

Friday, 29 June 2018

## Biggest-ever changes to SA dog and cat laws

Sunday, 1 July, marks the start of the biggest-ever shake-up in South Australia's dog and cat management laws.

Changes include mandatory microchipping and desexing, compulsory breeder registration and the introduction of an online statewide dog and cat database.

The new laws will increase the number of lost dogs and cats returned to their owners, promote responsible pet ownership, reduce the number of unwanted animals ending up in shelters, and improve council services for dog and cat owners.

Dog and Cat Management Board Chairperson Felicity-ann Lewis said these four major changes to dog and cat management in South Australia were bigger even than the introduction of dog registration more than a century ago.

"We've had strong support for the changes," Dr Lewis said.

"The consultation process to get to today was long and thorough, stretching back to 2014 and including public consultations and close liaison with breeders, councils, the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League and vets.

"While these changes to legislation will help in the fight against irresponsible breeders and puppy farms, the onus remains on buyers to be vigilant to make sure they are buying pets from reputable breeders and sellers.

"If you have any information about illegal puppy farms or the mistreatment of animals, call RSPCA South Australia's 24-hour cruelty hotline on 1300 477 722."

Visit [www.dogandcatboard.com.au](http://www.dogandcatboard.com.au) for more information.

### The new laws that start on 1 July 2018 include:

Measure	Reason	Details
Mandatory microchipping	Increases the likelihood that owners can be identified and lost pets returned home safely.	Affects <b>all</b> dogs and cats. Applies from 12 weeks of age. A vet can give an exemption on medical grounds.
Mandatory desexing	Reduce the number of unplanned and unwanted litters. Reduce inclination to wander. Reduce aggression and dog attacks.	Applies only to dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018 Must be desexed by six months of age. Exemptions apply.

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<p>Breeder registration</p>	<p>Create a record of all dog and cat breeders in SA. Identify and eliminate 'puppy farms' and other unethical breeders.</p>	<p>Breeders can register through Dogs and Cats Online.</p> <p>Upon registration, they will be issued with an official Breeder Registration Number, which is to be included in all ads for sale.</p> <p>Breeders and sellers must also adhere to the new South Australian Standards and Guidelines for Breeding and Trading Companion Animals.</p>
<p>Dogs and Cats Online website</p>	<p>Enable owners to pay dog registration fees online. To store registration and microchip information in one, central database and to keep this data up-to-date. Provide a tool to help pounds and shelters identify lost dogs and cats.</p>	<p>Will bring together 68 council databases.</p> <p>Will enable owners to pay dog (and cat in the six councils where this applies) registration online.</p> <p>Will process discounts for people who have a Centrelink Concession Card.</p> <p>Will, for the first time, include all SA microchip numbers on the one database.</p> <p>Will enable councils to more quickly identify and return lost pets.</p> <p>Owners can still visit their local council to pay for registration if they prefer.</p>