

Dog & Pet Law FAQ

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About Us

At O'Toole Lawyers, we understand that pets are family. Whether you're facing a council dispute, an ownership issue, or a serious dog incident, our Adelaide-based team provides clear legal advice under South Australian law.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. My dog bit someone — what should I do?

Contact your local council immediately. You may face fines or prosecution under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (SA). We can help you respond and appeal any decision.

2. Can the council take or destroy my dog?

Yes. Councils can seize dogs after an attack or if considered dangerous. You have the right to appeal before destruction occurs.

3. What are my responsibilities as a dog owner?

All dogs and cats must be microchipped, desexed (unless exempt), and registered via Dog and Cat Online (DACO).

4. How do I appeal a “dangerous dog” declaration?

You can apply for a review in the Magistrates Court within 14 days. We can represent you and prepare your case.

5. Who keeps the pet after a breakup?

Pets are considered property. Ownership depends on registration, purchase, and care records.

6. Someone else has my pet — what can I do?

If you can prove ownership, you can demand its return or take civil recovery action.

7. Can my landlord or strata ban pets?

They can, depending on your lease or by-laws. You may request written permission or negotiate terms.

8. My neighbour's dog keeps barking or attacking — what can I do?

Report it to your local council. Councils can issue nuisance or control orders.

9. What are the rules for breeding or selling puppies?

Breeders must be DACO registered, display breeder numbers, and microchip/desex all puppies.

10. What rights do I have with an assistance dog?

Accredited assistance dogs have full access rights under SA and federal law.

11. Someone injured or killed my pet — can I claim compensation?

Yes. Negligence or intentional harm may entitle you to damages or prosecution.

12. How do I report cruelty or neglect?

Contact RSPCA SA (1300 477 722) or SAPOL for urgent cases.

13. Do I need a lawyer for a pet law issue?

If your pet has been seized, declared dangerous, or part of a dispute, get legal advice early.

Contact O'Toole Lawyers

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