



How will our new cat laws affect veterinarians?

As from 1 November 2013, all domestic cats in Western Australia, over six months of age, will need to be sterilised, microchipped and registered with their local government as the full *Cat Act 2011* comes into effect.

What does this mean for veterinarians?

Veterinarians have a key role in the microchip implanting and sterilisation procedures.

Provisions under the new cat laws are already in effect to allow veterinarians and authorised microchip implanters who have undertaken the necessary required training to microchip cats.

However, only veterinarians are authorised to sterilise cats.

This funding will be provided to support the 'Desex in the West' program to offer low cost sterilisation to cats owned by low income earners and pensioners.

What are pre-paid vouchers for sterilisation?

If a cat is transferred to a new owner before being sterilised, the previous owner must provide the new owner with a prepaid voucher from a veterinarian to have the cat sterilised at a later date.

What obligations do veterinarians have after sterilising a cat?

A veterinarian who sterilises a cat must:

- Provide the cat's owner with a certificate of sterilisation; and
- Where the cat is also microchipped, notify the microchip database company of the sterilisation within seven days (to locate the cats microchip database company contact www.petaddress.com.au).

Are there any discounts offered for cat sterilisation?

The Australian Veterinary Association Ltd WA Division has been approved for government funding.





What obligations do veterinarians have after microchipping a cat?

A veterinarian who implants a microchip into a cat must notify and record the following information with a registered microchip database company within seven-days:

- The implanter's full name;
- The microchip barcode information or sticker;
- The microchip number;
- If the veterinarian is part of a company or organisation, the name and full contact details of that company or organisation;
- The date the cat was microchipped;
- The cat owner's full name, residential address, contact numbers and email address;
- The address at which the cat is normally kept; and
- The cat's name, age, breed, colour, gender and sterilisation status of the cat.

Which microchip database companies are authorised under the Act?

- Central Animal Records (Aust) Pty Ltd;
- HomesafeID;
- Petsafe;
- Australasian Animal Registry; and
- National Pet Register.

What happens where microchipping or sterilisation will negatively affect the cat's health?

A veterinarian can issue an exemption certificate if microchipping or sterilising a cat will have a negative impact on the cat's health or welfare due to age, illness or injury.

A certificate cannot be issued for cats that are under six months of age. Owners should be advised to return once the cat reaches that age.

The exemption certificate should state that microchipping and/or sterilisation will adversely affect the health and welfare of the cat and the date that this should be reviewed. Contact the Australian Veterinary Association to get a sample certificate.

Are there any penalties for veterinarians?

Yes, a maximum fine of \$5000 may be imposed for failure to meet the obligations stated above.

What is the purpose of the *Cat Act 2011*?

Our new cat laws are about encouraging responsible pet ownership and reducing the number of unwanted cats in the community and the number that are euthanised each year.

The full *Cat Act 2011* will take effect from **1 November 2013** and will require all cats that have reached six months of age to be:

- Microchipped;
- Sterilised; and
- Registered with the relevant local government.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, refer to the Department of Local Government and Communities' Responsible Cat Ownership web page at:

<http://dlg.wa.gov.au/Content/Legislation/ResponsibleCatOwnership.aspx>