

**BOLHOUSE, BAAR & LEFERE, P.C.**  
**ATTORNEYS AT LAW**

**“FLUFFY WON’T BITE!”**

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As Michigan’s winter gives way to spring, many of us are anxious to get outside for a nice walk or an all-out run. I myself much prefer walking outdoors to the alternatives of a mall or a machine. One of the few downsides to walking outside, however, is the possibility of being attacked by a dog.

While most dog owners will confidently tell you that “Fluffy” won’t bite, sadly that is not always the case. Over the past few months there have been several stories in our local newspapers and media about people being severely bitten and injured by dogs, the most serious of whom was a runner in the Ionia area.

Being attacked by a dog or having someone you know attacked by one can be a devastating experience. Dog bites can result in serious injury, extensive medical bills, scarring, and ongoing issues including counseling, plastic surgery, etc.

Michigan has a strict liability statute, meaning if you are bitten by someone’s dog, *in virtually every instance*, the dog owner is responsible. This is true even if you’re on the dog owner’s property. It is not necessary that the dog be known to be dangerous or violent.

For many of the dog bite cases we handle, we’re able to work out a resolution with the dog owner’s homeowner’s insurance carrier. Often this happens without the need to even file a lawsuit.

As you head out into the fresh spring air for your exercise or any other activity, enjoy yourself and be safe. But, if you find yourself bitten by a dog, give us a call to learn what your options may be. Our firm has experienced attorneys who have been handling dog bite cases for years, and would be happy to assist you in gathering the necessary information, analyzing your claim, and helping you determine the best way to proceed to be fairly and properly treated and compensated.