



Central Coast Council's
Guide to being
PAWSOME!

Central
Coast
Council

Remember a pet is for life!

Owning a pet is both fun and rewarding, but remember your pet is your responsibility.

As a pet owner, you have the responsibility to look after your pet's basic welfare needs. Your pet will need an appropriate, balanced diet and clean, cool water at all times, adequate shelter suitable for all weather conditions, socialisation, training and exercise.



If you are about to add a furry four-legged addition to your family, look no further than Council's Animal Care Facilities.

Charmhaven

Open: 10am-4.30pm, Monday – Friday
10am-2pm, Saturday
Closed selected public holidays

Location: Depot Road, Charmhaven

Phone: 4350 3184

Erina

Open: 10am-3pm, Monday – Friday
10am-2pm, Saturday
Closed selected public holidays

Location: Pateman Road, Erina

Phone: 4304 4350

Email: socaresacf@gmail.com

Every year in Australia, hundreds of thousands of animals are abandoned. Before adopting a pet, carefully consider how your lifestyle suits cat or dog ownership. Once you decide to adopt, think about the type of pet and breed that best matches your lifestyle.

Microchipping and Registration

Ensure your pet's safety by microchipping and registering your cat or dog.

In New South Wales, all puppies and kittens must be microchipped and registered by 12 weeks of age, or before being sold or given away, whichever comes first.

Microchips are a tiny, 2mm implant placed under the skin between the shoulder blades. The microchip contains a unique 15-digit number which is assigned to your pet for identification.

Additional Fee and Annual Permits

For dogs not desexed by 6 months of age, an additional one-time fee applies.

Annual permits are required for owners of cats that are not desexed by 4 months of age.

Change of Ownership/Details

Keeping your address and contact information up to date is essential to ensure you are reunited with your pet, should they become lost.

Pay the lifetime registration fee and update your details at petregistry.nsw.gov.au

Why desex your pet?

Every year, up to 1,000 cats and dogs wait patiently for their forever home in Council's Animal Care Facilities. Desexing your pet helps reduce the number of unwanted litters, leading to fewer abandoned animals.

Beyond helping to control the pet population, desexing offers numerous benefits for you and your pet, including:

- avoiding additional registration fees
- reducing the risk of certain cancers
- improving behaviour, making your pet less likely to roam or exhibit aggressive behaviour.

Training and socialisation

Puppies have a critical socialisation period from 3 to 17 weeks of age, which is why puppy training during this time is highly recommended.

As well as providing an opportunity for socialisation, training helps puppies develop basic manners and strengthens your bond.

Remember, training should always be based on positive reinforcement and kindness. Reward good behaviour with a pat, a food treat or a pleasant encouragement and ignore unwanted behaviours.

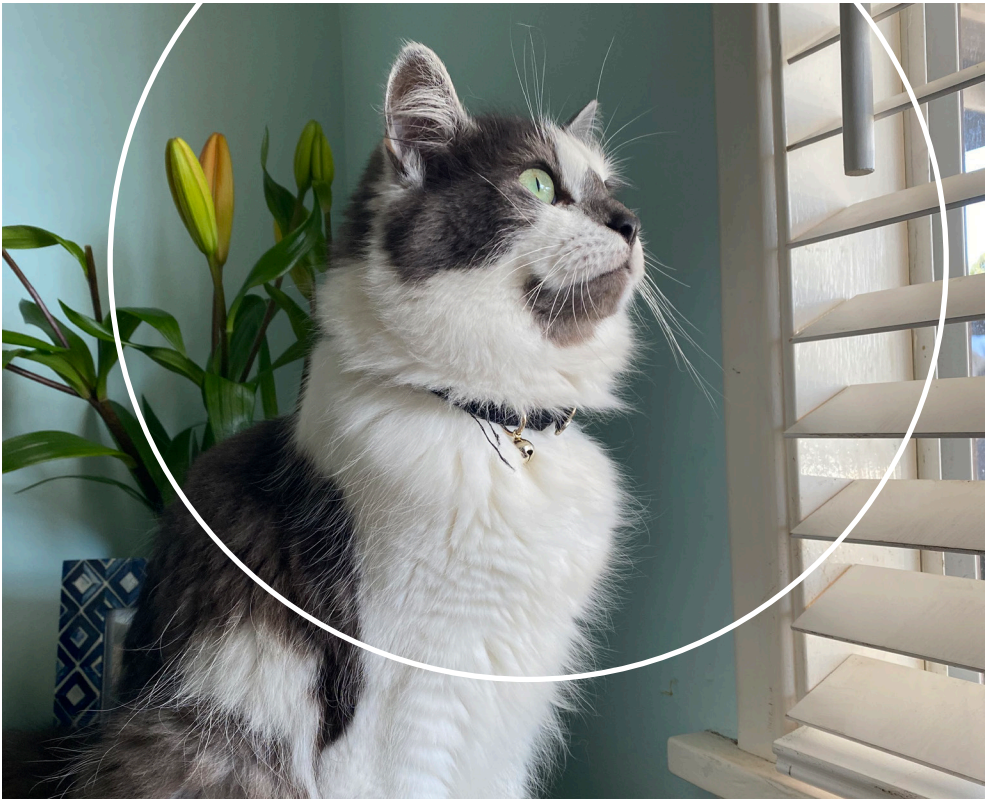


Pets at home

There are many considerations before bringing a pet home. For the safety of your dog and others, dogs cannot roam freely in public places.

