

Companion Animals

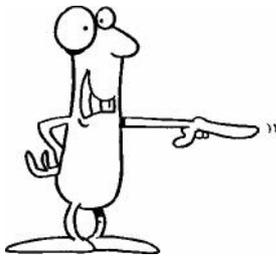


Being a responsible pet owner

Most of being a responsible pet owner is common sense. Animals need to be fed and housed in an appropriate way. They have physical and mental needs that must be catered for and their behaviour needs to be such that they do not pose a threat to other animals and people or disrupt neighbours and people's ability to enjoy public areas.

The Companion Animals Act 1998

In 1998 the Companion Animals Act was introduced to set into law the rights and responsibilities surrounding pet ownership in NSW. The following information forms part of these guidelines but the Act itself is a substantial document covering many things and it is suggested that you obtain a copy to gain a full understanding of it's meaning and implications.



Identification and Registration requirements for cat owners

All cats born after 1 July 1999 are required to be microchipped by 12 weeks old or before they are sold or given away. The cats must then be lifetime registered by 6 months old.

Cats born before 1 July 1999, that leave the owners property at any time, must be identified either by a microchip or by a tag worn on their collar with their name and owner's phone number on it. These cats do not need to be registered unless sold or given away.

Microchipping / Registration and Identification requirements for dog owners

Almost all dogs are required to be microchipped by 12 weeks old or before they are sold or given away and then lifetime registered by 6 months old.

When a dog is not on the property that it usually occupies, it must wear a collar and tag with its name and owner's telephone number or address on it.

Companion Animal Registration

Most dogs and cats require lifetime registration by the time they are 6 months old. The fees are a one off payment for the life of the animal and a change of details or ownership attracts no additional fee.

Registration fees are as follows:

Entire cat or dog (non-desexed)	\$207-00
Entire cat or dog owned by a registered breeder	\$ 57-00
Desexed cat or dog	\$ 57-00
Desexed cat or dog owned by a pensioner	\$ 24-00
Cat or dog Purchase from Pound	\$ 28-50

Changing owner details or notifying a change in details

If microchip and registration details change, eg. when an owner moves, changes their telephone number or if they sell or give an animal away, it is the responsibility of the previous owner to notify the change. A change of ownership form is available from councils and will need to be signed by the old and the new owner. A change of details form is also available when needed. Changes can also be made at www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au

Dogs out and about

Dogs must be under effective control and be on a lead when away from their homes. You will find your closest off leash area in Hawkesbury area on our website. Even when the dog is off lead in those areas it must be under the control of a competent person.

* Contact other local councils for details of available leash free areas they provide.

Public places that dogs are not allowed:

- Children's play areas.
- Food preparation /consumption areas.
- Recreation areas where dogs are prohibited.
- Public bathing areas where dogs are prohibited.
- School grounds - except with permission of the person controlling the school grounds.
- Childcare centres - except with permission of the person controlling the childcare centre.
- Shopping areas where dogs are prohibited.
- Wildlife protection areas.



Dogs defecation in public places

If your dog defecates outside your own property, it is your responsibility to remove the faeces. Leaving your dogs faeces to be cleaned up by, or worse, stepped in by others is and can attract a penalty notice being issued.

Regulations for restricted dog breeds

Owners of restricted breeds, which include Pit bull Terriers, American Pit bull Terriers and some other fighting breeds, must ensure that when their dogs are on their property they are contained in a childproof enclosure. One or more signs must be clearly visible from the boundaries of the property displaying "Warning Dangerous Dogs".

When away from their property, restricted breeds must be muzzled and on a leash.

Restricted breeds must never be sold or given to, or be in the sole charge of a person under the age of 18 years.

Dog training

Dogs need training. This includes things as simple as being socialised. You can start your pup off on the right foot by attending a puppy preschool and then, when it is a little older, attending obedience or agility classes.

There are also lots of books and videos available from libraries, book shops and pet shops that may assist you.

Barking Dogs

Some dogs bark excessively, often because they are bored, this causes many neighbourhood problems. There are things you can do to help.

When away from your property for extended time, give your dog a large meaty bone or something to keep it's mind active. A treat ball with something nice inside that the dog has to spend time manipulating often works well. Here at the shelter we use a clean plastic drink bottle (old coke bottle etc) and place some tasty dry food inside. This will often keep dogs amused for hours.

Leaving small dogs in the house or in the laundry is another possible solution to barking but don't forget to give them something to keep them amused and water etc.

Something else you can try is a barking collar, these help by breaking the routine of constant barking.

Where to get further information

Links to download a copy of the Companion Animals Act and to the Companion Animal Home Page can be found at www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au.

A copy of the Companion Animals Regulations can be obtained by visiting:

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_reg/car1999265/

Obedience classes in the Hawkesbury and Agility classes in the Hawkesbury

There are numerous groups and organisations that provide classes in obedience and agility. Council recommends that you go on-line and find the best group that suits your needs.

Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

10 Mulgrave Road
Mulgrave NSW 2756
PO Box 146
Windsor NSW 2756
Phone: (02) 4560 4644
Fax: (02) 4577 6604



Office hours

Monday to Friday: 9.00 - 12.30pm and 2.00 - 4.30pm

Saturday: 9.30 - 11.30am

Sunday: 7.00 - 9.00am

This document contains important information. If you do not understand it, contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450.