



Stop Puppy Farming – Update for rangers and local government staff

New laws and changes to the Dog Act 1976

The *Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Act 2021* (SPF Act) was passed by the Parliament of Western Australia in December 2021.

Although changes to the *Dog Act 1976* (Dog Act) and *Cat Act 2011* (Cat Act) have now passed through Parliament, many of the provisions require further work, in consultation with stakeholders before they take effect.

This fact sheet outlines the changes to the legislation and whether these changes have commenced.

Further information can be obtained from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries’ website at: <https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/local-government/community/cats-and-dogs/stop-puppy-farming>

	Topic	Legislative change	Status
1.	Greyhounds	<p>Muzzles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pet or retired racing greyhounds are not required to wear muzzles in public places. • Racing greyhounds registered with Racing and Wagering Western Australia are still required to wear muzzles in public places. <p>Leads</p> <p>Greyhounds are still required to be kept on leads in public places.</p>	Commenced on 23 December 2021

	Topic	Legislative change	Status
2.	Sterilisation of dogs	<p>Mandatory sterilisation</p> <p>Dogs must be sterilised by the age of two years, unless they are exempt.</p> <p>Exemptions to sterilisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dogs registered before the commencement of the Amendment Act (new laws). • Dogs exempt because a veterinarian has certified that a sterilisation procedure would adversely affect the health of the dog • Livestock working dogs. • Sterile dogs • Greyhounds registered with Racing and Wagering Western Australia • Dogs owned by a person with an ‘approval to breed.’ <p>Registration periods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsterilised dogs – changed to annual registrations only. • Sterilised dogs – remains the same with annual, three year and lifetime registration options available. 	Not yet commenced

	Topic	Legislative change	Status
3.	Approval to breed dogs	<p>Requirement to obtain an approval to breed</p> <p>A dog owner will need to obtain an approval to breed if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their dog is not sterilised by two years of age (and not otherwise exempt) • they intend to use their dog for breeding (regardless of the dog's age) • their dog breeds, (regardless of the dog's age), even if the dog breeds unintentionally. <p>Refusal to grant an approval to breed</p> <p>A local government will be able to refuse (or cancel) an application on the grounds that the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is under 18 years of age • is a person convicted of an offence under the Dog Act, Cat Act and Animal Welfare Act 2002 (Animal Welfare Act) in the previous five years • does not have sufficient facilities, or access to sufficient facilities, to breed dogs in accordance with any standards under the Animal Welfare Act or any other written law • is not a fit or proper person to breed dogs. <p>Conditions of the approval to breed</p> <p>A local government will be able to attach conditions to the 'approval to breed.'</p> <p>Cancellation of an approval to breed</p> <p>An approval to breed may be cancelled by the local government if the person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who holds the 'approval to breed' requests that the approval is cancelled • does not comply with a condition of the approval • no longer keeps any dogs in the district • does not comply with a requirement under the Dog Act or Animal Welfare Act. 	Not yet commenced

	Topic	Legislative change	Status
4.	Pet shops and dog suppliers	<p>Requirement to obtain a pet shop approval</p> <p>Pet shops selling dogs will need to obtain a ‘pet shop approval’ from their local government.</p> <p>Local governments will only be able to refuse, or cancel, an application on grounds set out in the legislation.</p> <p>Supply of dogs</p> <p>Approved pet shops will only be able to supply dogs sourced from a refuge organisation or dog management facility that has obtained a ‘dog supply approval’ from the State Government.</p> <p>The State Government will only be able to refuse, or cancel, a ‘dog supply approval’ application from refuges and dog management facilities on grounds set out in the legislation.</p>	Not yet commenced
5.	Centralised Registration System (CRS)	<p>Commencement of provisions for establishment of CRS</p> <p>Sections 44, 49 and 62 of the SPF Act, which provide for the establishment of a centralised registration system (CRS) and the migration of data from current local government dog and cat registers relating to the Dog Act and Cat Act commenced.</p> <p>Commencement of other provisions</p> <p>The commencement of the other provisions related to the operation of the centralised registration system will require the development of regulations, in consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>The State Government will acquire and maintain the CRS.</p> <p>Cat and dog owners will be able to apply to register these pets, supply documentation and make payment online. Local governments will approve the applications online and confirm the registration. Some people may still wish to do this by visiting their local government in person.</p>	Commenced on 27 August 2022
			Not yet commenced

	Topic	Legislative change	Status
6.	Transfer of dogs/CRS	<p>Dog owner number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All owners of dogs registered with a local government will be given a 'dog owner number.' This unique number will be available through the CRS. <p>Transferring a dog</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a person transfers a dog, they will need to provide their 'dog owner number.' This will enable authorities to identify who is supplying dogs. If a person is claiming to have bred a dog, their 'dog owner number' can be searched on the CRS to confirm that they have an approval to breed. 	Not yet commenced
7.	Additional enforcement powers for local governments	<p>Local governments will have additional investigative and enforcement powers under the Dog Act including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> refusing or cancelling a dog's registration if the dog is not sterilised, but required to be sterilised under the Dog Act seizing and detaining an unsterilised dog in accordance with the Dog Act, including obtaining a warrant to enter premises to seize an unsterilised dog causing a dog to be sterilised that is required to be sterilised in accordance with the process under the Dog Act requiring a holder of a pet shop approval or a dog supply approval to provide records to the local government. 	Not yet commenced

How can I remain up to date?

For more information on the Stop Puppy Farming Project or to subscribe to updates, visit the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' website www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/stopuppyfarming

This information is correct at June 2023.