



Microchipping Regulations Overview

From 6th April 2016 all keepers (owners) of dogs in England must have their dogs microchipped and registered with a Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) compliant microchipping database. The legislation refers to the keeper rather than the owner. For pets, the owner and the keeper will generally be the same person. For some breeds such as greyhounds and guard dogs, the keeper is the person with whom the dog normally resides and this person may not be the owner.

From 6th April 2016, all pups must be microchipped and recorded on a microchip database within 8 weeks of birth. The owner of the bitch who gave birth to the pup will be responsible for microchipping and this person will be recorded as the first keeper. When the pup is sold or transferred on, the microchip database operator must be provided with the name and contact details of the new keeper.

The microchipping database must also be informed of any change of keeper or any changes to a keeper's contact details and the change must be updated on the microchipping database to ensure compliance with the law. Until such time as the microchipping database has been notified of the change, the dog is no longer considered microchipped under the regulations and enforcement proceeding can be taken potentially resulting in a fine of up to £500. It is the responsibility of the keeper to ensure that contact details for the dog/dogs are kept up to date.

One of the primary objectives of the regulations is to assist in reuniting a dog with its keeper in the event that it is lost or stolen. To assist in this regard, the information that must be recorded on the microchipping database includes the name, address and contact details of the keeper, the breed, colour sex, name and date of birth of the dog.

The microchips that are used must have a unique 15 digit code and be compliant with ISO standards 11784 and 11785. Use of a non compliant chip is a breach of the regulations. If a dog is lost or stolen, the compliant microchips can be scanned to identify the unique 15 digit code and matched to the owner's contact details, which are kept on a DEFRA compliant microchipping database. All compliant databases have a web look up facility which is able to check which compliant database the microchip is registered.

Only properly qualified / trained persons can implant microchips in compliance with the regulations. These persons include veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses operating under the direction of a veterinary surgeons and persons who have successfully completed a training course that has been approved by the Secretary of State.
