



Visit Summary

Admission: <u>16Jul12</u>	<u>Small Animal Outpatient</u>	Visit#: <u>8886BZ</u>
Discharge: <u>16Jul12</u>	<u>Alive</u>	Status: <u>Final</u>

Clinician: Bain, Melissa  
 Patient #: 43-70-99 Birth: 20Mar11 Sex: FS  
 Patient: Frost  
 Species: K9 Color: silver  
 Breed: MIX/POODLE/LAB.. Weight: 11KG

Presenting Complaints

nipping, barking, growling-service dog

Pertinent History

click here for <a href=https://infoshare.vmtx.ucdavis.edu/services/clinsrv/sac/specialties/behavior/PatientInfo/437099> patient info </a>

Frost is a 15 month old FS Labrador/Poodle mix that presented to the Behavior Service for being a service dog that was nipping, barking, and growling.

Household:

Frost lives with Elizabeth, her husband Brandon, her 11 yr. old son Lincoln, and her 7 yr. old daughter Reagan, in a detached suburban home with no other pets.

Household changes:

Frost moved into the home two weeks ago. Prior to that she spent two weeks in Colorado living in a hotel with the family while they were in training with Frost at the Angel Service Dogs organization (<http://angelservicedogs.com>).

Acquisition:

Frost was purchased from the Angel Service Dogs organization in Colorado for \$20,000 as a trained allergen alert dog. The family's son, Lincoln, has severe food allergies and the dog was purchased to be his service dog and alert him to allergens in his food.

Diet:

Frost is fed wet (50%) and dry (50%) Natural Balance Limited Ingredient food. She is also given carrots and bits of meat for rewards or allergen safe treats.

Medical history:

No history obtained from Angel Service Dogs, though owners have requested it multiple times.

6/25/12: Presented to a local family veterinarian (Loomis Basin) for exam and vaccinations (bordetella, DHLPP, rattlesnake). Vet records state that Frost may have separation anxiety. Vet recommended behavior consult because of concern that the service dog may be distracted from lifesaving duties by anxiety and this can be a risk. Also recommended that owners call trainers to get the rest of the commands if they are unsure of what they are.

7/11/12: Presented to family veterinarian for a recheck to get anxiety medication and to check ears. Ears were normal and Vet again identified possible separation anxiety and fear-based anxiety. After discussing the case with a veterinary behaviorist at Loomis Basin, Dr. Cooper, Vet did not recommend alprazolam or other meds because of dis-inhibition possibility. Recommended Nothing in Life is Free, DAP (Dog Appeasing Pheromone), and avoidance.

Current medications:

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None currently. Unsure of what was given prior to purchasing dog 4 weeks prior.  
Training:

Was trained at Angel Service Dogs of Colorado as an allergen detecting service dog. Stayed at the homes of three different trainers prior to being given to the family.

Family attended two week training in CO when they went to pick up Frost. Also consulted a trainer in Sacramento, Patty Malnick, who said that Frost could be a service dog but that it would require a lot of work to get her over her aggression issues.

Behavior:

Behavior Screen on prehistory form:

Excessive barking/whining when people enter the family home and every time the family leaves the home.

Pacing/repetitive behavior whenever Elizabeth leaves the room or the house.

Fearful, Anxious, Submits with: unfamiliar people in the home, cars/trucks going by while on leash, unfamiliar dogs while on leash and while off leash, at veterinarian's office, when owners leave, when owners return, with loud noises, when being bathed, picked up, disturbed while sleeping.

Bark/Growl: Unfamiliar people at the door, unfamiliar people in the home, unfamiliar people in neutral territory while on leash, off leash, and when approached. Unfamiliar dogs while on leash. Dog in yard-person passes. Dog in yard-dog passes. When owners leave. When a stranger approaches the car. When a non-edible toy is taken away.

Problem Behavior: Nipping, barking, growling.

Has nipped husband and both children, but not broken the skin. One incident described in the room was when he cocked his arm back to throw a toy. He described that she barked in an aggressive manner, not her friendly or demanding manner. He also described a situation where he was petting her and she grabbed his hand with her mouth, but did not break skin.

Has rammed children in the chest and then walked away from the children. At the mall when Elizabeth was walking Frost, Lincoln reports that a boy was walking with his mother near them but was not interacting with the family or doing anything and Frost charged him and knocked him over.

Barks and growls at children. When one year old niece was visiting the home, Frost was on the floor on one side of Elizabeth and niece was on the other side. Elizabeth said that though unprovoked, Frost barked at the niece and later jumped over Elizabeth to knock niece over and then moved away from the child.

Barks when people enter the room. At training session in CO when family went to pick up Frost, family was in a room with Frost and a man with Down's syndrome entered the room. Frost began to bark aggressively at the man until he left. The man was unwilling to enter the room again because he was so scared by Frost's behavior. Owners were told by the training company that "they must have something against Down's syndrome people," and that is why Frost reacted that way.

