

Media Contact:

Contact: Angie Harrier | Media Specialist

Phone: 269-207-8006 | angie.harrier.i4v5@statefarm.com

**State Farm™ Releases Top Ten States for Dog Bite Claims in 2016
Ohio in Top Three for Number of Claims**

Warmer weather means people and their four-legged companions are spending more time outside, but a sunny afternoon can be spoiled by an often-times preventable incident like a dog bite. Dog bites can happen in an instant, and many times it's not because a dog is vicious, but was provoked or startled. Children make up fifty percent of dog-bite victims. Often, you see small children excitedly running up to a dog to pet it, but unfortunately not all dogs understand this as a gesture of innocent love. It's important to be aware of our dogs, other people's dogs and our children. The CDC estimates half of all children fourteen and younger have been bitten by a dog.

In 2016 [State Farm](#) paid over \$121 million as a result of 3,660 dog bite claims across the country, an increase of 15 percent. In Ohio claims spiked forty-two percent from 2015-2016, bumping it up in the category of state with the most claims from fifth to third. 2016 brought 211 dog bite claims in Ohio, totaling over \$7.5 million dollars. Over the past decade State Farm has paid over \$1 billion for dog-related injury claims nationwide. The average dog bite claim in cost almost \$36,000.

State Farm is a member of the National Dog Bite Prevention Coalition, which includes the United States Postal Service (USPS) among others (mentioned below). The USPS also saw an increase in dog bite incidents from the year before (6,755, which was 200 more than in 2015). The USPS ranked the top 30 cities for dog bites on letter carriers, with four of those being in Ohio – Cleveland (3rd, 60 bites in 2016); Columbus (15th, 39 bites in 2016); Cincinnati (25th, 24 bites in 2016); Akron (28th, 21 dog bites in 2016 – up 133% from 2015).

State Farm: Top 10 States for Dog-Related Injury Claims 2016

State	Number of Dog-Related Injury Claims	Amt. Paid for Dog-Related Injury Claims
1. California	433 claims	\$16.8 million
2. Illinois	323 claims	\$13.9 million
3. Ohio	211 claims	\$ 7.5 million
4. Pennsylvania	200 claims	\$ 4.8 million
5. Texas	168 claims	\$ 3.1 million
6. Michigan	167 claims	\$ 4.4 million
7. New York	156 claims	\$10.4 million
8. Indiana	137 claims	\$ 3.0 million
9. Georgia	125 claims	\$ 3.4 million
10. Minnesota	122 claims	\$ 3.3 million

Source: State Farm - Homeowner, Renter, Farm & Ranch, and Commercial property claims

State Farm does not exclude homeowners or renters insurance coverage because of the breed of dog owned. Under the right circumstances, any dog might bite, regardless of breed. Homeowners should talk to their insurance agent about coverage under a standard homeowner policy. For example, some homeowners may consider adding a [personal liability umbrella policy \(PLUP\)](#) to provide extra coverage in case their dog does bite someone. Renters should also make sure they have renters insurance. Most landlords do not provide coverage should there be a dog bite incident.

Renowned dog trainer Victoria Stilwell works with State Farm on educating people about responsible dog ownership and understanding dog body language.

She recommends the following tips to keep people safe from dog bites.

1. **Learn canine body language.** Too often people misunderstand or miss signals that a dog is uncomfortable. For example, a dog that yawns might not necessarily be tired. Yawning can also be a sign of stress.
2. **Give dogs space.** Dogs can feel threatened when strange people touch them, so take pressure off by giving them the choice to come into your space first to say hello.
3. **Be humane.** Dogs that are raised and trained humanely are more confident and less likely to bite than dogs that are trained using punitive methods or equipment designed to intimidate and cause pain.

Members of the National Dog Bite Prevention Coalition include [State Farm](#), [Victoria Stilwell](#), [Insurance Information Institute](#), [United States Postal Service](#), [American Humane](#), and the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#).

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About Victoria Stilwell

Victoria Stilwell is a world-renowned dog trainer, TV personality, author and public speaker best known as the star of the international hit TV series *Greatest American Dog* and [It's Me or the Dog](#), through which she reaches audiences in over 100 countries. The torchbearer for force-free positive reinforcement dog training methods, Stilwell is the Editor-in-Chief of [Positively.com](#) and is the CEO of both Victoria Stilwell, Inc. and [Victoria Stilwell Positively Dog Training](#) (VSPDT): the world's premier global network of positive reinforcement dog trainers. A co-founder of the National Dog Bite Prevention Task Force, Stilwell is also committed to helping the cause of animal rescue and rehabilitation, working closely with organizations around the world to increase awareness about puppy mills, dogfighting, animal abuse, pet overpopulation, dog bite prevention, breed-specific legislation and other animal-related issues. Appearing frequently in the global media, Stilwell is widely recognized as a leader in the field of animal behavior. She serves on the Advisory Boards of DogTV, Dognition, RedRover and Canine Assistants. She is also the CEO of the Victoria Stilwell Foundation, providing animal behavior expertise and funding to smaller rescue shelters and positive training-based canine assistance organizations.

About State Farm™

The mission of State Farm is to help people manage the risks of everyday life, recover from the unexpected, and realize their dreams. State Farm and its affiliates are the largest providers of [auto](#) and [home](#) insurance in the United States. Its nearly 19,000 agents and nearly 70,000 employees serve more than 84 million policies and accounts – more than 81 million auto, fire, life, health and commercial policies, and more than 2 million bank accounts. Commercial auto insurance, along with coverage for renters, business owners, boats and motorcycles, is available. State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company is the parent of the State Farm family of companies. State Farm is ranked No. 35 on the 2016 Fortune 500 list of largest companies. For more information, please visit <http://www.statefarm.com>.