



# Your cat and the law

## Cat containment

Cats that are allowed to roam freely can have a much shorter lifespan than cats that are safely confined by their owners. Outdoor roaming cats have an average lifespan of just three years compared to indoor cats, which can live to 15 years or more.

There are many options available to help you contain your cat to your property. These range from purpose built enclosures to fixtures that can be attached on top of fences to prevent your cat leaving your garden.

Cats, at the very least, should be kept indoors overnight. Some councils have introduced a curfew from dusk to dawn. Contact your local council to find out if a cat curfew applies in your area.

Indoor cats are safe from:

- **Cars:** cats can be injured or killed, or cause accidents, if allowed near roads
- **Cat fight injuries:** the most common injury from cat fights is an abscess. Abscesses are incredibly painful and can require costly veterinary treatment. Diseases such as FIV can also be transmitted during cat fights
- **Humans:** to reduce neighbour disputes and any potential harm to your cat it is safer to confine your cat to your property
- **Wildlife:** preventing your cat from hunting wildlife and reducing the risk of your cat contracting diseases, fleas, lice, ticks or worms from other animals
- **Dogs:** cats can be killed or seriously injured in dog attacks.

## Good cats are the result of love and good management.

With an estimated 250,000 cats in households around South Australia, the laws governing our beloved feline friends need to be the best possible, reflecting modern community attitudes.

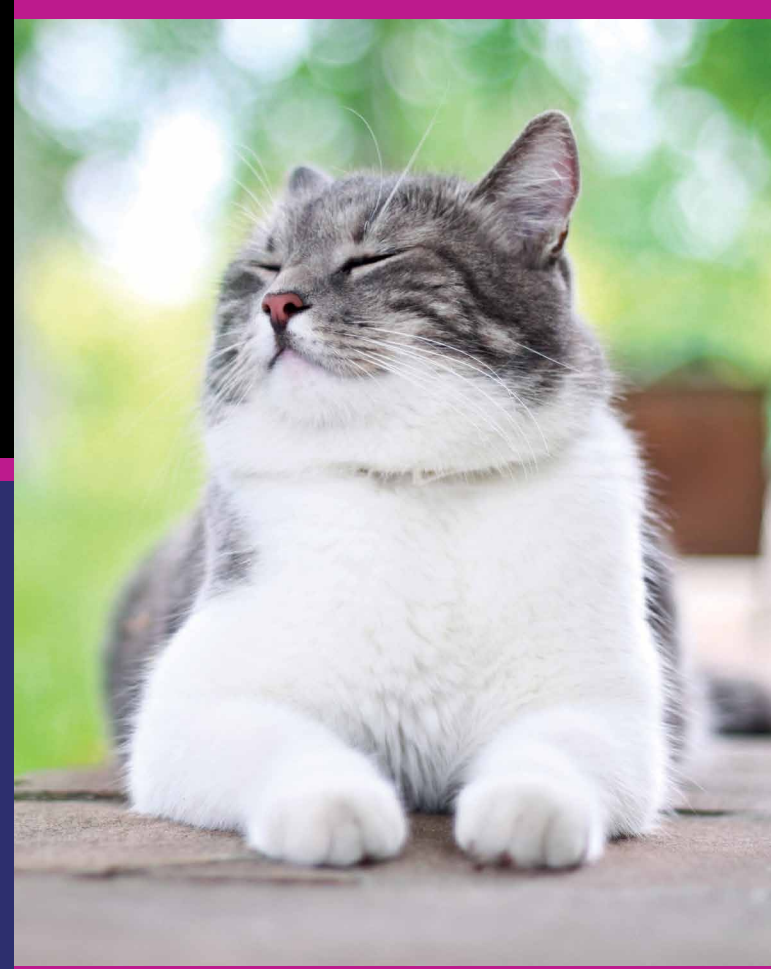
That's why, from 1 July 2018, you have new legal responsibilities as a cat owner.

Visit [dogandcatboard.com.au](http://dogandcatboard.com.au) to find out what makes a responsible cat owner.

