

Dog Bite Injuries

Maryland, DC, and Virginia Premises Liability and Dog Bite Attorneys, Serving Clients Nationwide

Shulman Rogers represents people injured on someone else's property, whether from a dangerous condition, inadequate security, or a dog attack, across Maryland, DC, Virginia, and the country. Property owners have a legal duty to keep their premises reasonably safe, and dog owners can be held liable when their animal causes injury. We act quickly to document the scene and preserve evidence, and we handle every premises liability and dog bite matter in-house.

We handle every case ourselves. No referrals, no outsourcing.

Conditions Change and Evidence Disappears, So We Move Fast

A dangerous stairwell gets repaired. A wet floor gets mopped and the warning sign comes down. Surveillance footage gets overwritten within days. Property owners and their insurers know that the evidence proving a hazard existed does not last long, and they have every incentive to let it disappear.

From the moment you call us, we work to document the property condition as it existed at the time of the incident, identify who was responsible for maintaining it, and gather any available surveillance footage, incident reports, and maintenance records before they are gone.

Why Premises Liability and Dog Bite Cases Require Different Legal Experience

Dog bite liability rules differ significantly by state. Since 2014, Maryland has applied a statutory framework that creates a rebuttable presumption that a dog's owner knew or should have known about the dog's dangerous propensities whenever the dog causes injury or death. If the dog was running at large at the time of the attack, the owner faces strict liability outright, with limited exceptions for cases where the victim was trespassing, committing a crime, or provoking the dog. DC and Virginia generally still follow the traditional rule, which requires the injured person to show the owner knew or should have known the dog was dangerous. Knowing which framework applies is often the first question in a dog bite case.

Premises liability depends on the visitor's legal status. The duty a property owner owes depends on why the injured person was on the property. Invitees, such as customers or guests present for a business purpose, are generally owed the highest duty of care. Licensees, present with permission but not for the owner's business benefit, are owed a lesser duty. Trespassers are generally owed the least protection, with some exceptions for known trespassers or children. Establishing the correct legal status is often the first step in evaluating a premises liability claim, and it applies across Maryland, DC, and Virginia.

Notice matters, and it has to be proven. In most premises liability cases, the injured person must show that the property owner knew, or reasonably should have known, about the dangerous condition and failed to fix it or provide adequate warning. That often requires maintenance records, prior complaint history, and surveillance footage to establish how long the hazard existed before the incident.

Contributory negligence makes these cases harder to win without careful preparation. Maryland, DC, and Virginia all follow contributory negligence, one of the strictest standards in the country. If a court finds the injured person even partially at fault for their own injury, it can bar recovery entirely in any of these jurisdictions. That makes a thorough, well documented investigation essential from day one, wherever the case is filed.

What We Do From Day One

- **Document the property condition:** Photographs, measurements, and a description of the hazard as close to the time of the incident as possible
- **Identify the responsible party:** The property owner, a tenant, a management company, or a maintenance contractor may each carry separate liability
- **Preserve surveillance footage and incident reports:** Requested immediately, before footage is overwritten or records are lost
- **Obtain maintenance and complaint history:** Establishes whether the property owner knew or should have known about the hazard
- **For dog bite cases, obtain animal control and veterinary records:** Establishes ownership, prior incidents, and whether the dog was properly restrained, and confirms which state's liability standard applies
- **Document all injuries and damages:** Medical records, imaging, treating physician statements, and the effect on daily life

Common Types of Premises Liability Cases We Handle

- Slip and fall and trip and fall incidents
- Inadequate security leading to an assault or other criminal act
- Negligent maintenance of stairs, walkways, elevators, or escalators
- Swimming pool accidents
- Falling objects and structural defects
- Toxic exposure, including mold and carbon monoxide

Dog Bite and Animal Attack Cases We Handle

- Dog bites and attacks in public places or on private property
- Attacks by dogs running at large
- Attacks on children and delivery or service workers
- Injuries caused by a dog knocking someone down or causing a fall

Injuries and Harm We Handle

- Fractures and orthopedic injuries
- Traumatic brain injury from falls
- Scarring and disfigurement from dog attacks
- Infections requiring extended treatment
- Spinal cord injury
- Wrongful death

Geographic Areas We Serve

Our premises liability and dog bite attorneys represent clients injured throughout Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Howard County, Frederick County, Anne Arundel County, and Baltimore in Maryland, all DC neighborhoods, and Fairfax County, Arlington, Alexandria, Loudoun County, and Prince William County in Virginia. We also evaluate cases in other states as needed.

Past results do not guarantee future outcomes. The information on this page is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Shulman Rogers is licensed to practice law in Maryland, Washington DC, and Virginia. National representation is available for select matter types.

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