

LETTERS OF DEMAND & PREPARING EVIDENCE

This factsheet explains how to write a letter of demand for consumers who unknowingly purchased an unwell domestic animal.

WHAT IS A LETTER OF DEMAND?

A letter of demand sets out what you are claiming and why. It offers a chance to resolve a dispute by agreement without having to go to court.

HOW DO I WRITE A LETTER OF DEMAND?

1. Address the breeder or the seller.
2. Put a heading at the start of the letter with the words '**letter of demand**'.
3. State the **laws** that you are claiming have been breached.

For Victoria, see ALI Factsheet 'Domestic Animals and the Australian Consumer Law' on the ADO's website to find more information on consumer laws.

If you need further assistance, seek legal advice.

4. A letter of demand will usually provide a **summary of the events** that have led to your claim. This may include:
 - a) The type of animal you purchased, including breed, sex and microchip number.

- b) The **date** you purchased the animal.
- c) Details of any **advertisements** for the animal, including a copy or screenshot if possible.
- d) **Details** of how and when you responded to the advertisements.
- e) Details of **interactions** between you and the seller in chronological order.
- f) Details of the **money exchanged**, including how money was exchanged.
- g) Any **statements** or representations made in writing or verbally about the **quality, health** or **type of animal**.
- h) Details of the **problems or issues** with the animal.
- i) Details of **veterinary diagnosis** and **treatments**, including why the treatments were reasonable.
- j) Itemised details of any **veterinary treatments** incurred to date, including copies of **invoices**.
- k) Details of **expected future veterinary costs**, again itemised, based on evidence from your treating veterinarian.



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5. Outline your **request for payment**.

- a) State the **total amount** that you are claiming and the date by which payment is to be made. Provide information on how they should pay (your **bank details**).
- b) Include your phone number or email (or a way for the seller to **contact** you).
- c) State that if payment is not made you **intend to initiate legal proceedings** (taking the case to a tribunal or court).

6. Provide **evidence** for your claim (details below).

7. Make sure you can show that you have sent the letter, and the breeder has received it. Use postal **tracking** if you send the letter by mail. Request a **read receipt** if you send it by email.

2. Show the **amount of your claim** (for example, invoices for veterinary treatment).

Some useful notes:

- Save screenshots of messages with the seller, vet records, invoices, and payment receipts.

INVOICES

Invoices should clearly show the **amount paid**, **the recipient** and the **purpose of payment**.

If there is a transaction receipt that only shows how much was paid, but has no reference to what it was for, or who it was to or from, this piece of evidence is not very helpful. It is much more useful if there are details that clearly show what the payment is for.

VET REPORTS

Vet reports should clearly state the **diagnosis**, **symptoms** and **date of treatment**.

If the vet finds that the condition is likely genetic, hereditary or congenital, the report should give clear reasons for that finding.

If the diagnosis is inconclusive or the condition cannot be proved to have originated with the seller you may not have enough proof to make a legal claim.

WHAT EVIDENCE DO I NEED?

Any documents which:

1. **Support your claim** that the seller has breached the Australian Consumer Law (for example, vet reports or evidence of representations made by the seller about the health of the animal); and



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The Animal Law Institute ran an Anti-Puppy Farm Legal Clinic in Victoria to provide free legal services to eligible Victorian residents until 31 December 2025.

The Animal Defenders Office acknowledges the enormous contribution of the Animal Law Institute to the practice of animal law in Australia.

If you are unsure of your rights and how to move forward, contact a community legal centre or private lawyer to discuss your situation.

This factsheet provides general information only. It is not specific to individual circumstances and is not intended as legal advice. You should speak with a lawyer about your own situation before taking any legal action.