



Laws for Responsible Cat Owners

This document provides a summary of the legislation which applies to cats and the cat owners.

What is the *Cat Act 2011*?

The Cat Act 2011 requires the identification, registration and sterilisation of domestic cats, and gives local governments the power to administer and enforce the legislation. The legislation enables better management of the unwanted impacts of cats on the community and the environment, as well as encourage responsible cat ownership.

What is the purpose of the *Cat Act 2011*?

The Act is not only about responsible pet ownership, it also aims to reduce the number of unwanted cats in the community, and the number of cats that are euthanised each year. Microchipping and registration will also assist in the return of your cat if it becomes lost.

What does this mean for you and your feline friend?

All cats that have reached six months of age are required to be:

- Microchipped
- Sterilised
- Registered with the relevant local government.

Your cat will be required to wear a collar and registration tag to ensure they can be easily identified and returned to you if they become lost.

How does this affect cat breeders?

Even if you wish to only breed one litter from your cat, you are considered a cat breeder. If you wish to become a breeder, you must apply for a permit from your local government. These permits are valid for 12 months and a fee may be payable.

If you wish to give away or sell a cat, you must ensure the cat is microchipped and sterilised prior to transfer. If the cat cannot be sterilised due to its young age, you must provide a prepaid sterilisation voucher to the new owner.

Are there limits on cat numbers?

You will need to contact your local government to find out if they have introduced a local law to limit the numbers of cats that can be owned.

If your local government introduces a local law limiting cat numbers and you currently own more cats than it allows, you may keep the cats you currently own. However, you will not be able to buy or acquire any new cats until the number you own fall under the maximum permitted in the local law.

If my cat is below six months of age and not microchipped, can it be sold or transferred?

No. While a kitten is not required to be microchipped until it reaches six months of age, it cannot be sold or transferred to a new owner until a microchip is installed.

What happens if my cat cannot receive a microchip?

If your cat cannot receive a microchip for medical reasons, you may obtain an exemption certificate from a registered vet.

Exemption certificates can only be issued for cats that are 6 months or older, meaning that these exemptions cannot be issued to allow the sale of non-microchipped kittens.

My cat is very old – do I still need to have it sterilised?

Yes, the legislation applies to cats of all ages. However, your vet can issue an exemption if sterilising your cat is likely to have a negative impact on your cat's health and welfare.

Registration tags and certificates

Once your cat is registered with your local government, you will be issued a registration certificate, as well as a valid registration tag which your cat is required to wear on its collar. Cat registration tags change in colour each year.

The current colours are:

- Green tag for registration period ending 31 October 2017
- Yellow tag for registration period ending 31 October 2018
- Red tag for registration period ending 31 October 2019

- Blue tag for registration period ending 31 October 2020
- Green tag for registration period ending 31 October 2021
- Orange tag for lifetime registration.

It is an offence for your cat not to wear a collar with the registration tag and you can be given an on-the-spot fine of \$200 for failure to do so.

What concessions or assistance is available for pensioners or low income earners?

Pensioners receive a discount on registration fees.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, including tips for being a responsible cat owner, visit the [Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries website](#) or contact your local government.

For more information, please contact:

Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

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