

Your dog and the law



the following laws apply for dogs.

Dogs in public places

You are legally responsible for your dog's behaviour. In public, you must keep your dog under 'effective control' which means:

- Keeping your dog on a leash no longer than two metres or keeping your dog in sight and responsive to your commands.
- Respecting your local council's on/off leash areas.
- Not taking your dog into a school, kindergarten, childcare centre or shop without appropriate permission.
- Not letting your dog chase or harass other people, dogs, animals or birds.
- Always keeping your greyhound on a lead in public places.

Clean up after your dog. Dog droppings can create health problems for people and dogs. The nutrients and pathogens they contain are also harmful to the environment. If you don't pick up your dog's faeces immediately, fines can be applied.



Good dogs are the result of love, care and good training from their owners.

Pet ownership laws encourage responsible behaviours to protect you, your dog and your neighbours. They help guide positive attitudes and manage public expectations.

This guide outlines the responsibilities dog owners have under state laws. Councils often have by-laws for managing dogs in their municipalities, so check with your local council.



For more information, contact your local council.



Government of South Australia
Dog and Cat Management Board



Legal responsibilities of dog owners

Dog owners have responsibilities to their dogs and the community. In South Australia, the following laws apply for dogs.

Microchipping

If you own a dog it must be microchipped. Microchipping is a safe and permanent way to identify a lost dog. Your dog must also wear a collar with a tag displaying your name and contact details when off your property.

- All dogs must be microchipped.
- Puppies must be microchipped by 12 weeks of age or at the point of sale.
- If you acquire a new dog that is not microchipped, it must have one implanted within 28 days.

Microchips must be implanted by a veterinary surgeon or an approved person.

You'll need to register your dog's microchip number in Dogs and Cats Online which your breeder, shelter, vet or previous owner should give you. They will create the initial record but you will need to complete it with your personal details.

Desexing

Research shows that desexing has a positive impact on a dog's health and temperament. Desexing can also reduce the inclination to wander.

- All dogs born after 1 July 2018 must be desexed by 6 months of age.*
- When you acquire a new dog, it must be desexed within 28 days.
- Working livestock dogs do not need to be desexed.

Dogs can only be desexed by a registered veterinary surgeon.

*Exemptions apply. More information can be found at dogandcatboard.com.au

Registration

All dogs over 3 months old must be registered within 14 days of taking possession. You do this yourself in Dogs and Cats Online, South Australia's mandatory database for registering dogs, cats, breeders, microchip and desexing information.

You can log in at any time to register your dog, update your contact details, or report your dog as missing by selecting 'lost' as its 'animal status'. Councils, the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League and vets use Dogs and Cats Online to identify lost pets and find their owners, so make sure you keep your details up-to-date. If you move into a new council area you must change your address in Dogs and Cats Online within 14 days.

When you register your dog for the first time, you'll receive a registration certificate and plastic disc with the dog's registration number. As registration numbers stay with your dog for life, you can engrave it onto a permanent metal disc if you prefer. The number must be displayed on the dog's collar when outside your property. Income from registration fees are invested in dog and cat management activities in your council area.

Register at
dogsandcatsonline.com.au



Breeding and selling

There are laws to govern dog breeding and sales.

- Breeders and sellers must adhere to the [South Australian Standards and Guidelines for Breeding and Trading Companion Animals](#) which can be found on the Board's website.
- Anyone selling a dog must be registered (as a breeder) in Dogs and Cats Online.
- Dogs must be microchipped before sale
- Advertisements must include the seller's contact details and Dogs and Cats Online breeder registration number.
- Anyone selling a dog must provide the purchaser with: microchip, health, temperament and breeding details.

Barking

Dogs bark to express excitement, boredom, stress, anxiety or to let you know they're defending their territory. But ongoing barking, whining or howling can be incredibly distressing for neighbours and owners. Training, socialising, exercising, providing activities and spending more time with your dog will help.

As a dog owner, you have a responsibility to ensure your dog doesn't bark excessively and become a nuisance. When barking problems can't be resolved, councils can issue expiation notices for excessive barking, or in severe cases, a 'control order'.

For more information visit:
dogandcatboard.com.au

Wandering

Dogs that wander the streets or public places without their owner pose a risk to the community. They can cause car accidents, harass or attack other dogs and people. Your premises must be secured with adequate fencing to contain your dog. If your dog wanders or attacks, substantial penalties can apply.

Wandering dogs should be reported to the council they are located in.

Transportation

Do not drive with an animal on your lap. It's not safe for you or your dog for it to travel unrestrained. Purpose-made pet restraints or carriers are highly recommended.

Dogs travelling in a vehicle tray like a 'ute' must be restrained by a leash, fixed cage or similar enclosure (accredited assistance dogs and livestock working dogs excluded).

