A VETERINARY GUIDE TO COMPULSORY MICROCHIPPING FOR DOGS

Includes information on:

• Updates on microchipping legislation • How it will affect you and your clients
• Benefits of Petlog • New ‘Find a Petlog Implanter’ service
• FAQs from dog owners
INTRODUCTION

On the 6th February 2013 the Westminster government announced a package of measures to tackle irresponsible dog ownership and improve dog welfare.

As part of the measures the government is introducing secondary legislation under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 from 6 April 2016, requiring the microchipping of all dogs in England. From this date all dogs in England* must be microchipped and registered on an authorised microchip database by the age of 8 weeks and before transfer to a new keeper. Owners will be required to keep their contact details up to date on the microchip database.

AN UPDATE ON COMPULSORY MICROCHIPPING IN OTHER AREAS:

Scotland - Compulsory microchipping for all dogs is likely to be introduced in Scotland from April 2016.

Isle of Man – Holding a public consultation about the introduction of compulsory microchipping of dogs.

Northern Ireland - Northern Ireland led the way by being the first devolved administration in the UK to introduce compulsory microchipping. Since April 2012, all dogs held under an individual dog licence are to be microchipped.

Republic of Ireland – Announced in February 2015 that microchipping will be compulsory for dogs. The dog microchipping programme will be rolled out on a phased basis, beginning with pups in September 2015 and will be expanded to all dogs in March 2016.

Wales – The Welsh Government are working to bring in compulsory microchipping for all dogs in Wales in the spring of 2016, in line with the date announced for compulsory microchipping in England. They are currently consulting on the regulations.

WHO IS PETLOG?

Petlog is managed by the Kennel Club and is proud to be the largest independent database in the UK, working with 12 of the leading microchip suppliers and supporting over 8.7 million pet owners. Petlog has been working on looking at best practice, how we can improve on the service we currently deliver and most importantly how we can simplify your life and offer an even better service to your clients.

We have been working with DEFRA throughout this process and Petlog is fully compliant with the new Government regulations/conditions to be met by a database operator which come into force from 6 April 2015.

We would love to hear your feedback on how we can support you and your clients and look forward to hearing your views through this coming year. To provide us with your feedback please visit www.petlog.org.uk/vets
We've been speaking to vets to get feedback on how the legislation will impact veterinary practices once microchipping becomes compulsory in April 2016.

**HERE ARE SOME OF THE MAIN QUERIES WE RECEIVED FROM VETERINARY PRACTICES**

**I READ IN THE REGULATIONS ABOUT REPORTING AN ADVERSE REACTION TO A MICROCHIP. WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR THIS?**

An Adverse Reaction Reporting System has been set up by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) and anyone finding an adverse reaction or a failed microchip must report it to the VMD at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/microchip-adverse-event-reporting-scheme

**WHAT TO DO IF A NEW CLIENT PRESENTS AN ALREADY MICROCHIPPED PET?**

In the event that the registered owner and/or database provider tells the veterinary surgeon that the animal is stolen, the veterinary surgeon may inform the registered keeper and/or database provider that s/he will alert the police and provide the police with the current keeper’s details. Alternatively, the veterinary surgeon may wish to ask the registered keeper and/or database provider to report the theft. The veterinary surgeon may then disclose appropriate details to the Police or ask for a formal request for disclosure from the Police for this information.

In some cases, the animal may not have been reported stolen, but the registered keeper still wants to recover the animal. This may be the case where there is a civil/domestic dispute. In these circumstances, the veterinary surgeon should only provide the current keeper’s details to the registered keeper if the registered keeper has engaged a lawyer/legal advisor for advice relating to the recovery of the animal. Generally, the safest approach in these circumstances is for veterinary surgeons to disclose the current keeper’s details only to the registered keeper’s lawyer/legal advisor rather than directly to the registered keeper. The registered keeper’s lawyer/legal advisor should be asked to expressly confirm, in writing, the basis on which they are requesting disclosure and the basis on which disclosure is exempt under the Data Protection Act.

**THE MAIN QUESTIONS FROM VETS RELATED TO ENFORCEMENT**

We posed your questions to Defra for clarification and here are their responses:

**WHAT EXACTLY WILL VETS BE EXPECTED TO DO AFTER APRIL 2016?**

Vets will not be expected to do much differently with regards to microchipping after April 2016. Vets should be aware of the requirement for puppies to be microchipped by the time they are 8 weeks old and also of the exemptions to this and explain the benefits of microchipping to dog owners.