Ensure your yard is securely fenced to prevent escapes. Your dog should not be able to go over, under or through your fence or gate. Some dogs bark when their owners are away from home. When barking becomes excessive, it can cause stress and frustration for those living close by. We strongly encourage good communication between you and your neighbours, which will help in resolving any issues. If a formal barking dog report is made, you will be notified in writing and provided with information to help.

For your cat's safety and to protect local wildlife, it is recommended to keep your cat inside.



Pets in public places

Dogs are beloved companions, but responsible ownership ensures everyone enjoys beaches, parks and open spaces.

When exercising in a public place, keep your dog on a lead and under the control of a competent person. You can be fined for having your dog off-leash in a public place. This means when you are outside your home, including on the footpath, your dog must be on a lead – except in designated dog off-leash exercise areas.

If you would like to give your dog some lead-free time, visit one of Council's allocated dog off-leash exercise areas. When within these areas, it is important that your dog is still under your control and comes back to you when called.

Remember to always take a bag and bin it. Your dog's waste is your responsibility! If your dog poos in a public place or on someone else's property, you are responsible for picking it up and disposing of it thoughtfully. This will stop it from getting into our waterways or ending up on the bottom of someone else's shoe. Failing to pick up after your dog risks an on-the-spot fine.



Council provides a number of off-leash dog exercise areas across the Central Coast.





Pets and Protecting Wildlife

Your pet is your responsibility and as a responsible pet owner, you have an obligation to ensure your pet does not affect the natural environment and its inhabitants. The impact of pets on native wildlife:

- Dogs and cats can kill or harm wildlife.
- The sight, smell and sound of a dog or cat can cause birds and other animals distress.
- Breeding of native animals can be disrupted, affecting the already reducing populations.
- Dogs and cats can disturb bush regeneration projects and areas of ecological significance.
- Dog and cat poo that washes into waterways can harm fish, frogs and other aquatic animals.

What you can do

To help preserve our wildlife and the environment, there are some things that responsible pet owners can do:

- For your cat's safety and to protect local wildlife, it is recommended to keep your cat inside, especially overnight.
- For the safety of your dog and our native wildlife, failure to prevent your pet escaping can result in a fine.
- Dogs and cats are prohibited to enter schools, shopping centres, beaches (except in designated areas), food preparation areas, playgrounds and wildlife protection areas, as outlined by the Companion Animals Act 1998.
- If your dog attacks or harms an animal, or causes a nuisance, as an owner you remain liable. If you find a sick or injured wild native animal, contact WIRES Wildlife Rescue Line at 13 000 WIRES or Wildlife Arc on 02 4325 0666.

Pets and sustainable choices

Have you noticed our new dog-friendly signage in your neighbourhood? These signs not only make it easier for you and visitors to the Central Coast to recognise areas across the region that are dog friendly, they are also made with recycled materials.

Council also provides residents with corn starch dog poo bags which are 100% compostable and are made from renewable resources.

Pets and Preparedness

Emergencies can happen at any time, planning how to take care of your pets before an emergency helps keep everyone safe.

Things that responsible pet owners can do to plan and prepare for an emergency:

- Prepare an **Emergency Grab and Go Bag**.
- Plan for how you will relocate your animal.
- Train your pet to be settled in a crate/carrier.
- Ensure cats and dogs are microchipped and contact details are up to date .
- Dogs and cats should wear collars and have an ID tag including their name, owner's name and contact number.
- Discuss your emergency plan with the family and practice it.

Animal Emergency Kit

Preparing an Emergency Grab and Go Bag ensures you have the essentials for your pet if you need to seek temporary accommodation. The bag should include:

- crate or carrier
- dry food and clean water (enough for at least three days)
- food and water bowls
- leads, collars, harnesses, toys
- poo bags for dogs, litter and tray for cats
- vaccination certificates, registration certificates
- first aid items and medications
- blankets, towel and bedding
- information sheet including your name and contact details, photo of pet, pet's name, description and care requirements.

Additional things to remember:

- **Fireworks and thunderstorms** – make sure your pet is secured to prevent them from running away when scared.
- **Going away** – ensure your pet is responsibly cared for by arranging friends or family to pet sit or book your pet into a boarding kennel.
- **Travelling** – pets must be secured properly and are not allowed to sit on laps or in the front seat; never leave a pet alone in a hot car.
- **Identification** – in addition to microchipping and registration, ensuring your cat or dog has a collar with tags will help to quickly reunite you with your pet.
- **Permission to pet** – Always get permission from an owner before patting their dog. Do not pat a dog when its owner is not present. It's important to also remember to never approach a dog you don't know.

For more search '**responsible pet ownership**' at centralcoast.nsw.gov.au



Responsible Pet Ownership

Central Coast Council

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