For further information regarding the law and your cat or to download a copy of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* visit [www.dogandcatboard.com.au](http://www.dogandcatboard.com.au)

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## Your cat and the law

There are new laws that affect you and your cat. The most significant are the introduction of:

- **mandatory microchipping**
- **mandatory desexing**
- **a new registry and standards/guidelines for breeders and sellers**
- **a new statewide database (Dogs and Cats Online).**

These new rules are designed to help reunite you with your lost cat, prevent unwanted litters and eliminate unscrupulous breeders from the industry.

This handy guide outlines changes that affect the whole state. Your local council may have additional rules in place, so it pays to check your individual circumstances.

## Dogs and Cats Online

From 1 July 2018 all cat microchip information is required to be recorded on Dogs and Cats Online. Owners are responsible for documenting this information on Dogs and Cats Online if their cats were microchipped prior to 1 July 2018. Microchip implanters are responsible for documenting this information on Dogs and Cats Online if they microchip a cat after 1 July 2018.

Owners will be able to login online any time and update their contact details in one place and notify councils if their cat has gone missing.

## Mandatory microchipping

After 1 July 2018, if you own a cat it must be microchipped.

Unlike a collar or tag, which can easily snag and fall off, microchipping is a safe and permanent way to identify your cat if it becomes lost or is impounded.

### From 1 July 2018:

- **All cats will be required to be microchipped**
- **Kittens will need to be microchipped by 12 weeks of age or at the point of sale**
- **If you acquire a new cat that is not microchipped, it must have one implanted within 28 days.**

Microchips must be implanted by a veterinary surgeon or an authorised person.

While microchipping is a superior form of ID to collars and name tags, it is still a good idea to have a collar and tag on your cat, as this identifies your cat as an owned and loved pet.

When you get your cat microchipped, it's important to remember to keep your personal details linked to that chip up-to-date. If you move house, change phone numbers, etc, you must update your information on Dogs and Cats Online.

## Mandatory desexing

Cats are prolific breeders. In just seven years, a single litter can result in the birth of thousands of cats if breeding is left unchecked. Many of these unwanted litters will be euthanised in pounds or shelters as a result of unchecked breeding. Desexing is a humane, practical solution to prevent this.

Under changes to the law, all cats born after 1 July 2018 must be desexed.\*

These laws are being phased in, which means:

- **All cats born after 1 July 2018 will be required to be desexed by 6 months of age\***
- **If you acquire a new cat after 1 July 2018, it must be desexed within 28 days.**

Cats can only be desexed by a registered veterinary surgeon.

## Why desexing?

Along with stopping unwanted litters, desexing has a range of health and behavioural benefits for your cat.

- **Desexing can increase your cat's life expectancy**
- **It reduces the risks of developing certain cancers**
- **Desexing may reduce undesirable behaviours, such as spraying, marking, fighting and yowling**
- **It helps reduce the number of cats and kittens euthanised in pounds and shelters.**

## Cat breeders and sellers

There are new laws regulating the breeding and sale of cats. These changes are designed to weed out unscrupulous breeders from the industry. The most important changes to the law are:

- **Breeders and sellers must adhere to the new South Australian Standards and Guidelines for Breeding and Trading Companion Animals, from 1 August 2017.**
- **If you are a breeder and you intend to sell a cat after 1 July 2018, you must register as a breeder with the Dog and Cat Management Board.**
- **You must not sell a cat unless it has been desexed and microchipped in accordance with the Act.**
- **If you are a breeder and seller any advertisement you place for the sale of a cat must include your contact details and breeder registration number.**

## Cat registration

Some local councils may require your cat to be registered with them. Your council may also set a limit on the number of cats that can be kept on a property and require cats to be contained or set curfew times. Contact your local council for more information.

For more information visit:  
[dogandcatboard.com.au](http://dogandcatboard.com.au)  
[dogsandcatsonline.com.au](http://dogsandcatsonline.com.au)  
[goodcatsa.com.au](http://goodcatsa.com.au)  
f [goodcatsa](https://www.facebook.com/goodcatsa)

\*Exemptions apply. More information can be found at [dogandcatboard.com.au](http://dogandcatboard.com.au)