

Registration obligations for dog ownership

§ 24 Animal Protection Act: All dogs kept on federal territory must be identified/chipped by a veterinarian using a numeric-coded, electronically-readable microchip, at the owner's cost. Puppies must be chipped no later than at the age of three months, and always before ownership is transferred for the first time. Dogs brought into federal territory shall be identified in accordance with the provisions of the veterinary regulations. Identification as described above is not required where the dog has already been chipped with a functioning microchip.

Every dog owner is obliged to register their animal within one month after chipping, entry into Austria, or acquisition of the dog – and always prior to transferring possession for the first time – by submitting the required data and documentation (*to the pet database*).

§ 1 Upper Austrian Dog Ownership Act: A person keeping a dog over the age of twelve weeks must register the dog with the mayor of the local authority for their primary residence (*in the dog registry*) within three days.

Each dog must be registered twice – with the pet database, and in the dog registry.

Minimum standards for dog ownership

(Appendix 1 of the 2nd Animal Husbandry Ordinance)

These are the minimum requirements!

1.1. General requirements for dog ownership

- (1) Dogs must be given sufficient opportunity to run freely at least once a day, according to their need for exercise.
- (2) Dogs which are mainly kept indoors, e.g., in an apartment, must be given the possibility to defecate and urinate outside several times daily.
- (3) Dogs must be afforded social contact with humans at least twice a day.
- (4) In principle, anyone owning several dogs must keep them in a group. Group housing may only be excluded where the dogs are incompatible or where this is necessary for veterinary reasons.
- (5) Puppies may not be separated from their mothers until over the age of eight weeks, except where the separation is necessary for veterinary reasons to protect the mother or the puppies. Where premature separation of several puppies from the mother animal is necessary, the puppies must be kept together up to an age of at least eight weeks. An exception may only be granted where it serves the welfare of the animals, and where the persons

caring for the animals possess the necessary facilities, competence, and skills to professionally raise the puppies.

(6) Muzzles must fit the size and shape of the dog's head and allow air to pass through; they must allow the dog to pant and to drink water.

1.2. General requirements for keeping dogs outdoors

(1) A dog may only be kept outdoors where its breed, age and state of health make this appropriate, and where the dog has been given the opportunity to adapt to the weather conditions associated with living outdoors.

(2) Anyone who keeps a dog outdoors must ensure that the dog has at its disposal a kennel that meets the requirements of paragraph 3, and that an additional, weather-protected, shaded, heat-insulated place to lie down is available outside the kennel.

(3) The kennel must be made of heat-insulating material and designed in such a manner that the dog cannot injure itself and can lie down without getting wet. It must include an access facing away from the weather side, have appropriate flooring for a dog to lie on, be kept dry and clean, and be of a size that allows the dog 1.) to move around and lie down in a manner typical for dogs, and 2.) to keep the interior of the kennel warm with its own body heat where the shelter itself is not heated.

(4) If dogs are kept outdoors in groups, the dog kennels and places to lie down must be of a size and number to ensure that all the dogs in the group can use them at the same time without this being a cause of conflict.

1.3. Requirements for keeping dogs in rooms

(1) A dog may only be kept in rooms with natural daylight. When kept in rooms not intended for human use, the areas of the openings which let in daylight must, in principle, amount to 12.5% of the floor area; this does not apply where the dog can go outside at any time. In the case of low levels of daylight, the rooms must also be illuminated according to the natural rhythm of day and night.

(2) There must be an adequate supply of fresh air in the rooms.

(3) A dog may only be kept in rooms not intended for human use where the usable floor space meets the requirements for kennelling dogs in pens.

(4) A dog may only be kept in non-heated rooms where they are equipped with a kennel which meets the requirements for keeping dogs outdoors, or with a dry area to lie down which provides sufficient protection against draft and cold.

1.4. Requirements for kennelling dogs in pens

- (1) Permanent kennelling is prohibited. Dogs must be allowed to leave the pens at least once a day to meet their natural need for exercise.
- (2) Each dog pen must have a fully usable area of 15 m² and does not include the space required for the dog's kennel. For each additional dog, as well as for each female with puppies up to the age of eight weeks, an additional usable ground space of 5 m² must be available.
- (3) The fencing enclosing the dog pen must be designed so that the dog cannot destroy it, climb over it or injure itself on it. The fencing must be at least 1.8 m high and anchored sufficiently deep in the ground.
- (4) The dog pen must be closed on the main weather side. The gate must be fitted with a rotary knob on the inside of the enclosure. The gate must be designed to swing inwards.
- (5) The flooring and all facilities in the dog pen must be chosen and designed in such a way that the health of the dogs is not impaired and that they cannot be injured. The floor must be designed in such a way that fluid can escape. Separators shall be such that the dogs cannot injure each other. At least one side of the dog pen must allow the dog a clear view to the outside. A sleeping area made from heat-insulating material must be provided outside the kennel. The inside of the dog pen must be kept clean, free of vermin and dry.
- (6) The dog pen must be illuminated with sufficient natural light.
- (7) In dog pens, structural arrangements must be made so that shaded places are always available for all dogs kept in the dog pen.
- (8) A dog pen may not contain any electrical devices or devices which emit electrical impulses installed below a height that a dog can jump up and reach with its front paws.
- (9) If several dogs are kept individually in a dog pen on a plot, the dog pen must be arranged so that the dogs are in visual contact. Visual contact between incompatible dogs must be prevented.

1.5. Feeding and care

- (1) The owner must ensure that the dog has sufficient quantities of clean water at all times in his usual area.
- (2) The owner must provide the dog with suitable food of sufficient quantity and quality.
- (3) The holder must
 1. care for the dog regularly and take care of its health as appropriate to its breed;
 2. provide adequate fresh air and suitable air temperature if the dog is left in a vehicle without supervision; and
 3. keep the dog's living area clean and free of vermin. Excrement must be removed daily.

Further regulations on dog training and dog sport (sled dogs) can be found under point 1.6 - 1.8. Appendix 1 of the 2nd Animal Husbandry Regulations

Other animal welfare regulations:

§ 16 Para. 5 Animal Protection Act: Dogs must never, even temporarily, be kept tied by a chain or tethered in any other way. Dogs shall not be deemed to be tied or tethered when they are walked on a leash, tethered in the context of lawful dog training measures, disaster relief operations or use as police or army dogs, assistance dogs or therapy dogs, or tethered for short periods of time in front of places or buildings that must not be entered with dogs.

§ 5 Animal Protection Act: It is prohibited to inflict unjustified pain, suffering or injury on an animal or to cause it extreme anxiety. *This also includes the use of accessories that are not compatible with animal protection, such as spiked collars, collars with inward-facing prongs, electrical animal training devices (such as Teletakt) or chemical training substances. ⇒ It is also forbidden to possess such objects!*

§ 7 Animal Protection Act: Interventions carried out other than for therapeutic or diagnostic purposes or for the professional chipping of animals in accordance with the applicable legal regulations are prohibited.

The exhibition, import, acquisition, brokerage, and transfer of possession of dogs born after the 1 January 2008 on whose body parts interventions have been carried out is also prohibited in Austria.

⇒ Consequently, in Austria the docking of tails and cropping of ears is prohibited. Deliberately transporting animals abroad for the purpose of performing interventions which are prohibited in Austria is also prohibited.

§ 15 Animal Protection Act: Any animal which appears to be ill or injured must be cared for appropriately without delay and, whenever required, veterinary advice must be sought. Animals which are ill or injured must be accommodated in a manner which meets these special needs and, if necessary, in separate accommodation.