

Cat Act Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the Cat Act 2011?

The cats laws are not only about encouraging responsible pet ownership they are also aimed at reducing the number of unwanted cats in the community and the number that are euthanised each year. Microchipping and registration will also ensure your cat is returned to you if they become lost.

What does this mean for you and your feline friend?

The Cat Act 2011 requires all cats that have reached six months of age to be:

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

Your cat is 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 legislation decrease the impact and problems of cats?

By requiring all owned cats to be identified, any unowned cats can be captured and either rehomed or destroyed. In addition, the requirement for all cats to be sterilised will reduce the number of cats born to owned cats. Enforcement by local governments result in unowned cats being removed from the community.

Who will enforce the legislation?

The Cat Act relies on local governments to administer and enforce it. As is the case with other legislation its success depends on the level to which this is done and the support from the community.

I am a responsible cat owner, why should I have to comply?

By identifying cats that are owned through microchipping and registration, local governments are able to deal with the problems caused by unowned, stray and feral cats.

At what age do I need to get my cat microchipped, registered and sterilised?

All cats must be sterilised, microchipped and registered by the time they reach 6 months of age. Cats are to be registered with the relevant local government (Shire of Woodanilling)

How much will this cost me?

Cat owners are expected to pay the costs associated with sterilisation, microchipping and registration of their cats.

The cat registration fees are:

- Annual: \$20
- 3 year: \$42.50
- Lifetime: \$100

Pensioners receive a 50% discount.

My cat is very old; do I have to have it sterilised?

The legislation applies to all cats. However, a veterinarian can issue an exemption certificate if sterilising the cat is likely to adversely affect the health and welfare of the cat. This should be shown to your local government when registering your cat.



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My cat is an indoor cat; does it need to be microchipped and sterilised?

Yes, the legislation is required all cats to be microchipped and sterilised unless an exemption is granted for health or breeding reasons. Any cat can escape – this protects your cat.

At the moment I need to go to a vet to get my cat microchipped. Will this change?

The legislation includes provisions to allow a person who is not a veterinarian or a veterinarian nurse to implant microchips in cats as long as they have the following from a registered training provider:

ACM40412 Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing;
LGAREGS404A Undertake Appointed Animal Control Duties and Responsibilities;
LGA40504 Certificate IV in Local Government (Regulatory Services);
ACM30210 Certificate III in Animal Technology;
ACMSS00001 Microchip Implantation for Dogs and Cats Skill Set;
ACM30410 Certificate III in Companion Animal Services;
ACM40110 Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation;
ACM40210 Certificate IV in Captive Animals;
ACM40310 Certificate IV in Companion Animal Services.

Will my cat have to wear a collar? What about the dangers?

Your cat must wear its registration tag whenever it is in a public place. This means it will need a collar. You can purchase a collar that will release if your cat gets it caught on a branch or similar obstacle.

Will I be fined if my cat loses its collar?

It is a defence if you can show that the loss of the collar and registration tag was outside your control. You must show that the cat is registered and that you took reasonable precautions to prevent this happening. A local government is likely to issue a warning in these circumstances.

My children each own a cat. Can they be the registered owner?

To be a cat owner you must be over 18 years of age. If the “owner” is a child under 18 years of age then the cat must be registered under that child’s parent or guardian, as they must take legal responsibility.

I have bought a new cat, what are my responsibilities?

All cats must be sterilised and microchipped. This should be done by the seller. If your new cat is considered by the vet to be too small to be sterilised, the seller must provide you with a sterilisation voucher.

By the time your cat is six months old, you need to provide evidence of microchipping and sterilisation to your local government to get it registered. Your local government will then issue you a registration tag which you must make sure your cat wears whenever it is in a public place.

You also need to check that the microchip details have been updated with the relevant microchip company, and registering local government if the cat was previously registered to another owner.



Cat Act Frequently Asked Questions

I have sold or have given away my cat, what do I need to do?

If you sell or give your cat away, it is your responsibility to ensure the cat is microchipped and sterilised prior to sale or being given away. You also need to notify, in writing, both the local government being where the cat is registered, and the microchip database company of the new owner's details.

What do I need to do if I import cats from interstates or overseas?

Cats which you bring into WA may not already be microchipped and sterilised. You will need to ensure that by the time the cat is 6 months old you have it sterilised, microchipped and registered.

Is the registration fee paid for a cat transferable?

Yes, it is transferable in two circumstances

1. When you retain the cat and move to another local government area; and
2. When you sell or give away your cat

In both circumstances you (and the new owner) must notify the local government of the change, but no additional registration fee is payable until the current registration period ends

How do I find out if my cat is microchipped, and its microchip number?

