



NEW ANIMAL AND BIRDS (DOG LICENSING AND CONTROL) RULES

The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) has made revisions to the Animals and Birds (Dog Licensing and Control) Rules. The revised Rules will come into effect on **1 Sep 07**.

2 The new Rules are targeted at better management of the dog population as well as to instill responsible pet ownership and discourage pet abandonment. The key changes are as follows:

(a) Mandatory microchipping of all newly licensed dogs

3 All licensed dogs must be microchipped with an ISO compliant microchip. Dogs that were licensed before 1 Sep 07 will be exempted from the requirement. However, owners of such dogs are strongly encouraged to have their dogs microchipped for better traceability. All new dog owners must submit documentary proof from a veterinarian to show that their dogs have been microchipped.

4 Microchipping is a more effective and permanent identification system than dog badges. It is a more reliable way to ensure traceability in the event of a rabies outbreak. At the same time, it would also help AVA to trace and return lost dogs to owners.

(b) Harmonisation of dog licence fees

5 Under the new Rules¹, the annual licence fee for all unsterilised dogs (both male and female) is \$70 while the licence fee for sterilised dogs is \$14. The alignment of fees takes into account that unsterilised male and female dogs are equally responsible for breeding.

¹ Previously, the annual licence fee for a male dog and for a female dog was \$14 and \$70 respectively, while the licence fee for a sterilised female dog was \$14 a year.

6 To encourage early licensing of dogs, the new Rules allow owners to license their dogs that are up to 5 months of age at a reduced rate of \$14 a year even if the dogs are not sterilised. However, owners will have to sterilise their dog before the expiry date of the dog licence as otherwise, the licence fee of \$70 is payable at the time of licence renewal.

7 A group licence fee will also be introduced for dogs kept in registered farms for breeding, boarding and training. The licence fees are as follows:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| i) More than 300 dogs on the premises | \$3,500 per annum |
| ii) More than 200 dogs but not more than 300 dogs on the premises | \$1,700 per annum |
| iii) More than 100 dogs but not more than 200 dogs | \$1,100 per annum |
| iv) 100 or fewer dogs on the premises | \$ 650 per annum |

(c) Higher penalties for keeping of unlicensed dogs, allowing dogs to stray and failing to muzzle dangerous breeds of dogs in public places

8 A dog above 3 months of age must be licensed. To discourage dog owners from keeping unlicensed dogs, allowing their dogs to stray or not muzzling dogs of breeds² that are required to be muzzled in a public place (eg, the Rottweiler or Mastiff); the maximum fine for such offences has been raised from \$500 to \$5,000.

9 In the event of the loss or death of a dog, or a change in address of the dog owner, the owner is required to inform AVA within 28 days. Under the new Rules, a dog licence is not transferable. When a licensee does not renew the dog licence upon its expiry, the licensee may be fined for keeping a dog without a valid licence and will have to apply for a new dog licence.

² Breeds of dogs that are required to be muzzled in a public place include:

- i) Breeds specified in Part I of the Second Schedule: Pit Bull, which includes the American Pit Bull Terrier (which is also known as the American Pit Bull and Pit Bull Terrier), American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, American Bulldog, and crosses between them and other breeds, Akita, Neapolitan Mastiff, Tosa, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro, Boerboel, and their crosses; and
- ii) Breeds specified in Part II of the Second Schedule: Bull Terrier, Doberman Pinscher, Rottweiler, German Shepherd Dog with its related breeds such as the Belgian Shepherd Dog and the East European Shepherd Dog, Mastiffs including the Bull Mastiff, Perro De Presa Canario, Cane Corso and Dogue De Bordeaux, and their crosses.

d) Pet shops and dog breeding farms to help buyers license their dogs

10 All dogs for sale at pet shops and dog breeding farms are to be licensed at the point of sale. The pet shop or farm would be responsible to assist a new owner in getting his dog licensed, but the licence fee would be borne by the owner.

