

Microchip details now needed in cat/dog sale advertisements

To allow traceability of sellers of pets, it is now an offence to advertise the sale of a dog or cat unless the microchip identification number of the animal is included in the advertisement or notice. A registered domestic animal business may use its Council business registration number as an alternative.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is the requirement for microchipping information limited to only breeding businesses?

A. No. The legislation applies to anyone in Victoria who advertises a dog or cat (or puppy or kitten) for sale. All dogs and cats that are being advertised for sale (through a business or privately) need to be permanently identified and that microchip number must appear in the advertisement. If the person is a registered business (such as a pet shop, shelter or breeder) they can place their council registered premises number (along with the name of the issuing council) in the advertisement instead.

Q. What is the definition of a breeding domestic animal business?

A. If you have 3 or more fertile female dogs or 3 or more fertile female cats, and sell dogs or cats (whether you make a profit or not), you are deemed to be a domestic animal business. This means you must register with the local council and comply with the mandatory Code of Practice for the Operation of Breeding and Rearing Establishments. However if you are a member of an applicable organisation you do not need to register as a domestic animal business unless you have 10 or more fertile female dogs or 10 or more fertile female cats. Either way you must comply with local council laws in relation to the maximum number of animals allowed on a property.

Q. What if I am a member of an applicable organisation but not a registered domestic animal business?

A. You cannot use your breeder number from the applicable organisation. If you are advertising a dog or cat for sale, the advertisement must include that animal's microchip number.

Q. What if I'm part of a Community Foster Care Network, or a dog or cat rescue organisation, but not registered with the Council as a domestic animal business?

A. You will be required to include microchip numbers in dog/cat sale advertisements.

Q. Do I have to put in the microchip number if I am advertising the animal as 'free to a good home' or giveaway?

A. No. The provision does not apply to advertisements to give away a dog or cat.

Q. Are there any exemptions?

A. The only exemption is if a veterinarian has provided a certificate to say the animal cannot be microchipped as it would significantly prejudice the animal's health.

Q. If I have purchased a dog or cat that was advertised what information do I need to get from the seller?

A. The seller must provide the microchip certificate and you must arrange the change of ownership details with the microchip registry.

Q. I have seen an advertisement without a microchip number - who do I report this to?

A. If the advertisement is on a local notice board or the like then contact your local council.

If the advertisement is in a classified publication or website you should inform that organisation of the new requirements.

Q. What if the microchip number in the advertisement is not the same as the one in the animal I have purchased?

A. You should first ensure that the number on the microchip certificate matches the microchip in your animal (a vet can do this for you).

Once you have this information (regardless of whether the certificate and microchip match) contact the Licensing Officer in the Department of Primary Industries on 03 9217 4200.

Q. What is the penalty if I advertise for sale a dog or cat without a microchip number?

A. The classified publication may choose to withdraw your advertisement from their publication.

You may lose potential customers who are looking for ethical and transparent people to purchase an animal from.

There is a penalty of up to 5 penalty units (around \$600) that can be issued by Authorised Officers of Council, RSPCA or Department of Primary Industries

Q. What if I'm advertising through an Interstate newspaper, or on a National online classified site?

A. If you are based in Victoria, and if the dog or cat sale advertisement will be viewed by prospective purchasers in Victoria, then the requirement to include a microchip number still applies.

If you would like to receive this information/publication in an accessible format (such as large print or audio) please call the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, TTY 1800 122 969, or email customer.service@dpi.vic.gov.au.

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Q. What if I'm a breeder advertising the future availability of puppies or kittens that aren't born or for sale yet?

A. As long as your advertisement relates only to the future availability of litters, and does not include reference to animals currently "for sale", the microchip requirements do not apply. However such advertisements must be kept up to date, in that as soon as these animals do become available for sale, the microchip details must also be displayed in the advertisement.

Further Information

For information on:

- registration and microchipping of cats and dogs;
- registration of commercial breeding establishments;
- other dog or cat ownership issues;

please contact your local council.

Local government is also responsible for auditing breeding and rearing establishments to ensure compliance with the standards in the Code of Practice.

General information on responsible pet ownership can be found at www.dpi.vic.gov.au/pets or call the Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

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