definition of a “Vicious” or “Restricted” dog as defined by Santa Barbara County Ordinance, Chapter 7 Article VII. If there is likely cause that the dog may be vicious or restricted an Administrative Hearing will be held.

When will I be informed of the Hearing?
Within the next 15 days, you will receive 5-10 days advance notice of the Hearing. You will also receive a copy of our investigation report and a copy of the ordinance. You are welcome to seek independent legal counsel and are encouraged, but not required, to attend the Hearing. You may bring witnesses to the hearing. The injured/reporting party may also attend and testify at the Hearing and provide witnesses.

What happens to my dog during this process?
Santa Barbara County Animal Services (SBCAS) will care for your dog until the Hearing Officer has made a decision. If applicable, you must also meet any conditions of release before collecting your dog. Visitation is not allowed. You may request to have your dog held at your home, a veterinary hospital, or a boarding kennel during this process. If your request is approved by SBCAS, you will sign an agreement that the animal will not be removed from the site. You will be responsible for all boarding expenses, regardless of the result of the Hearing. Please let the responding Animal Control Officer know if you would like to request home or alternate impoundment.

What if my dog is found to be Vicious or Restricted?
If your dog is determined to be Restricted, s/he will be returned to you if you can meet the requirements and pay all fees set by the Hearing Officer within 14 days from the date of the decision letter. Requirements may include, but are not limited to, additional secured fencing, having the dog wear a muzzle while in public, and proof of liability insurance. If your dog is determined to be Vicious, s/he will not be returned to you and may be euthanized or approved for release to an approved sanctuary at your expense.

If a dog is found to be Vicious or Restricted, all charges and fines for services performed by Animal Services must be paid within fourteen (14) days after the services are performed or the fines are ordered to be paid.