

# VETERINARY BEHAVIOR CONSULTANTS

Patrick Melese D.V.M., M.A.  
*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 retaining me as long as the information does not preclude me from serving the opposing counsel should you not need my services. There are few qualified Veterinary Behaviorists in the U.S. (less than 40 in practice in the U.S.A. and many do not accept legal cases) 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 1-3 per year on average) over the last 22 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 courts but most cases tend to settle.

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 retainer is non-refundable. Professional hours spent on the case will be charged against the retainer until it is used up. Additional professional services and expenses will be billed separately.

My usual fees for expert witness services are **\$275** per hour, which includes court or deposition time, testimony time, meetings with attorneys and other parties to the case, reviewing material, research, evaluating animals and preparation for the case. Charges apply door to door. Expenses such as trips out of town and associated expenditures are additional and often have minimum charges to allow for scheduling out of the office as needed. Court "wait" time fees depends on case and my clinic schedule so are negotiated on a case-by-case basis. 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 retained as an expert, I typically request a letter stating this fact as well as a **retainer check for \$825 for routine cases (please request tax ID number from me directly for your accountant). Exceptions to this (e.g. you clearly need additional hours promptly 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 the retainer 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.**

Please let me know if you would like to retain me for your case.

Sincerely,



Patrick Melese D.V.M., M.A.  
**Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Behaviorists**  
*Veterinary Behavior Consultants*  
Attached: CV

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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 at the Animal Specialty Group 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.) 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 International Society for Applied Ethology, San Diego County Veterinary Medical Association, California Veterinary Medical Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association (where he has also presented at the national meetings) and Association of Pet Dog Trainers. Dr. Melese founded Veterinary Behavior Consultants, a veterinary referral and consulting practice limited to animal behavior problems, in 1988 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 3 board-certified Veterinary Behaviorist in private practice south of UC Davis.

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