

Responsible Pet Ownership Frequently Asked Questions

Being a responsible pet owner requires that you understand your obligations under the Companion Animals Act 1998. Here are some responses to frequently asked questions to help you understand these obligations and be a responsible pet owner.

Do I have to microchip and register my dog or cat?

In NSW, all cats and dogs must be microchipped by 12 weeks of age or before being sold or given away (some exemptions apply). All cats and dogs, other than those exempt, must be registered by 6 months of age.

Is my dog required to wear a collar and name tag?

Yes, A dog must have a collar around its neck and attached to the collar there must be a name tag that shows the name of the dog and the address or telephone number of the owner of the dog.

Does my dog or cat have to be desexed?

No, unless it is a restricted dog or a declared dangerous or menacing dog. However there are many benefits in having your pet desexed: Reduced lifetime registration fees, Your pet is less likely to stray, be aggressive, fight or spray to mark its territory, and Reduces unwanted pets. Desexing before 6 months of age is recommended.

Do I have to stop my dog from barking?

Yes, If your dog is barking excessively it may create a nuisance. Council will investigate ongoing complaints about barking dogs and may issue a nuisance order requiring the owner to prevent the dog from barking.

If my dog defecates in public do I have to clean it up?

Yes, If a dog defecates in a public place you must immediately remove the faeces and properly dispose of them.

Do I have to prevent my dog from escaping the property on which it is usually kept?

Yes, The dog owner must take all reasonable precautions to prevent the dog from escaping from the property on which it is being kept. Roaming dogs can be a nuisance or threat to people and other animals.

When I am walking my dog does it have to be on a lead?

Yes, A dog that is in a public place must be under the effective control of some competent person by means of an adequate chain, cord or leash that is attached to the dog and that is being held by (or secured to) the person.

Does my cat have to be kept indoors?

No, in most cases a domestic cat is free to roam providing it does not create a nuisance by yowling, damaging property or injuring other animals. You are encouraged to keep your cat indoors at night and ensure it does not create a nuisance.

Do I have to notify Council if my dog or cats details change and how long do I have to do it?

Yes, there are a number of circumstances when you have to notify Council that there has been a change in your animals details. These circumstances are,

- If any change occurs in the registration information or identification information for the animal (notification must be given within 14 days after the change occurs).
- If the animal dies (notification must be given within 28 days after the animal dies) If the animal has been missing for more than 72 hours (notification must be given within 96 hours after the animal went missing)
- If the animal has been found after having been reported missing (notification must be given within 72 hours after the animal is found)

If you do not notify Council that any of the above circumstances have occurred you may be guilty of an offence and you may receive a penalty infringement notice.

Is it an offence if my dog attacks a person or animal?

Yes, Under the Act if a dog rushes at, attacks, bites, harasses or chases any person or animal (other than vermin), whether or not any injury is caused to the person or animal it has committed an offence. If this has occurred Council may take action against the owner of the attacking dog by issuing a Nuisance Order, Menacing Dog Declaration or a Dangerous Dog Declaration. Council may also issue a penalty infringement notice.

Will I be fined if I don't comply with these requirements?

In most cases, where there has been no threat or injury to a person or other animal, the Rangers will seek voluntary compliance. If you fail to meet your obligations enforcement action and fines may be applied.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

If you have any further enquires please call the Goulburn Mulwaree Council Rangers on (02) 4823 4409.