11 AVA will continue to review our policies and regulations, in tandem with our public education efforts, to ensure that they remain relevant and support our efforts to promote responsible pet ownership.

Enquiries

- 12 For further enquiries and information, please:
- visit AVA's website at www.ava.gov.sg
 - e-mail ava_cawc@ava.gov.sg
 - call the Centre for Animal Welfare and Control service line at 6471-9987 on weekdays from 8 am to 5 pm

FAQ - NEW DOG LICENSING RULES

Q1. What is the rationale for the changes to the dog licensing rules?

A1. The purpose of the new rules is for better management of the dog population, as well as to instil responsible pet ownership and discourage pet abandonment.

Q2. At what age must a dog be licensed?

A2. A dog that is three months of age and above must be licensed.

Q3. If my dog is young, can I license it after it has been sterilised?

A3. All dogs aged three months and above must be licensed. Dog owners may license their dog at a reduced rate of \$14 a year if the dog is below 5 months of age. However, the dog has to be sterilised before the expiry date of the licence in order to renew the licence at this rate. The licence fee of \$70 will be payable if the dog is not sterilised at the time of renewal of the dog licence.

Q4. My dog is tattooed. Is this acceptable for licensing?

A4. The dog has to be microchipped with a microchip that conforms to the ISO standards. Tattoos are not acceptable as they fade and are difficult to read.

Q5. My dog has a non-ISO compliant microchip, is this acceptable?

A5. You may bring your dog to a veterinarian to verify if the microchip number can be read and certified by the veterinarian. Otherwise, you would have to get the dog microchipped with an ISO-compliant microchip.

Q6. Where can I get my dog microchipped?

A6. You can get it done at any veterinary clinic. A certificate from the veterinarian should be obtained as documentary proof. This certificate has to be submitted to AVA for verification when applying for a dog license.

Q7. How much does it cost to microchip a dog?

A7. The cost varies and it may range from \$40 to \$80.

Q8. I currently have a licensed dog. Do I need to microchip my dog before I can renew my dog's license?

A8. Only newly licensed dogs need to be microchipped. You need not microchip your dog if it has already been licensed but for better identification of your pet, we strongly encourage you to have it microchipped.

Q9. Can I renew my dog's licence after 1 Sep 07 although it has expired before 1 Sep 07?

A9. A licence that has already expired cannot be renewed. A new licence will have to be obtained and the new requirements on microchipping and the fees will apply. In addition, the owner may be fined for keeping a dog without a valid licence if the licence is not renewed before it expires. AVA would like to remind dog owners to ensure that their dog's licence is kept current.

Q10. Can I transfer my dog licence to another person?

A10. A dog licence is not transferable but you may transfer ownership of your dog to another person. You should inform AVA within 28 days if you have ceased to keep the dog. The new owner would then have to obtain a new licence for the dog. This is to simplify the procedure of licensing of dogs as many dog owners overlook the need to complete the transfer of ownership forms. In addition, many of the new owners are unable to obtain the signature of the previous owners to complete the transfer form. This also serves to commit the new owner to his responsibility of ensuring that the dog he owns is licensed.

Q11. Do I need to inform AVA if my dog is lost or dead?

A11. When your dog is lost you can make a police report and notify the SPCA and AVA with the particulars of the dog, so that your dog can be returned to you if it is found by the authorities. AVA should be notified within 28 days of the loss or death of a dog. You should also request AVA to cancel your dog licence should you be unable to find your dog after sometime.

Q12. Do I need to renew my dog licence every year?

A12. A dog licence has to be renewed annually if you are still keeping the dog.

Q13. What is the fee for a dog licence?

A13. The fees are as follows:

Licence fee for dogs other than in dog farms:

For a dog below 5 months of age	\$14 per annum
For a sterilised dog	\$14 per annum
For a non-sterilised dog	\$70 per annum
For a fourth or subsequent dog	\$175 per annum

Licence fee for dogs in dog farms:

More than 300 dogs on the premises	\$3,500 per annum
More than 200 dogs but not more than 300 dogs on the premises	\$1,700 per annum
More than 100 dogs but not more than 200 dogs	\$1,100 per annum
100 or fewer dogs on the premises	\$ 650 per annum

Q14. How many dogs can I keep in a house?

