

ANTI-PUPPY FARM LAWS IN NEW SOUTH WALES & VICTORIA

This factsheet focuses on laws related to the sale of dogs and cats in Victoria and NSW as at November 2025. It does not address basic animal ownership requirements such as microchips and council registration, nor does it address the breeding and keeping of restricted breed dogs.

WHAT IS A ‘PUPPY FARM’?

‘Puppy farming’ is often used to refer to situations where dogs are kept and bred in inadequate conditions. NSW and Victoria have introduced laws to address puppy farming by placing restrictions on people and organisations who breed, sell or give away dogs.

SOURCE NUMBERS / BREEDER IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

NSW: Anyone advertising a dog for sale or to give away must include their Breeder Identification Number (‘BIN’) in the advertisement.¹

VIC: Anyone wishing to advertise a dog to sell or give away must have a Source Number.²

RESTRICTIONS ON WHO CAN BREED & SELL DOGS

NSW: A person who has been convicted of an animal cruelty offence is not eligible to receive a BIN (and any existing BIN will be revoked).³

VIC: A person’s Source Number may be cancelled or refused if they have been convicted of animal cruelty offences.⁴

RESTRICTIONS ON BREEDING DOGS WITH HERITABLE DEFECTS

NSW: While breeding or selling a dog with a heritable defect is not explicitly an offence, it is discouraged to prevent the spreading of genetic disorders. Breeders are encouraged to disclose any known heritable defects to potential buyers.⁵

VIC: It is an offence to allow a dog with specified heritable defects to breed.⁶ It is also an offence to sell or dispose of a dog with a heritable defect if the person knows or is reckless as to whether the dog has the defect, unless they advise the buyer of the defect prior to sale.⁷

¹ *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* (NSW), s 23A.

² *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic), Part 5C, Division 3.

³ *Companion Animals Act 1998* (NSW), s 83M.

⁴ *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic), s 68ZF.

⁵ *Animal Welfare Code of Practice - Breeding Dogs and Cats*

⁶ For dogs, this applies to the following diseases caused by heritable defects: Von Willebrand’s Disease, Progressive Retinal Atrophy, Neuronal Ceroid Lipofuscinosis, Collie Eye Anomaly, and Hereditary Cataracts.

⁷ *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* (Vic), s 15C.

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LIMIT ON NUMBER OF FEMALE ADULT DOGS

NSW: It is an offence to keep more than 20 female adult dogs (older than six months), with exceptions for charitable organisations, rehoming centres and similar facilities. Breeders had until 1 December 2025 to reduce their number of female adult dogs or, if they had more than 20 fertile female adult dogs at 24 October 2024, to apply for a limited exemption.⁸

VIC: Limits apply to fertile female dogs (older than 12 months) and vary depending on the breeder type: no more than 2 for microbreeders, and no more than 10 for recreational breeders and domestic animal businesses, although some commercial dog breeders may be approved to keep up to 50.⁹

LIFETIME BREEDING CAPS

NSW: The maximum number of pregnancies and types of births a female adult dog may have in their lifetime is five litters, or up to three caesarean litters with veterinarian approval.¹⁰

VIC: No limit.

⁸ *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* (NSW), ss 23D and 23M–U.

⁹ *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic), ss 3, 44B and 58AF.

¹⁰ *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* (NSW), s 23H.

¹¹ *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2025* (NSW), Schedule 1.

PET SHOPS

NSW: Pet shops are defined as ‘a business in the course of which a dog is kept in a shop, or a booth or stall in a market or at a fair, for the purposes of sale’.¹¹ Pet shops must comply with animal trade requirements¹² about the environment, housing, health and welfare of the dogs.

Pet shop owners must follow a code of practice. More information is available from the [NSW Office of Local Government](#).

VIC: Uses a narrower definition of pet shop to only include shops that sell or buy dogs and are situated in a permanent location and open at least five days a week.¹³ Pet shops must be registered and comply with minimum standards of accommodation, management and care set out in a code of practice.¹⁴

Pet shops are prohibited from sourcing or selling dogs unless they are from a registered shelter, pound or a voluntarily enrolled foster carer,¹⁵ and it is an offence to sell animals outside registered premises and private residences (for example at market stalls or from the boot of a car).¹⁶ More information is available from [Animal Welfare Victoria](#).

¹² As set out in s 32(3) of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2025* (NSW).

¹³ *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic), s 3(1).

¹⁴ *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic), s 63A.

¹⁵ *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic), s 63AAB.

¹⁶ *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic), s 96.



ANTI-PUPPY FARM LAWS IN NEW SOUTH WALES & VICTORIA

The Animal Law Institute ran an Anti-Puppy Farm Legal Clinic 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.