



INFORMATION SHEET NO. D02

YOUR DOG AND THE LAW

Dogs are a great family pet and more often than not are treated like a member of the family. However, there are certain requirements of responsible dog ownership.

By following these requirements dogs and humans can live in safety and harmony.

Dogs on leads

All dogs are required to be kept on a leash no longer than 2 metres in length whilst they are in a public place. An exception to this rule exists in parks and reserves, where dogs can exercise off leash, unless signs indicate otherwise.

Where dogs are being exercised off leash they must be kept under 'effective' control of the person responsible for the dog at all times; meaning the dog immediately responds to voice command, the dog remains in close proximity to the person and the person is able to see the dog at all times.

'Picking up' after your dog

Dog waste is not only unsightly, there are also environmental and health risks with discarded pet waste. Under the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act it is an offence for dog owners not to pick up their dogs faeces. When people come into contact with faeces they are at risk of salmonella, worms and other parasites. Faeces also attract rodents and disease carrying insects. When left on the ground dog faeces can promote weed growth. If washed into waterways and carried into rivers, lakes and the ocean, excess nutrients from faeces may lead to algal growth.

It is an offence for dog owners not to pick up their dog's faeces. Failure to do so carries a \$55 fine.

Dogs in Utes

Dogs travelling in the back of open utes, trucks or similar vehicles must be harnessed so as not to allow any part of the dog to extend itself beyond the tray.

Working dogs are exempted if they are specifically being used for the purpose of droving stock and are going to or from a property where they are droving stock.

Limit of dogs on premises

Did you know that there is a limit on the number of dogs that can be kept on your premises?

In a small dwelling you may keep one dog and in other properties, two dogs. If you want to keep more than two dogs, you must obtain Council permission.

Failure to do so may result in a \$187.50 fine under Council By-Law.

Barking Dogs

Barking is a perfectly natural behaviour in dogs. However, excessive, prolonged or repetitive barking needs to be addressed.

Dog owners are responsible for making sure that the barking of their dog does not become a problem.

Complaints due to excessive barking are amongst the most frequent received by Councils. If your dog barks excessively you may be guilty of an offence and you may be fined or have a Control (Barking Dog) Order placed on your dog.

Other offences

The Dog & Cat Management Act 1995 sets out a number of offences for which the owner or person responsible for control of the dog can be fined. These include the dog:

- wandering at large;
- attacking, harassing or chasing a person or animal;
- attacking a person whom is lawfully entering premises;
- being in a school, kindergarten or child care centre without permission*;
- being in a shop (but not a pet shop, veterinary office or dog grooming parlour) or a place where food and drink is sold or prepared*;
- chasing a vehicle.

**These offences do not apply to Guide Dogs or Hearing Dogs.*

If a dog is impounded, it may be disposed of after 72 hours if not claimed.

Penalties

It is an offence pursuant to section 43(1) of the Dog and Cat Management Act for a dog to be wandering at large. All dogs must be on a leash and under the control of a responsible person if they are to be on the street.

An expiation of \$210.00 (\$750 for a dangerous dog or prescribed breed) can be issued to the owner of a dog if the dog is deemed to be wandering at large.

Destruction and control orders

Councils have the power to make orders for the destruction or control of dogs, so complaints / disputes concerning dog behaviour may be dealt with at a local level.

The Control Orders that a Council may make are:

- Control (Destruction) Order;
- Control (Dangerous Dog) Order;
- Control (Menacing Dog) Order;
- Control (Nuisance Dog) Order;
- Control (Barking Dog) Order.

These orders may make directions such as:

- The dog is to be kept indoors or enclosed or muzzled,
- That warning signs be displayed or that steps be taken to stop any nuisance behaviour.

Thank you for being a responsible dog owner

*Please note the information contained herein is intended as a guide only.
Further clarification may be obtained by contacting the Council on 8525 3200.*