New rules on the sale, supply and advertising of pet animals

Information Note

New rules on the sale or supply of pet animals will come into effect on 1st February 2020. They are the Animal Health and Welfare (Sale or supply of pet animals) Regulations 2019 (No. 681 of 2019).

From 1st February, anyone who sells or supplies six or more pet animals in a calendar year must comply with a number of new requirements. These include the following:

1) sellers/suppliers of six or more pet animals in a calendar year must apply to be entered into the “Register of Sellers and Suppliers of Pet Animals”;  
2) premises used in connection with the sale or supply of pet animals must be entered into the “Register of Premises”.

***The registration requirement does not apply to persons to whom the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010 applies, or a local authority or a facility run by or on behalf of a local authority.***

The application form can be used to apply for entry into both the Register of Sellers and Suppliers and the Register of Premises. Anyone currently selling six or more pet animals in a calendar year has until 1st May 2020 to apply for entry into the Registers.

3) sellers/suppliers of six or more pet animals in a year must keep certain records on the animals, for at least three years:
   - name and address of the person from whom an animal is obtained,
   - date an animal is obtained,
   - date of sale or supply of an animal,
   - description of animal, including species, breed, sex, colour and distinctive markings, physical condition and health where practicable, age and animal identification, if applicable,
   - name and address of the person to whom each animal is sold or supplied and date of sale or supply,
   - details of disposal of each animal not sold or supplied, including cause of death, method of, and reason for, euthanasia, circumstances of escape, and date of the death or escape,
   - for each animal receiving medical care, clinical signs, diagnosis, the type of service rendered, date and veterinary practitioner’s name.

4) all advertisements of pet animals must include the following information-
   - the registration number of the seller/supplier of the animal;
   - the age of the animal;
   - the unique code of the microchip implanted in a dog;
   - the country of origin of the animal;
• if the seller/supplier is a dog breeding establishment to which the Dog Breeding Establishment Act 2010 is applicable, the registration number issued by the relevant Local Authority, or -

• in the case of a registered charitable organisation (Charities Act 2009) the registration number issued under the Charities Act 2009.

The application form for registration should be returned to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) at the following address-

Pet Sales Register
Animal Health and Welfare Division
Agriculture House 4C
Kildare Street
Dublin 2 D02 WK12

DAFM will send a certificate confirming registration, with a unique registration number, which should be displayed in the premises used in connection with the sale or supply of pets.

Any queries should be sent to petsalesregister@agriculture.gov.ie.

Questions and answers

Q. How is a pet defined?
A. A pet is defined as an animal kept, or intended to be kept, by a person-
   1. as a pastime or hobby,
   2. for companionship,
   3. for ornamental purposes, or
   4. any combination of (1) to (3)

but does not include a farm animal.

Q. Who must register?
A. Anyone who sells or supplies 6 or more pet animals in a year must register. This includes charitable organisations that rehome pet animals. The registration requirement does not apply to persons or organisations to whom the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010 applies, or a local authority or a facility run by or on behalf of a local authority.
Q. Who must keep records?
A. Anyone who sells or supplies 6 or more pet animals in a year.

Q. Do the new rules on registration only apply to pets that are advertised for sale?
A. No – the rules on registration apply where 6 or more pet animals are sold or supplied in a year, regardless of whether the sale or supply is advertised or not.

Q. What should I do if I expect to sell one or more litters of pups in a calendar year, but I do not know if the total number of pups for sale will be 6 or more?
A. You can register at any stage if you expect to sell or supply 6 or more pets in a year.

Q. Can I advertise the sale of pups prior to the pets being microchipped?
A. No, all advertisements relating to sale or supply of pet dogs must contain the relevant chip number for each dog advertised for sale.

Q. Is there a charge for registration?
A. No, there is no charge for registration.

Q. I am no longer selling pets, can I be removed for the register.
A. Yes. If you are no longer selling 6 or more pet animals in a calendar year and want to be removed from the register, please send in your request for removal by email to petsalesregister@agriculture.gov.ie or post to the address outlined above.

Q. What is the voluntary code of practice for sellers and suppliers of pet animals?
A. The voluntary Code of Practice is intended to provide guidance to pet shops as part of their care and management of animals sold or supplied as pets.
The Code addresses a number of issues including animal welfare. It also focuses on the need to provide a prospective pet owner with sufficient information about species of interest to enable the person to make an informed decision as to whether to purchase.

Q. This is a voluntary code of practice; do I have to abide by recommendations made within the document?

A. In order to be entered into the Register of sellers and suppliers of pet animals and the Register of premises, the applicant must sign the declaration at the bottom of the registration form which states that the applicant is aware of the provisions of the code of practice.

If you have any questions please contact petsalesregister@agriculture.gov.ie, or call 01 607 2862