

MICROCHIPPING AND THE LAW – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. At what age must a dog be microchipped?

A. All dogs by the age of 8 weeks or for a Veterinarian certified working dog by the age of 12 weeks will be required to have a microchip implanted from 6 April 2016.

Q. Whose details should be registered?

A. The keepers contact details. All keepers, including breeders, must keep these details up to date. For the majority of dogs they will be a family pet and the keeper will be the person it normally lives with, in the case of a child it will be an adults details such as a parent or guardian at the address where the dog normally lives.

Q. I have an assistance dog that has been trained and allocated to me, who is the keeper?

A. The body responsible for the training and allocation up until the dog stops working are to be the registered keeper. Once it stops working the keeper becomes the person it lives with.

Q. I am a breeder, how does this affect me?

A. All dogs by the age of 8 weeks that you keep, including puppies that you intend sell or pass to a new keeper must be chipped and registered with your details. When registering you must make it known that you have bred the dog. These details will remain with the microchip registration even when the dog is transferred to a new keeper. A breeder is considered to be the first keeper of a puppy if the breeder owns the breeding bitch.

Q. The dog has a new keeper, what should I do?

A. From 6 April 2016, where a dog is transferred to a new keeper, the new keeper must change the database record to their details including any changes such as its name.



Q. My pet dog has had puppies and I want to pass some of them on to friends or relatives am I still classed as a breeder?

A. Yes, they have to be microchipped by the age of 8 weeks and you must register your details and tell them that you have bred the dogs before any are passed to another keeper.

Q. Should I rely on the new keeper to change the details?

A. The law says that the new keeper must notify the database company of any changes of keepership unless the previous keeper has done so. However rather than relying on them to do so you may want to contact the database company in case there is a delay with the new keeper updating them.

Q. Are there any penalties if I fail to register or keep the details up to date?

A. Yes, if a dog without a microchip comes to the attention of the authorities, its keeper may be served with a notice requiring the dog to be microchipped within 21 days, and may face criminal prosecution and a £500 fine if they do not comply with the notice.

Q. I am intending to purchase or bring a dog in from abroad, what are the rules?

A. Legislation already exists for importing and travelling with pets from abroad. Part of that includes the requirement for the dog to be microchipped prior to travelling. An imported dog must be registered within 30 days of arrival. If the dog is intended to be transferred to another keeper within 30 days of arrival the dog must be registered before it is transferred. If you are only visiting but staying for 30 days or more the dog will need to be microchipped and registered.

Q. I am worried about my dog having a microchip implanted, are there any exemptions?

A. A dog will only be exempt from compulsory microchipping if a Veterinary Surgeon certifies in writing that the dog is unfit to be microchipped on health grounds. The dog must be microchipped once the certificate expires unless it specifies Permanent exemption.



Q. My dog has a microchip but I have been told it does not meet the standards, does this matter?

A Yes, most microchips will conform to the standards required however some, for example, that have been implanted abroad, may not. If this is the case a new microchip must be implanted and registered before 6 April 2016 or if imported after 6 April 2016 within 30 days of arrival.

Q. My dog has already been microchipped and I have all the paperwork to prove this but whenever it has been scanned it cannot be found?

A. On rare occasions the microchip may become faulty and cannot be read when scanned, in this case a new microchip should be implanted. There are procedures in place to record any faults with microchips including where a chip has been found to have moved from the place it was originally implanted. This will help identify manufacturing and implanter problems.

Q. My dog has a microchip but it is still registered with the last person who had the dog, how can I change this?

A. You will need to know what the microchip number is and then contact one of the companies that holds the records of microchips. A veterinarian, larger pet charity or other bodies such as groomers may offer to scan your dog for you.

Q. Will my dog still be required to have a collar and tag when in public?

A. Yes, it has always been a legal requirement that the dog carries the name and address of the owner usually on a tag attached to the collar. There have been no plans to withdraw this. Tags identifying the owner are useful to those without a scanner to help a lost dog get back home.

Q. In the modern world of technology I am worried what will be seen if my dog is scanned by someone who has no legitimate reason to, what details are shown on the scanner?

A. The only detail shown is a unique reference number. For someone to access any information that is associated with that number they will have to be registered and be identifiable as being authorised before any information is released.