Barks and bares teeth at unfamiliar dogs when being walked by family members. Also barked at other dogs during training session in CO and bared teeth at dog next to her during graduation ceremony.

Barks, growls, lunges at Vet. During first veterinary visit Frost barked and lunged when the Vet entered the room. She was unable to return until Elizabeth was able to get Frost held tightly so she could not lunge.

Lunges at some people that walk into her area. When in her crate, Frost barks and lunges at visitors to the family home. Will also lunge at visitors when they enter the home.

When a family friend (male) came over, Frost shook and urinated on the floor and then suddenly turned toward the friend when he made a sniffing noise with

his nose and lowered her body and growled.

Tries to push daughter off of mother's lap when the daughter is being held.

Paces, whines when female owner leaves the house or room.

Body Changes: According to the owner, Frost will lunge and growl when seemingly unprovoked. Has done this at many different types of people, males, females, old couples, children.

Diagnostics/Treatments to Date:

Sought help from veterinarian and trainer. Part of a social facebook group with other owners of dogs from this organization. Will hold Frost back when she is barking and lunging and will step in front of her to block her view. The training in Colorado was mostly how to redirect her when she is doing these behaviors, not so much on the detection of allergens in the environment, which was what was expected.

Goals:

The owner would like to know if the family is to blame for the dog's behavior as she has been told this by the training company. Would like Dr. Bain's diagnosis and would like to return the dog for a refund so the family can acquire a service dog that can function for the safety of the family.

### Physical Examination

<b> Physical Exam

Physical exam was not performed.

Frost presented as BARH, ambulatory x4, clean and clear ears with no odor.

<b>Behavioral observation:

In initial contact in front reception area, did not interact with technician, but kept close to the female owner. Frost was nervous with rigid body posture and tail slight tucked in when the clinicians and students initially walked in. As the doctor inquired history from owner, she was very alert and became stiff, with ears back, with keyboard stroke sounds and hand gestures or movements. Occasionally she would lay down on the ground at the owner's feet with body partly relaxed. She averted her eyes from us and crouched down further as we stood up and walked out of the door.

Frost jumped and barked aggressively when the clinicians and students reentered the room. Her ears were erect. The owner held her tightly to prevent her from lunging at us. She had a tense body posture and avoided eye contact. When she heard noises at the door or felt floor vibration, she perked her ears, stood up, and barked extensively. Through out the remaining appointment time, she growled, barked and charged toward the door, remaining leash, sometimes without obvious triggers, but sometimes with sounds heard outside. After this she would not lie down or sit still and was constantly looking around. Her breathing was rapid and shallow. She seemed hypersensitive and watchful with any movement or noise.

Frost stared intensely at the door when both kids went outside.

When one of the kids (Lincoln) tried to pat and calm Frost, she froze, turned her head around and snapped toward him (it was hard to visualize her mouth at that time). He quickly stopped and retreated.

The kids tried to block Frost's view when was barking. However, such a maneuver was not successful in stopping her growling or barking.

As Frost exited the exam room, she was nervous and looking around. She shied away on the breezeway with the trees blowing in the wind and pulled toward passersby in scrubs. She would occasionally pull on the leash.

<b>Video Observation

V1. Frost was playing ball in the backyard. She was recalled successfully without any hesitation. She seemed happy and friendly with tail wagging.

V2. The family ordered lunch via In-N-Out drive-through window. Frost was growling at the cashier at first, then barking aggressively from low to high

pitch/frequency. She was pacing and circling frantically in the van with frequent lunging at the window. Similar behaviors were seen when the owner picked up the orders. Frost failed to respond to any command and couldn't be restrained.

V3. Frost was growling and barking excessively with visitors while she was in an airline-type crate. There were no visitors seen in the video clip, as they were out of view and not in the same room. The owner and video camera were approximately 10 feet away.

#### Problems

- 1) Barking at/lunging at/growling at/biting familiar and unfamiliar people while on and off leash
- 2) Barking at/lunging at/growling at unfamiliar dogs while on and off leash
- 3) Barks/whines/paces when separated from female owner
- 4) Wary around inanimate objects
- 5) Pulling on leash very often and unresponsive to commands from family members other than the female owner (which is still weak for a trained service dog)

#### Medical/Surgical Procedures (Billing)

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#### Clinical Diagnoses

- 1) Human-directed aggression, offensive and defensive, based in fear and over-stimulation/hyper-arousal
- 2) Separation anxiety, ddx separation distress (not addressed this visit)
- 3) Apparent lack of training expected of a purchased trained service dog

#### Plans and Progress Notes

- 1) Owner will return dog to Angel Service Dogs and seek a refund. Recommended that owner not accept another dog from this organization.