A14. You may need to check with the management of your housing estate/condominium if dogs are allowed to be kept in your unit. Some managements or landlords may not approve the keeping of a dog. In a HDB flat, only one small sized dog of an approved breed may be kept. The list of approved breeds allowed in a HDB flat is available on AVA's website (www.ava.gov.sg). Generally in other premises, up to three dogs are allowed. Special permission must be obtained from AVA to keep more than three dogs in a premises.

Q15. Must my dog be leashed and muzzled in a public place?

A15. All dogs must be leashed in a public place. If your dog is of a large breed³ like a Rottweiler or Mastiff, it must also be muzzled in a public place. Owners are also advised to muzzle their dogs in a public place if their dogs are known to be ferocious.

Q16. What is the fine for an offence such as keeping an unlicensed dog or allowing a dog to stray or not muzzling a dog that is required by law to be muzzled in a public place?

A16. Generally, the maximum fine is \$5,000 for an offence. In the case of dogs not muzzled in a public place when the law requires it to be muzzled, a repeat offender may be fined up to \$10,000.

Q17. There are people who board many dogs in my farm. Do they need individual licences for their dogs?

A17. The respective owners must obtain licences for the dogs boarded in the farm. If a person keeps more than three dogs in the farm, he would have to pay the licence fee of \$175 for the fourth and subsequent dog.

Q18. I have more than 300 dogs in my farm now and have obtained a licence at the fee of \$3,500. But if I reduce my number of dogs to over 200 a few months later, can I get a pro-rated refund of fee, since the fee for more than 200 dogs is \$1,700?

A18. As you originally had more than 300 dogs, the licence fee cannot be reduced when you have less dogs subsequently. However, at the time of renewal of licence, the fee imposed will depend on the number of dogs in the farm at that time.

³ Breeds of dogs that are required to be muzzled in a public place include:

- i) Breeds specified in Part I of the Second Schedule: Pit Bull, which includes the American Pit Bull Terrier (which is also known as the American Pit Bull and Pit Bull Terrier), American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, American Bulldog, and crosses between them and other breeds, Akita, Neapolitan Mastiff, Tosa, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro, Boerboel, and their crosses; and
- ii) Breeds specified in Part II of the Second Schedule: Bull Terrier, Doberman Pinscher, Rottweiler, German Shepherd Dog with its related breeds such as the Belgian Shepherd Dog and the East European Shepherd Dog, Mastiffs including the Bull Mastiff, Perro De Presa Canario, Cane Corso and Dogue De Bordeaux, and their crosses.

Q19. I have more than 200 dogs now in my farm and have obtained a licence at the fee of \$1,700. If I increase my number of dogs to more than 300 a few months later, will I have to pay \$3,500 which is the fee for keeping more than 300 dogs?

A19. When you increase the number of dogs in your farm, you should notify AVA within 14 days and apply for a variation of the licence. AVA would consider your application and require you to pay, on a pro-rated scale, the difference in licence fee.

Q20. When I obtained a licence for my dog, I paid for the non-sterilised fee of \$70. However I subsequently realised that my dog was sterilised. Can I obtain a refund if I produce the sterilisation certificate?

A20. The sterilisation certificate must be produced at the time of obtaining the licence. Any fee paid is non-refundable. You would be eligible for the reduced fee only when you next renew the licence.

Q21. Can the pet shops and dog breeding farms help buyers to license the dogs that they purchase?

A21. AVA will require all dogs for sale at pet shops and dog breeding farms to be licensed at the point of sale. Under this arrangement, the pet shop or farm is responsible to assist the new owner to get a licence for the dog, but the fee would be borne by the owner.

Issued by Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority

**Ministry of National Development
on 6 August 2007**
