

Registration and Rebates

The *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* provides two options for dog registration, namely the registration of individual dogs or the registration of a business.

Business Registrations

The Benefit Of Business Registration

A business registration allows a person who has numerous dogs which are used for breeding, training or the provision of security or other services involving dogs, to register the number of dogs involved rather than individual dogs.

Examples:

Dog breeders often retain puppies until they are about five months of age to determine the individual with the best conformation, they then sell the others. Over a twelve month period, they may have (for example) thirty dogs of registrable age, but only have fifteen at any one time. A business registration encompasses all these dogs and regards them as being registered.

A greyhound trainer may have fifty dogs at any one time, but those that do not perform on the track are not kept. Several hundred individual dogs may pass through the kennel in a year. A business registration allows the trainer to register the business which provides the trainer with the flexibility to change dogs over the registration period without having to notify the local Council of these changes.

Definition Of A "Business"

The Act defines a business as: *a kennel at which dogs are bred or trained; or the provision of security or other services involving the use of dogs, The owner of such a business: may apply, in the manner and form approved by the Board, to the Registrar of the area in which the business is (or is to be) situated or from which the business is (or is to be) operated for registration of the business.*

Therefore if the dogs are being kept for any other purpose apart from a kennel for breeding or training, or for the provision of security or other

services involving the use of dogs, they must be individually registered.

Fees For Registration Of A Business

Section 26(6) of the Act allows councils to charge fees for the registration of a business. These fees must be approved by the Minister prior to implementation.

For example:

A council may choose to determine a fee per dog held by the kennel, and then charge a multiple of that fee, If the fee is \$25 per dog and the kennel owner wishes to keep ten dogs at any one time, the total fee would be \$250. Alternatively, a council may choose to charge a flat fee for the registration of a kennel regardless of how many dogs are held. The kennel owner can determine whether they are financially advantaged by registering their kennel or individual dogs (thus being eligible for rebates).

Rebates For Desexed, Microchipped or Trained Dogs

The Act states: *Without limiting the matters that may be taken into account when setting fees to be approved by the Minister, councils must provide for a percentage rebate of the fee that would otherwise be charged for the registration of a dog in the following cases:*

- (a) *if the dog is desexed;*
- (b) *if (i) the dog has been implanted with a microchip for the purposes of identification; and (ii) the information contained in the microchip is up-to-date;*
- (c) *if the dog has passed a specified training program accredited by the Board, (and, if more than one rebate applies in respect of a particular dog, the rebates are to be aggregated and deducted from the registration fee that would otherwise be charged).*

Therefore rebates apply only to the registration of individual dogs and not to businesses.

Individual Registrations

All other dogs must be registered individually. The rebates do apply.

Registration and Rebates

Desexing, training and microchipped rebates

The Act states that these rebates must be provided. It does not state how large or small the rebate must be

Desexing Rebate.

A dog is desexed if:

- The owner has a desexing certificate issued by a veterinarian for that dog
- The dog has a desexing symbol tattooed in the ear
- The owner signs a statutory declaration that the dog has been desexed.

If evidence is provided once, the rebate is given for the rest of the dogs life. Most councils do not require annual proof. Hormone treatments which reduces reproductive hormones in dogs (chemical desexing) do not make the dog eligible for the desexing rebate because the effects are temporary.

Training Rebate

A dog is "trained" if:

- It is less than one year of age and has a certificate from a puppy preschool (Board determination) or
- The owner has a Dog and Cat Management Board training rebate certificate certifying that the dog meets the training requirement.

For further information on the training rebate, refer to the training information sheet.

Microchip Rebate

A dog is microchipped if:

- It has a microchipping certificate or
- A microchip reader detects the chip AND
- The details from the chip correspond to those on the register

Other Classes of Dog

The following are not mandatory rebates or eligible for free registration, but councils may wish to apply reduced fees for them.

Therapy dogs – assessment criteria

Therapy dogs are those dogs which visit retirement villages, hospitals and similar venues. They are not

eligible for free registration and all the provisions of the Act apply. Councils may choose to impose a lower registration fee for therapy dogs (check with your local council). The Board suggests that the following criteria apply:

- The dog must not be a prescribed breed. (Japanese Tosa, Filo Brasileiro, Dogo Argentino, Presa Canario, American Pit Bull/Terrier).
- The person must provide the council with a letter of recommendation from the organisation to which the dog has been a regular therapy visitor for at least the previous twelve months.
- The dog must be of sound temperament. If this is in doubt then a recognised temperament test such as the National Consultative Committee for Animal Welfare or SAFER test should be undertaken.

Pensioner discounts

There is no mandated pensioner discount but most councils do provide one. There are two types of pensioners:

- Old age pensioners. Once this has been established, there should be no requirement to validate every year (people do not get younger)
- Health card holders. These are people who are unemployed or on other forms of pension. Most councils require that these be validated annually because the persons circumstances may change

Councils may issue discounts of different levels at their own discretion.

Working dogs

A working dog is one that is used primarily for working stock. ie droving (a working sheep or cattle dog). Whether or not there is a reduced fee for working dogs is at the discretion of councils.

Greyhounds

There is no requirement on councils to provide discounted registration fees for greyhounds. Many councils do apply a discount for greyhounds that are used for racing or being trained for racing and for racing kennels. Re-homed pet greyhounds are generally treated in the same manner as any other breed of dog.