

Animal name: Violet

Animal number: 42971

Physical description: Large white and brindle, spayed female

Description of identified behavior concerns:

Violet arrived at the shelter as a stray on 6/5/2022 after being held by a finder overnight during which she attacked the finder's dog causing a puncture wound and the dogs. "The finder had to separate the two dogs with a chair"

6/26/2022 Behavior staff noted that Violet is difficult to re-kennel and a two leash method should be used.

6/29/2022 There was an incident recorded by an officer who went to a victim's home to document a bite. It's unclear if this was an adoptive home, foster home or other type of situation. The bite occurred while Violet was playing with another dog and a family member bent down to pick up their phone and "got in the way and one of the dogs' teeth scratched them on the head". This was a Mild 1 bite based on the description, no photos were provided. This record is for a dog with a different name (Kobe) and the description of the dog is slightly inconsistent with Violet's coloring. This record will not be factored into the following assessment.

7/1/2022 This dog attacked an experienced volunteer who was attempting to leash her for a walk. He sustained five bites that broke skin on the back of the left thigh, lower right arm, twice on the right wrist, as well as the victim's neck while he was on the ground. These wounds were described as, "not overly severe" but he was advised to seek medical care, it is unknown if he did or not. This attack is indicative of intense frustration and a lack of inhibition. The placement of the bites indicates a great level of effort and movement during this attack. Though the wounds were "not overly severe", there were a significant amount of contacts that broke skin and may have been others that did not. A continued attack like this presents incredible risk to caregivers including staff, volunteers and potential adopters. This response, though likely fueled by her increasing stress levels, is outside the norm for a dog who has been at the shelter for one month.

4/13/2023 Violet was taken out by behavior staff who noted she initially grabbed at items from waist and at the leash and made no attempt to make tooth to skin contact. They also noted that she engaged in play while in the yard.

4/14/2023 Violet was taken out by behavior staff who noted difficulty leashing due to jumping and trying to push out of the kennel. Leash biting was noted and the handler redirected with a rope toy. This needed to happen multiple times throughout the interaction. They also noted play and that Violet, "leans in for attention" and "occasional jumps on to handler but responsive to turning away and vocals". This consistent jumping and grabbing at items with little ability to calm on her own seems to be a continuation of her stress response in the shelter environment and may be indicative of a low quality of life.

According to the available care logs, 4 confirmed handlers appear to have begun taking Violet out of kennel in April 2023.

In Person Observations:

Over two days, observed this jumping horizontally which appears to be a stereotypy; staining on the wall indicates this sequence is repeated often and without function. Face is tense, commissures are pulled back and face is flushed, pupils fully dilated, lips pushed forward while barking.

When a female stranger entered the ward, Violet jumped against the front of the kennel with all four feet off the ground, pushing off wall with front paws. Violet then came to front of kennel barking, ran to a tossed treat and ate it, ran back backing at stranger then chased a treat to back of kennel. Ate all food offered. Ceased barking and pacing and pushing off of walls/kennel if consistently/constantly fed. Upon doing another walk by of Violet's kennel, she lip licked on approach then chased and ate a tossed treat. Continued to pace and jump and push off the walls and kennel front as person walked away.

Summary of risks to humans and management requirements:

Moderate III or Severe IV bite reported on 7/1/2022, multiple punctures. Due to lack of documentation and subjective language used, cannot definitively determine actual bite level.

Identified leveling: Severe VI

Summary of risks to conspecifics and management requirements:

History of "playing" with another dog prior to initial surrender.

History of Moderate III bite to another dog reported on 6/5/2022 with the need to be separated physically with a chair.

Identified leveling: High VI

Summary of risks to other domestic animals and management requirements:

No information provided regarding domestics; unable to assess risk for this category.

Identified leveling: Unable to identify

Summary of Quality of Life:

The level of arousal, stress and stereotypic behaviors presented at this time indicate a severe impact on this dog's quality of life.

Identified Leveling: Significant Intervention Needed

Recommendations and options based on risk assessment and management requirements:

The level of management for this animal is akin to that of an exotic canid that cannot be safely handled without significant precautions. If adopted out, Violet would require the following to be safely managed for the remainder of the life of the animal, as this level of aggression is unlikely to be remediated in any sense.

- Fully secure 10-12 foot fencing with airlocks to prevent escape and a shift area for cleaning and feeding
- Provisioning of a full enrichment program for Violet to meet quality of life and animal care standards for housing a large canid that meet or exceed the Association of Zoos and Aquaria (AZA) guidelines:
https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/large_canid_care_manual_2012r.pdf
- Enclosure must include provisions for severe weather, as Violet is unlikely to be comfortable and may be dangerous if he lives in the home with a person unless advised by a qualified, and certified behavior consultant (PhD, CAAB or CDDBC)
- Commitment to lifelong positive-reinforcement (only) training within protected contact as there is likely no behavior modification protocol that will impact this behavior in a positive direction. Any positive reinforcement behavior modification would need to be conducted by a qualified and certified behavior consultant (trainer is an insufficient level for this type of risk) to manage fear-based aggression (distance sessions may be appropriate) – (potential cost \$8,400/year)
- Possible partnership with a veterinary behaviorist for psychopharmaceutical intervention in partnership with a local veterinarian (potential cost: \$6,000 - \$10,000/year) in order to attempt to alleviate the unrelenting stress of living in proximity to people, which act as a clear trigger for aggression with this dog.
- Violet will never be able to safely leave property.