**WILL VETS HAVE TO WITHHOLD THE DOG FROM THE OWNER IF IT IS NOT MICROCHIPPED? OR WOULD VETS HAVE TO SEND EVERY DOG THAT ISN’T MICROCHIPPED TO THE DOG WARDEN SO THEY CAN ENFORCE THINGS AND IMPOSE A FINE?**

Veterinary surgeons are not expected to enforce the regulations, though they may report non-compliance to an enforcement officer if they have any concerns.

**WHAT DETAILS WILL BE RECORDED ON THE DATABASE, FROM 2016, LINKED TO THE MICROCHIP?**

Online registration is proving to be the most popular route for registering a pet’s microchip on a database. However, one of the main concerns of online registration is the level of detail provided on the database entries. All of the below must be inputted correctly and concisely.

- The full name and address of the keeper
- Where applicable, the fact that the keeper is also the breeder
- If the keeper is the breeder and is licensed by the local authority under the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973(b)
- The breeder’s licence number; and the name of the local authority by which they are licensed
- The original name or identification number given to the dog
- The contact telephone number (if any) for the keeper
- The name given to the dog by the keeper, if that is different to the details recorded
- The sex of the dog;
- The breed of the dog, or a description if it is a cross-breed;
- The colour of the dog;
- The most accurate estimate of the dog’s date of birth which the keeper is capable of giving
- The unique number of the microchip implanted in the dog.

In this regulation “breeder” means any keeper of a bitch which whelps, whether or not they carry on a business as a breeder of dogs.
WHY CHOOSE PETLOG?

WHY CHOOSE PETLOG AS YOUR MICROCHIP DATABASE OF CHOICE?

Always ensure that you register your clients details on a Microchip Database that complies with Government legislation to be met by a database operator. Petlog is fully compliant and by choosing one of the Microchip Suppliers listed below who work alongside Petlog, you will ensure that your clients whether Breeders/Dog Owners (or pet owners) will have the confidence that their data is secure, protected and that they comply with legislation. Petlog and the Kennel Club offer long term support and quality standard assurance.

Petlog is here 24/7 to provide support to dog owners to ensure they are reunited if their pets go missing.

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Petlog is the UK’s largest database for microchipped pets and is managed by the Kennel Club
- Petlog is fully compliant with the new regulations
- Petlog has over 20 years of experience
- Over 8 million pet owners trust Petlog to hold their information securely
- Petlog works with 12 leading microchip suppliers
- Petlog has ISO 9001 and 27001 certification
- Founding member of the European Pet Network, providing support across Europe

CHOOSE ONE OF THESE MICROCHIP SUPPLIERS OR USE OUR PETLOG FIND A PETLOG IMPLANTER SERVICE TO MAKE SURE NEW CLIENTS CAN CONTACT YOU DIRECTLY - WWW.FINDAPETLOGIMPLANTER.ORG.UK
WHY YOU SHOULD SIGN UP TO FIND A PETLOG IMPLANTER

This new online service will enable breeders and dog owners to find their nearest implanter of Petlog associated microchips by simply entering their postcode and searching within a radius. If your veterinary practice implants microchips and wants the general public to be able to find your practice as an implanter of Petlog associated chips then you can sign up to be part of the Find a Petlog Implanter service. For more information visit: www.findapetlogimplanter.org.uk

BENEFITS OF BEING PART OF THE KENNEL CLUBS FIND A PETLOG IMPLANTER SERVICE

• Listed on the Kennel Club’s and Petlog’s website which receives hundreds and thousands of visits per month
• The Kennel Club will be signposting dog owners to the service ahead of compulsory microchipping
• New customers in your local area will be directed to your practice
• Promotion of the service to thousands of breeders every month who have recently bred puppies

THE PETLOG DATABASE IS ISO 9001 AND 27001 CERTIFIED

Petlog has become the first UK microchip database to be awarded ISO 27001 certification for information security management.

The certification confirms that all sensitive customer and partner information is secured and managed at the highest level, and is the same standard held by such companies as Microsoft and Xerox.

In addition ISO 27001 ensures a full risk analysis is carried out and maintained and that correct procedures are in place to ensure that all data is handled and stored correctly so vets can be assured that their client’s data is safe with Petlog.
Since the announcement that microchipping will be compulsory in England from April 2016, Petlog and the Kennel Club have been working with breeders and dog owners to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities from April 2016.

