

Domestic Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms and Pet Shops) Act 2017

Pet Shops

Background

The *Domestic Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms and Pet Shops) Act 2017* (PFPS Act) introduces a range of amendments to the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (DA Act). These amendments deliver on the Government's election commitment to reform the dog breeding and pet shop industries in Victoria and better regulate the sale of dogs and cats.

Under the amended DA Act:

- there are limits on the number of fertile female dogs breeders can keep
- pet shops can only sell dogs and cats sourced from shelters, pounds or enrolled foster carers
- the role of foster carers is clearer
- there are new definitions for 'recreational breeders' and 'microbreeders'
- the definition of 'farm working dogs' is clarified
- an animal sale permit system is established
- traceability of cats and dogs is improved through the establishment of the Pet Exchange Register
- offences apply for publishing non-compliant pet sale advertisements.

What are the key changes for pet shops?

Pet shops can no longer sell animals obtained from dog and cat breeders.

Pet shops will only be able to source dogs or cats from approved sources. These sources include a registered pound, animal shelter or a foster carer registered with their local council.

Pet shops will only be able to sell dogs over six months of age and cats over eight weeks of age.

New offences have been created to prohibit pet shops from sourcing dogs or cats from a breeder, and selling cats or dogs that do not meet minimum age requirements..

If I can't get a puppy from a pet shop, where can I buy a puppy from?

Victorians will continue to have plenty of opportunity to buy a puppy for their families. Puppies will be available for purchase directly from breeders or animal shelters.

By going directly to a breeder, prospective owners have the opportunity to meet the parent(s) and see where the puppy was bred and raised.

Can a pet shop owner also own a breeding business?

No. The PFPS Act prohibits the co-registration of a breeding, shelter, pound and pet shop Domestic Animal Business (DAB).

This prevents breeders establishing a supply chain to funnel puppies and kittens into a pet shop. It stops a breeder setting up a breeding establishment in one municipality, a shelter in a second, and a pet shop (to on-sell cats or dogs from the shelter) in a third.

Can a pet shop advertise dogs and cats it has for sale?

Yes, however, the PFPS Act introduces new rules for the advertisement of dogs and cats.

All DABs, including pet shops, will be included on a new register, to be known as the Pet Exchange Register (the Register).

Pet shops will be enrolled on the Register by their local council, and a source number will be generated. The source number will enhance traceability of cats and dogs, and flag those who are not registered to sell or give them away.

From 10 April 2018 to 30 June 2019, pet shops must include both the microchip number and DAB number in all advertisements.

From 1 July 2019, it will be an offence to advertise a dog or cat for sale unless the advert includes its microchip number and the source number generated by the Register.

Offences apply to both the person selling the pet, along with the publisher that publishes a non-compliant advertisement.

When do pet shops have to stop selling puppies?

Pet shops have until 1 July 2018 to change their business models to only accept cats and dogs at the appropriate age and approved sources.

The Register, and associated advertising requirements will become mandatory from 1 July 2019.

For more information

Visit <http://www.animalwelfare.vic.gov.au> or email pet.welfare@ecodev.vic.gov.au or call 136 186.

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