

VETERINARY BEHAVIOR CONSULTANTS

Patrick Melese D.V.M., M.A., DACVB
Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Behaviorists
Forensic/Expert Witness Services

Fees for Expert witness research and testimony

I am glad to have my assistant or myself discuss whatever an attorney needs to know prior to your designating me as long as the information does not preclude me from serving the opposing counsel should you decide not to retain me. There are few qualified Veterinary Behaviorists in the U.S. (less than 45 in practice in the U.S.A. and most do not accept legal cases and few are well experience in legal work) and, in order to avoid unnecessarily disqualifying myself, I request to be formally retained before discussing such barring information. Although serving as an expert witness is only a small part of my behavior practice, I have served on a fair number of cases (usually several per year on average) over the last 25 years and have been retained by both plaintiff and defense attorneys as well as for animal control administrative impounds and abatement proceedings. I have given a number of depositions and also appeared in Superior and Federal courts but most cases tend to settle before I am deposed.

Expenses start when details of the case are discussed. They include beginning a case file, making alternative professional arrangements (i.e. turning away other opportunities so that I have time for your case) and so forth. You are also utilizing my name, experience and credentials. This credibility may well assist you in settling cases before trial as it has for others in the past. Additionally, formally retaining me as an expert witness prevents the opposing side from retaining me. For these reasons, the initial designation fee (\$900 portion) is **non-refundable**. We will gladly send you (e-mail or fax) a detailed fee schedule for this work. Professional hours spent on the case will be charged against the retainer until it is used up then the retainer must be replenished prior to further work. Additional professional services and expenses (if any) will be billed separately.

Charges apply “portal to portal.” Expenses such as trips out of town and associated expenditures are additional and have minimum charges to allow for scheduling out of the clinics/office as needed. Please note that when attorneys reserve time for case-related events during clinic hours, we turn away or reschedule paying clients so we must be paid for reserved time unless practice cancellation policies are followed (at least 48 business hours) even though the case may be settled “at the last moment.” **To be designated/retained as an expert**, I typically **request a letter** stating this fact as well as a **designation/retainer check** for the agreed upon amount (please request tax ID number from me directly for your accountant). Exceptions to this (e.g. you clearly have an already known need for a number of hours of teleconferences, documents available to review, preparing to assess an animal, etc. requiring larger retainer) need to be discussed with Dr. Melese prior to beginning services in this capacity. In general, work will not be started prior to receiving at least the designation check and I will not consider myself “retained” and should not be designated as an expert on your case until that point without prior written arrangement and acknowledgment of agreeing with proposed fee structure. We can supply you with a fee schedule as well as more information you may require upon your request. Please let me know if you would like to designate and/or retain me for your case.

Sincerely,



Patrick Melese D.V.M., M.A., DACVB
Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Behaviorists
Veterinary Behavior Consultants

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Patrick Melese D.V.M., M.A.
Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Behaviorists
Biography/ C.V.

Dr. Melese is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and director of VETERINARY BEHAVIOR CONSULTANTS, a veterinary practice dedicated to preventing and solving behavior problems in animals since 1988. Until mid 2002 Dr. Melese was on the faculty of the University of California School of Veterinary Medicine where he ran a satellite animal behavior service in the North County San Diego area. He was also concurrently appointed as a lecturer in Animal Behavior at U.C. Davis and in that capacity supervised and mentored residents in Clinical Behavior, helped teach veterinary students and perform clinical research. Since then Dr. Melese has reactivated his San Diego based private behavioral specialty practice in Kearny Mesa where he continues to see clients and their pets with behavior problems, teaches senior veterinary students rotating through his specialty service and provides local and national continuing education for veterinarians and others. Dog aggression cases represent a majority of Dr. Melese's animal behavior caseload but he sees all species for virtually any behavior problem.

Dr. Melese's training includes a B.S. and a Masters degree from the Department of Zoology at the University of California, Davis in 1980 where his subjects were Animal Behavior and Neuroscience. Afterwards, Dr. Melese worked with Professor Benjamin Hart, D.V.M., PhD. doing behavioral research and publishing several papers in physiological psychology at the U.C.Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. He continued to work with Dr. Hart through veterinary school and assisted with the Veterinary Teaching Hospital Behavior Service until graduating in 1986.

Since receiving his Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.) from U.C. Davis in 1986, Dr. Melese has been active in the field of Clinical Animal Behavior. He has kept abreast of recent advances in the behavior literature, attended numerous seminars and consulted with colleagues in the field throughout the world. He has worked as a consultant to practitioners, clients, breeders and institutions with specific behavioral problems. Dr. Melese also regularly serves as an expert witness in animal bite cases in Superior Court cases as well as evaluating allegedly aggressive pets at shelters and impounded by Animal Control Departments. He has been a lecturer to Veterinary students, Veterinary Medical Association meetings, kennel clubs, professional dog training meetings, and Animal Health Technology programs. Dr. Melese has been featured speaker at local (San Diego Humane Society and S.P.C.A., Escondido Humane Society) and national (American Humane Association) humane organizations. Dr. Melese is active in studies to test new treatments for animal behavior problems and has been selected by several of the major pharmaceutical companies to be a Southwestern center for clinical trials to test new behavioral products.

Over the years Dr. Melese has been featured on numerous television news segments and special reports on the local, regional and national stations (Networks, EXTRA, PBS Television, etc. see website blog for some recent links to appearances) in the San Diego Union/Tribune, several regional newspapers in California and other states and on several radio talk shows. He has even been featured on international programs shown in Japan and Korea.

Dr. Melese was past founding president of the San Diego Chapter of the Delta Society (an umbrella organization of professionals and pet owners interested in animal, people and their interaction in the Human/Animal Bond) and served in 1987 and 1988. Dr. Melese is an active and longstanding member of the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior, and the Animal Behavior Society where he has given presentations at both of their national meetings. He is also a member of the San Diego County Veterinary Medical Association, California Veterinary Medical Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association (regularly invited to lecture at the national meetings) and Association of Pet Dog Trainers. Dr. Melese founded Veterinary Behavior Consultants in 1988, a veterinary referral and consulting practice limited to animal behavior problems and has also been a respected general practice veterinarian (medicine and surgery) for many years. Dr. Melese also owned and operated the Tierrasanta Veterinary Hospital in San Diego for a number of years until it was sold. Dr. Melese remains one of just 4 board-certified Veterinary Behaviorist in private specialty practices south of UC Davis.

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