We’ve included some of the main questions and queries that dog owners have been contacting us about.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ARE THERE PENALTIES FOR DOG OWNERS NOT MICROCHIPPING AND NOT KEEPING DATABASE DETAILS UP TO DATE?

If the breeder or subsequent keepers of the dog do NOT update the dog’s details on a database that is compliant with the regulations, such as Petlog, then a notice may be served requiring the keeper to microchip the dog within 21 days of the served notice. If this notice is ignored then a fine of up to £500 can be issued or an enforcer can seize the dog and microchip it at the keeper’s expense.

ARE THERE EXEMPTIONS TO THE MICROCHIPPING REGULATIONS?

The first exemption is where a veterinarian has certified the dog as a working dog and docked its tail in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006. In such cases the time limit for the dog to be microchipped and details recorded with a database is extended to 12 weeks. The dog can be passed on to a new keeper once it has been microchipped.

The second exemption is where a veterinarian certifies that a dog should not be microchipped because it could adversely affect its health. In such cases a vet would have to certify that this was the case and state when the exemption expired. The dog would then need to be microchipped on the expiry of that time limited certificate unless a veterinarian issued a further exemption certificate because of ongoing concerns with the dog’s health. In this case the decision to exempt a dog from being microchipped would be made by the veterinary surgeon. In such a case a breeder may pass the puppy on with a copy of the veterinary exemption certificate and any time limit for microchipping though it would be for the puppy buyer to decide whether to take the dog given this information.

There are also more questions answered here:
www.thekennelclub.org.uk/microchippingfactsheet
IS THERE A FINE/PENALTY FOR DOG OWNERS WHO DON’T GET THEIR DOG MICROCHIPPED

Once the new rules come into effect, 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, and may face criminal prosecution and a £500 fine if they do not comply with the notice. If this notice is ignored then a fine of up to £500 can be issued or an enforcer can seize the dog and microchip it at the keeper’s expense.

In addition, if the breeder or subsequent keepers of the dog do NOT update the dog’s details on a database that is compliant with the regulations, then a notice may be served requiring the keeper to microchip the dog within 21 days of the served notice.

WHO IS LIABLE FOR A DOG IN CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE DOG STRAYS OR IS INVOLVED IN A DOG BITE INCIDENT WHEN THE CONTACT DETAILS ARE NOT UPDATED?

As soon as the dog is transferred to a new keeper they become liable for that dog. The new keeper should ensure the contact details on the microchip database are up to date when they acquire the puppy. The new keeper’s details can be updated either by the previous keeper/breeder, or the new keeper.

If the new keeper is to do this it is advisable the previous keeper should give proof of microchipping and confirmation of details recorded in their name to the new keeper, as well as keep a copy for themselves. It is recommended this be either a copy of the confirmation from the database of details recorded or a copy of a valid exemption certificate. This will help the new keeper to record their details in relation to the dog.

Once database records are updated with the new keeper’s details it will also ensure the previous keeper cannot be held liable for any problems the dog may cause under the new keepership.

HOW CAN I CHECK IF MY DETAILS ARE CORRECT?

Checking details is easy – you will need your Microchip number / the database that the chip is registered on and for Petlog a unique ID. – all of which are on the confirmation email/paperwork. With this information you can simply log on to the website – and check your details – if they do need amending you can also do this online (a small fee will apply – but this fee is a one off fee for a lifetime membership.)

I DON’T HAVE MY MICROCHIP NUMBER.

If you do not have the microchip number or do not know which database your pet is registered with – simply ask your Vet to scan your pet / you can then enter the Microchip Number on the Petlog website home page – and this will confirm if your pet is registered with Petlog and if not it will provide details of the database it is registered with. For pets registered with Petlog you can contact the Customer Care line who will be happy to assist you.

AT WHAT AGE SHOULD THE PUPPY BE MICROCHIPPED?

There is no minimum age specified in the regulations. However it is advised that microchipping does not take place before the puppy is 6 weeks old, and it is a requirement that the puppy is microchipped and recorded on a database that is compliant with the new regulations, such as Petlog, by the time it is 8 weeks old. Therefore between 6 weeks and 8 weeks is the optimum time to get the puppy microchipped, with 8 weeks being the legal maximum (unless an exemption applies).

There are also more questions answered here:
www.thekennelclub.org.uk/microchippingfactsheet
THE UK'S LARGEST LOST AND FOUND DATABASE FOR MICROCHIPPED PETS

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THE KENNEL CLUB
Making a difference for dogs