



Are you scanning your client's pets for a microchip?

Victorian legislation (Domestic Animals Act and Domestic Animals Regulations) regarding microchip implanting and scanning is very clear and there are significant implications if proper procedure is not followed. There have been recent cases of animals having surgical procedures such as de-sexing performed and only scanned after the procedure to then discover the person presenting the animal to the clinic was not the listed owner on the licenced domestic animal microchip registry.

It seems only some clinics are routinely scanning for the presence and functionality of microchips when presented to the clinics. It is advisable that any animal presented to the clinic, particularly for the first time, should be scanned to detect the presence, position and performance of an implanted microchip and then the owner's details should be verified by checking the listing on the appropriate animal microchip registry. This is a procedure that could be put in place for a veterinary nurse to perform on the arrival of the animal to the clinic. The registry that the microchip is listed on can generally be found by entering the microchip number into the search field on www.petaddress.com.au (Note: NSW Pet registry and the new proposed Dogs and Cats Online in SA do not currently link with this address). You are then able to verify the owner details – it may even be an opportunity to alert the owner to update their contact details if they are not current.

You should also be aware of the existence of a USA-based pet registry (<http://petchipregistry-au.info>) operating via a Sydney agent. This is **not** an accredited or licenced national domestic animal microchip registry and many pet owners have been duped into paying money for a service that will not be of any benefit to them.

The Victorian legislation is very specific in relation to the legal requirements of both the authorised implanter/veterinarian and the licenced domestic animal microchip registry when an animal is presented to them for professional services by someone who is not the listed owner of that animal on the registry (Regulation No. 24, Domestic Animals Regulations 2015).

There are significant penalties for these offences so please make yourself familiar with your legal requirements by noting the following related regulations.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS REGULATIONS 2015 - REG 24

Provision of information to licence holder if presenter of animal suspected not to be owner

- (1) If an authorised implanter reasonably suspects that a person who presents a prescribed animal to the implanter for a professional service is not the owner of the animal, the implanter must, if there is a permanent identification device implanted in the animal, provide the following details to the holder of an animal registry licence—
 - (a) the unique identification number of the device;
 - (b) if available, the name, address and telephone number of the person presenting the animal.
- (2) In this regulation, **professional service** includes grooming, vaccinating, the provision of medical care and checking permanent identification devices with respect to an animal, but does not include implanting a permanent identification device.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS REGULATIONS 2015 – REG 36

Licence holder to notify owner of certain matters

- (3) If a licence holder has been notified under regulation 24 of the fact that a prescribed animal in respect of which the licence holder holds a record has been presented for **a professional service**, the licence holder must—
- a) notify the owner of the animal of that fact; and
 - b) if provided to the licence holder, provide an authorised officer appointed under section 71 of the Act with the name and telephone number of the person who so presented the animal.

There is also specific reference to the legal requirements of both the authorised implanter/veterinarian and the licenced domestic animal microchip registry when an animal is presented to them for **microchip implantation** by someone who is not the listed owner of that animal on the registry or if a microchip already exists:

DOMESTIC ANIMALS REGULATIONS 2015 - REG 20

Offences regarding animals previously implanted

- (1) A person must not implant a permanent identification device into a prescribed animal if the person is aware that the animal has already been implanted with a permanent identification device unless—
- (a) the person is reasonably satisfied that the implanted device is not functioning correctly; or
 - (b) the implanted device does not uniquely identify the animal; or
 - (c) the implanted device has migrated outside the areas of the animal specified in regulation 19(2); or
 - (d) the implanted device is a permanent identification device referred to in regulation 14(b).
- Penalty: 2 penalty units.
- (2) If a person who intends to implant, or has implanted, a permanent identification device into a prescribed animal detects another permanent identification device in the animal, the person must—
- (a) notify the licence holder holding the records associated with that other permanent identification device of that fact; and
 - (b) if known, provide that licence holder with the name, address and telephone number of the person who presented the animal for implantation.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS REGULATIONS 2015 - REG 36

Licence holder to notify owner of certain matters

- 1) If a licence holder has been notified under regulation 20(2) of the fact that a prescribed animal in respect of which the licence holder holds a record has been presented for implantation with a further permanent identification device, the licence holder must—
- a) notify the owner of the animal of that fact; and
 - b) if provided to the licence holder, provide the owner with the name and telephone number of the person who presented the animal for implantation.
- 2) If a licence holder is unable to contact the owner under subregulation (1), the licence holder must enter the following details in the record held for the animal—

- a) that the animal has been presented for implantation with a further permanent identification device;
- b) if provided to the licence holder, the name, address and telephone number of the person who so presented the animal;
- c) the date on which the licence holder received the information referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b);
- d) the date on which the licence holder attempted to notify the owner in accordance with subregulation (1).