

Responsibilities of pet owners

To ensure the comfort, safety and health of the whole community the Companion Animals Act places certain responsibilities on all pet owners.

Here is a summary of the responsibilities of dog owners under the Act:

- If your dog is in a public place it must be under the effective control of a competent person by means of an adequate chain, cord or leash. The exceptions to this are: dogs exhibited at a show or engaging in obedience or agility trials or a dog secured in a cage or vehicle or in an approved off-leash area;
- If your dog is being exercised in an approved off-leash area it must always be under effective control of a competent person;
- You are not permitted to walk more than four dogs at any one time in an on-leash area or an off-leash area;
- Greyhounds must be muzzled at all times when in a public place;
- If your dog defecates in a public place it is an offence not to remove the faeces;
- Dogs are prohibited in children's play areas, food preparation/consumption areas, recreation areas, public bathing areas, school grounds, child care centres, shopping areas and wildlife protection areas.

Penalty notices issued under the Act

Animal not permanently identified (microchipped) . . .	\$165
Animal not registered	\$165
Failure to notify change of address/owner	\$165
Failure to prevent dog escaping	\$220
Dog not on lead in public place	\$220
Failure to remove dog faeces	\$275
Failure to take seized animal to pound/shelter	\$550
Dog in prohibited place	\$330
Own or in charge of attacking dog	\$550

For further explanation and other offences refer to the Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 1999 or contact your local council.

Remember...

A little chip will go a long way toward providing you with peace of mind. Microchip your dogs.

For more information

Contact your local NSW council or visit www.dlg.nsw.gov.au

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS BROCHURE IS NOT INTENDED TO BE COMPREHENSIVE, COMPLETE OR TO CONSTITUTE LEGAL ADVICE. WHILE ITS CONTENT IS CORRECT AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION, CHANGES TO THE COMPANION ANIMALS ACT AFTER THIS DATE MAY IMPACT UPON THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PRESENTED.

AS SUCH, THIS BROCHURE IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ONLY, AND SHOULD NOT SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL ADVICE OR YOUR OWN LEGAL INQUIRIES AS TO THE APPLICATION OF THE COMPANION ANIMALS LAW IN RELATION TO ANY MATTER.

ISBN 1 920766 62 6

©Department of Local Government, June 2007

Produced by *gildadesign* for the Department of Local Government



Information for dog owners in NSW

Two steps for lifetime protection of your pet

The Companion Animals Act 1998 was introduced in New South Wales on 1 July 1999 to protect pets, people and the wider community.

More than 150,000 dogs and cats are lost or stolen every year in NSW. Many are impounded because their owner cannot be contacted. Some may end up being rehomed or even destroyed. To decrease the number of pets that are euthanased each year, the Companion Animals Act requires that all NSW dog and cat owners have their pets permanently identified and registered for life.

Microchipping and Registration

Microchipping and Registration is a two part process that requires dog owners to:

1. Have their animals implanted with a microchip from the time they are 12 weeks of age, at point of sale or change of ownership (whichever occurs first).
2. Register their animals with their NSW local council by 6 months of age.

Please note: your dog is required by law, when in a public place, to have a collar around its neck with a tag attached that shows the dog's name and the address or phone number of the dog's owner.

Technological advances have made it easier to keep track of your pet through the implantation of a microchip.

About the size of a grain of rice, a microchip contains a unique 15 digit identification number that is quickly implanted under your pet's skin between the shoulders, which can be scanned in the event the pet is found lost or stolen.



There is nothing stopping you registering your new puppy as soon as possible. Early microchipping and registration is highly recommended as a large percentage of puppies under 6 months of age are regularly lost from their homes.

Desexing means that lifetime registration is cheaper, pets don't stray, they are cleaner and less likely to be involved in territory disputes or attacks.

There are exemptions from microchipping including bona fide working dogs in certain areas within NSW, and Greyhounds registered with the Greyhound Racing Authority. You should contact your local council for further information regarding exemptions.

Registration Cost

Registration can be completed at any NSW local council. The fees are set under the legislation as follows:

- \$40 for a desexed dog;
- \$150 for an entire or undesexed dog;
- \$40 for an entire or undesexed dog owned by a registered breeder;
- \$15 for a desexed dog owned by an eligible pensioner.

The above fees are one-off registration fees for each dog.

Updating your information:

When you become the owner of a dog either by purchasing the animal or being given the pet, ensure that the previous owner or breeder sends the local council a completed and signed change of owner form.



For peace of mind it is always advised that the new owner makes inquiries with the council to ensure the details are changed and as much information is provided in case your animal becomes lost or is stolen. The more information and contact numbers available on the Companion Animals Register the more likely you are to have your pet returned to you.

The Register is a database that lists all dogs and cats within NSW that have been microchipped and/or registered with the local council. Recorded with their microchip number are the address where the animal is normally kept and their owner's contact details. The information on the database can only be accessed by authorised persons for the purposes of reuniting lost pets with their owners, or for updating information. All forms for the Register are available at your local council.

If you sell or give away a dog it is your responsibility as the 'old' owner to update the new owner's details on the Companion Animals register at your local council, otherwise penalties may apply. Please contact your local council for more information.

What to do when your dog is missing

When you notice that your dog is missing contact your local council or pound as soon as possible. Council will update your dog's record on the Register to show your dog is missing and verify that your contact details are correct. That way, when your dog is found the council or pound can return your dog to its home.

REMEMBER, ALL DOGS IN NEW SOUTH WALES MUST BE MICROCHIPPED AND REGISTERED ON THE NSW COMPANION ANIMALS REGISTER