

Illinois Now in the Top 10 for Dog Bite Claims – This Should be a Wake-up Call for Canine Owners, Says Chicago Dog Bite Attorney, Paul Greenberg

Chicago, Illinois – Illinois now ranks among the top 10 states for dog bite insurance claims, according to newly released data from the Insurance Information Institute. The state sits at No. 8 nationwide, reflecting a troubling trend as claim costs have doubled in the past decade, with children remaining the most affected demographic.

The annual report, which draws from national homeowners insurance figures, highlights the growing financial and social toll of dog-related injuries. In recent years, Illinois saw a marked increase in both the number and severity of claims, mirroring a national rise in dog bite incidents. Total claim costs in the state have surged over the last 10 years, with settlements frequently exceeding \$50,000 per incident, according to the report, but Briskman Briskman & Greenberg Personal Injury & Car Accident Lawyers has secured much larger settlements for their dog bite clients, including a \$717,000 settlement for a PetSmart employee in 2024.

While dog bites can affect anyone, the data points to children as the most vulnerable group. Experts attribute this to children's limited ability to recognize warning signs in canine behavior and their small stature, making them more susceptible to serious injuries. Health care and legal professionals urge families to exercise caution and promote education to help prevent future incidents.

"Dog bites are traumatic and, unfortunately, we are seeing more severe injuries—especially among children," said Paul Greenberg, managing member of Briskman Briskman & Greenberg Personal Injury & Car Accident Lawyers, and experienced Chicago dog bite lawyer. "Beyond the immediate physical harm, survivors often experience long-lasting psychological effects."

Greenberg noted that the increase in dog bite claims may be fueled in part by changing pet ownership patterns and evolving urban environments. "As more families adopt dogs and as people and pets live in closer proximity, the need for responsible pet ownership and community awareness is greater than ever," he said.

State law in Illinois holds dog owners strictly liable for injuries caused by their animals, barring provocation or trespassing. The legal landscape provides a path to compensation for victims but also underscores the importance of preventative measures, including proper training and socialization for pets.

"Education and vigilance are essential to reducing these numbers," Greenberg said. "Simple steps, such as supervising interactions between dogs and children, can make a significant difference."

Greenberg is an advocate for responsible dog ownership and has been featured in OK! Magazine and the Chicago Sun Times.

As Illinois grapples with rising dog bite claims, advocates and attorneys alike are calling for renewed attention to safety initiatives and responsible pet ownership, aiming to reverse the troubling trend and protect the state's most vulnerable residents.

The dog bite attorneys at Briskman Briskman & Greenberg Personal Injury & Car Accident Lawyers have successfully represented individuals and families who have been injured or lost loved ones. We have achieved success in thousands of cases, recovering millions of dollars in damages for our clients in a wide variety of cases, including personal injury, car accidents, wrongful death, medical malpractice, pharmacy errors, dog bite injuries, and work injuries.

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