#### Comments

Video links:

A video from today meeting Reagan's teacher who came to do testing with Reagan:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMwKsa8Dlxk&feature=g-upl>

Going through a drive thru at In and Out Burger:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-VDrwml-R4>

Friends Come To Visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4xJ7HUTo-8>

#### Discharge Summary

- 1) Problem 1: Barking, growling lunging at unfamiliar people while on and off leash.
- 2) S/O: See history and pre-history form
- 3) A: Human-directed aggression. Frost's behavior appears to be defensive, as she sometimes barks or lunged when approached. Her behavior appears to be based in fear, with a possible component of territoriality.
- 4) P: Avoid triggers. Do not trust Frost to detect food allergens and return her to Angel Service Dogs.
- 5) Problem 2: Pulls on leash
- 6) S/O: See history and pre-history form
- 7) A: Anxiety; Lack of training.
- 8) P: Not address at this visit.
- 9) Problem 3: Nipping family members.
- 10) S/O: See history and pre-history form
- 11) A: Human-directed aggression (offensive and defensive) based in fear and over stimulation

- 12) P: Not address at this visit.
- 13) Problem 4: Ramming children in the chest when on and off leash.
- 14) S/O: See history and pre-history form
- 15) A: Human-directed aggression (offensive and defensive) based in fear and over stimulation
- 16) P: Not address at this visit.
- 17) Problem 5: Barks/whines/paces when separated from female owner.
- 18) S/O: See history and pre-history form
- 19) A: Separation anxiety
- 20) P: Not address at this visit.
- 21) Problem 6: Wary around inanimate objects.
- 22) S/O: See history and pre-history form
- 23) A: Lack of socialization and training.
- 24) P: Not address at this visit.

#### Discharge Instructions

- 1) Thank you for coming in to the Behavior Service. Frost has been diagnosed with fear-related aggression, based on her body postures, with a component of overstimulation, when evaluating her over-arousal in the multiple videos that you sent. She also potentially has separation anxiety, which we did not address. She also has an apparent lack of training expected of a purportedly trained service dog.
- 2) From all that we saw in the exam room, on the videos provided, and with the history that you and your family gave to us, Frost should not be in your home, nor any other home, serving as an allergen detection service dog. The aggressive barking and lunging that you described beginning to happen the day you got her is NOT due to anything that you have done. I cannot fathom that the organization did not see any of these behaviors beforehand or, if they did, they should have identified the issues behind her behaviors. The reasoning behind this is that they are an organization that provides service dogs and should be held to a higher level of knowledge about dogs. In addition the history that you gave of other dogs in your training group displaying what is likely aggressive behavior, based on your description, leads me to believe that this organization is not working to improve the lives of people that these dogs are serving.
- 3) I would strongly recommend against getting the replacement dog that they are offering, especially as it is purportedly a littermate of Frost, and especially regarding the terms of the contract that you told us about. It is currently impossible to know if this dog IS Frost's littermate, since you have not been given any documentation from the organization regarding Frost's health or other pieces of information. Additionally I would strongly recommend against getting another dog from this organization.
- 4) It is especially disturbing that you stated that, in a phone conversation with the owner of this organization, they would rehome this dog in another home as a service dog. Frost is a potential danger to others that, while certainly workable to rehabilitate her to make a household pet, makes her completely unsuitable as an allergen detection dog. I would not trust her to make a decision to alert to an allergen, especially during moments that she is displaying aggression. You had stated that she does not listen to commands when she is aggressive and aroused, which certainly mirrors what we see in our other patients.
- 5) When you do send her back to the organization, do not take them up on their offer to put her on a horse trailer to bring her back to Colorado. One option is to drive or fly her back there herself. The other option is to purchase a ticket for Frost by herself to fly in cargo. There are restrictions on the temperature in regards to flying animals, so check with the airlines. I

strongly suggest working with the organization and others in the area to come to a mutually acceptable day for her to fly, to completely assure that someone will be there to pick her up at the airport. I also suggest that you send a certified letter stating the date, time, and flight number to the organization, in the case that they do not show up at the airport.

- 6) Until this happens, I would suggest that Frost not be in contact with others outside of your family. Additionally be very aware of your children's interactions with her, since she has displayed aggression toward Lincoln in the past and in the exam room (a quick head turn and snap toward him when he was petting her). Do not step in front of her, nor have your kids step in front of her, when she is displaying aggression, as she can potentially redirect onto someone else.
- 7) There are other avenues in which to address this situation. One is to contact the Better Business Bureau. Another is to potentially contact media outlets. Additionally, we do suggest contacting a lawyer to help you through this process, and s/he will guide you to the best way to handle these things, including documenting all that has happened to you and others.
- 8) As we said, we are so sorry that you and your family have to go through this heartache, and we will do all that we can to support you. We hope that you are able to find a reputable trainer that will help you and your family be more secure in being able to help your family avoid the dangerous things in your environment.

Clinician Signature

Date