When a cat is microchipped, its details are placed onto one of a number of databases. You will have received the microchip number and details of the company where they microchip details are stored, at the time the cat was microchipped.

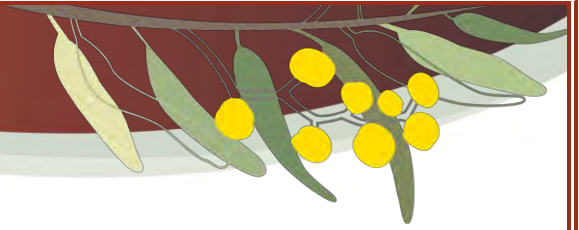
If you have the number, but are not sure what company has the details, you can use Pet Address to search a number of animal microchip databases. Pet Address will then direct you to the database for further information. www.petaddress.com.au

If you do not have your pet's microchip number, you have the following options:

- contact the vet who implanted the microchip to see if they recorded the number;
- contact your local veterinarian to see if they can scan your cat for the microchip (costs may apply). You may get this done during your pet's annual health check-up; or
- contact another facility, such as Cat Haven or your local government, that may have a microchip reader to see if they can scan your cat (costs may apply).

What happens if the chip malfunctions?

Failure of microchips is extremely rare. Generally, the issue is the operator of the scanner being inadequately trained in the correct technique, or that the reader is not a true multi-reader capable of reading all chips. If a person is confident the cat is microchipped, but the device has failed, the cat can be x-rayed to determine if one is present.



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How long will the microchip last and will it need to be replaced?

Microchips are designed to last the life of the cat and will not need replacing.

What if my cat is pregnant when I have to register her?

You are encouraged to sterilise your cat as soon as possible to avoid unwanted pregnancies. However, if your cat is pregnant and cannot be sterilised prior to registration, you must still register your cat.

In these circumstances, your local government may issue you with a Cat Control Notice specifying that the cat needs to be sterilised by a certain date after the kittens are born. If you do not comply with this notice you may be issued a fine or prosecuted.

My neighbour has 10 cats, can I report them? If they aren't registered will they be impounded?

There will be no restriction on cat numbers unless the local government has a local law restricting numbers. If you are concerned with the welfare of the cats you can contact the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA).

All cats need to be registered with their local government. After this date, if you reasonably believe the cats are not registered, you can notify your local government. The owner is likely to be cautioned in the first instance and instructed to comply with the legislation and if they do not take appropriate action they may receive an infringement notice.

How do I report unowned cats?

If you believe that you have unowned cats in your area, you can report them to your local government.

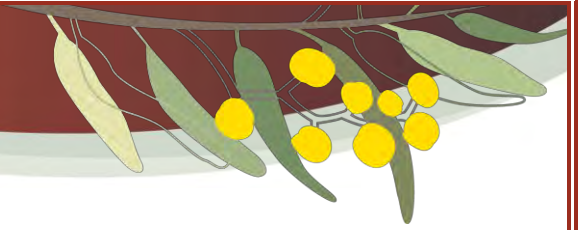
Can I set a trap in my yard to trap cats which I think are unowned?

Due to animal welfare issues, you are advised not to trap cats on your property. If you have concerns with cats on private property you should contact your local government to discuss.

Will this restrict the number of cats per household?

The legislation does not restrict the number of cats per household, however, local governments will be able to introduce local laws for this (or may have one in place).

In the event a local government does introduce, or already has a limit on cat numbers, it will not apply to cats currently owned, i.e. a cat owner will not have to reduce the cats they currently have, although they will not be able to replace a cat if it dies or is transferred, until they are down to the number allowed.



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Cats aren't like dogs... will this legislation require cats to be contained and confined?

The legislation does not require cats to be confined to a property, but local governments will be able to introduce local laws within their boundary for this purpose.

Local laws can also be introduced to prescribe cat free zones and to deal with nuisance behaviour by cats.

What happens if I don't comply with the legislation?

Local governments have a number of options to respond to non-compliance and may take the following steps:

1. Verbally request you comply
2. Issue a written request in the form of a Cat Control Notice
3. Issue an infringement notice
4. Commence proceedings for a prosecution.

If a person is convicted of two or more offences under this Act in 12 months, a local government can cancel a cat's registration, in which case it could be seized for non-compliance.

If a cat is seized and it cannot be identified as it is not wearing a registration tag and is not microchipped, the local governments may consider it unowned. After 3 days it can be destroyed or rehomed.