



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Local Government and Communities**

Laws for Responsible Dog Owners

The *Dog Act 1976*



Laws for Responsible Dog Owners

The *Dog Act 1976* is administered and enforced by local governments within their respective districts. The Act addresses the control and registration of dogs; the ownership and keeping of dogs; and the obligations and rights of dog owners and others.

Everyone who is a dog owner has a responsibility to ensure that his or her dog is well looked after.

In addition, it is important that dog owners respect other people in the community. This can be achieved by keeping dogs adequately confined on their properties, on a leash in public places, preventing aggressive behaviour and controlling excessive barking.

As a nation of pet lovers, we rely on dog owners to responsibly look after their dogs to ensure that we can all live together peacefully and without fear.



Your responsibilities

Dog control

Penalty: \$200 to \$5,000

If you own a dog, you have a legal responsibility to keep it under control, either within a fenced area on your property or on a leash when in public.

Dogs barking

Penalty: \$200 to \$5,000

As a dog owner, you are responsible for ensuring that your dog is not creating a public nuisance by barking excessively. Nuisance barking also covers public places adjoining the premises.

Removal of dog droppings

Penalty: Varies

Dog droppings are a source of annoyance to other users of footpaths and recreation areas. Most local governments have local laws that require the person in charge of the dog in a public place to remove their dog's droppings and adequately dispose of it.

Penalties for dog attacks

Penalty: \$3,000 to \$20,000

Potential imprisonment

A dog attack is a very serious matter. If your dog attacks a person or another animal, you will be held responsible even if you are not there at the time.

Dog registration

Penalty: \$200

A dog owner is legally required to register his or her dog with the appropriate local government if it is more than three months old. Contact your local government for a registration form and list of applicable fees.

Registration tags

Penalty: \$200

Your dog is required to wear a collar to which must be attached a valid registration tag. This tag will be issued by your local government when you pay your registration fee.



Microchipping has been introduced for all dogs from the following dates:

- From **1 November 2013**, dogs must be microchipped when they are registered for the first time or when a change of ownership occurs.
- By **30 November 2013** all dangerous dogs, which includes restricted breeds, and commercial security dogs, must be microchipped.
- By **1 November 2015**, all dogs must be microchipped.

Dangerous dogs

Dangerous dogs can be of any breed; however, some breeds are more prone to attacking than others.

Measures are in place to increase the safety of the community and to ensure that the owners take increased responsibility for dogs that are known to be potentially dangerous.

Some breeds have been declared restricted in Australia and Western Australia.

Local laws

Each local government is able to introduce local laws on a range of matters for dog control including specified dog exercise areas and the number of dogs allowed to be kept at a premise. For further information on the laws relevant to your district, contact your local government.

Where can I get more information?



For more information, including tips for being a responsible dog owner, visit the Department of Local Government and Communities Responsible Dog Ownership web page at:

www.dlgc.wa.gov.au/dogs

or contact your local government.

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