

Dog Owners Handbook



MĀWHERA

GREY

DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Rules and Regulations

Registration

If you keep a dog then it must be registered.

Dogs must be registered from 3 months of age. Registration needs to be renewed annually and must be paid by 31 July each year.

Dogs can be registered at Council Offices in Greymouth during office hours, 8:30am-4:30pm Monday to Friday.

Registered dogs moving into the district receive free registration for the remainder of the registration year provided the owner produces proof of current registration.

Change of ownership

If the ownership of a dog has changed the registration for the dog continues in force, but the previous owner and the new owner must advise Council of the change within 14 days.

You need to advise Council in writing of the change of ownership, the residential address of the new owner and the address at which the dog will ordinarily be kept.

Microchipping

Tags can easily be lost. Microchipping is a permanent means of identification that links dogs to their owners and is recommended for all dogs.

The chip is placed between the shoulder blades of the dog and is a painless procedure.

Microchipping is not required for all dogs.

- Dogs newly registered will be required to be microchipped two months after first registration.
- Dogs classed as dangerous or menacing will need to be microchipped.

- Dogs that are impounded for a second time will not be released from the pound until they have been microchipped.
 - All working dogs used solely for the purpose of herding or droving stock are exempt from microchipping.
 - Failure to adhere to the microchipping law will result in a \$300 infringement fine being issued
- Do's and Don'ts for Dealing with Your Dog

The more "Do's" you consistently enforce, the greater level of respect your dog will have for you, and the more successful you will be in your training efforts.

Do:

- Eat before you feed your dog
- Restrict access to your bedrooms and furniture
- Take the shortest route to your destination and make your dog move out of your way
- Go first through narrow passages
- If your dog wanders away, praise your dog for returning
- Use your dog's name when praising it
- Take your dog's "kills" (stolen articles or food) away
- Call your dog to you to give it affection
- Ignore or discourage pawing, nudging, whining
- Ignore your dog when you first see it - acknowledge family first
- Start games, making sure you win the game i.e. at the end you have the toy or stick
- Reward your dog for completing an exercise well.

Don't:

- Feed your dog first
- Let your dog sleep in or on your bed
- Let your dog restrict your access to anything in the house or take up residence in a doorway
- Let your dog bound out ahead of you
- Chase your dog yelling "Come!" or show your anger when the dog returns
- Allow your dog to keep or play with the "kill"
- Go over to your dog to give it affection
- Give attention when your dog demands it
- Make a large fuss over your dog whenever it demands attention
- Use your dog's name when telling it off - call it dog i.e. "bad dog"
- Play games, especially tug of war, if you can't win. Never give the toy after the game is over
- Give a command, if you are not prepared to enforce it.

Do's and Don'ts for Dealing with Other People's Dogs

Do's:

- Speak in light friendly tones
- Keep your expression neutral (smiling is baring teeth)
- If the dog approaches, present the back of your hand for the dog to sniff (with your fingers in a fist)
- Once the dog accepts you, stroke it on its side just in front of the back legs, or under the chin, then the chest.

Don'ts:

- Stand or lean over the dog – crouch down if possible
- Touch the dog on the head or the back of the neck
- Look into the dog's eyes – eye contact is a threat
- Get between a mother dog and her puppies
- Take food away from a dog.

If you're visiting and don't know if there's a dog on the property:

- Check the front yard for signs (kennel, dog bones, toys etc)
- Rattle the gate (if there is one) before you go inside
- Listen for the dog.

If a dog growls at you or tries to bite you:

- Don't run – it will chase you and it runs faster
- Never try to hit it or yell at it
- Stand still, elbows tucked by your sides, hands up under your chin, not making any movement
- Watch the dog out of the corner of your eye – don't look directly at it
- Move slowly away when the dog calms down
- If the dog knocks you down, curl up and use your arms to protect your face and neck and stay still.

Your Dog's Wellbeing

Vaccinations and Worming

Pregnant Bitches

Should be wormed to reduce the amount of worms pups are born with.

Puppies - worming

Puppies need to be wormed regularly, for example at 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 16 weeks old, then every three to four months.

Paratak Plus

If you need a broad spectrum wormer for your dog, Paratak Plus is available from Grey District Council.

Puppies - vaccinations

Generally recommended at 8 weeks, 12 weeks and 16 weeks, hepatitis and respiratory virus. Then a yearly booster to protect against parvovirus, distemper, hepatitis and respiratory virus. An additional vaccination is available for kennel cough if your dog is going into a boarding kennel.

Neutering and Spaying

Desexing your dog benefits dog owners and the wider community. Neutering and spaying dogs:

- Reduces roaming
- Reduces aggression
- Lessens diseases
- Reduces unwanted puppies.

If you are not planning to breed your dog, then consider desexing it from around six months of age.

The Council encourages desexing by offering discounts on registration for neutered and spayed pets.

For more information on the benefits of spaying and neutering contact your vet or talk to one of our Animal Control Officers.

Puppy Plunket and Dog Obedience Classes

Puppy plunket and dog obedience classes are a great way for your dog to learn their manners.

Contact Grey Vet Services on 03 768 0370 for more information.

Owner's Responsibilities

As a dog owner, you must provide your dog with:

Food

Water

Shelter from sun, wind, rain

Exercise

You must ensure that your dog does not cause a nuisance to others, remains on your property unless you are exercising it and does not cause harm to people, property or other animals.

You must contact the Grey District Council if you:

- Move house
- Get a new phone number
- Give your dog to someone else
- Get a new dog

Dealing With Nuisance Dogs

Barking Dogs

Nuisance barking can occur for several reasons, including when your dog is cold, hungry, bored, attention seeking, or excited.

Solutions for nuisance barking and to help maintain neighbours' sanity:

- Give your dog regular exercise
- Use anti-barking devices, such as a spray collar
- Involve your neighbours
- Take your dog to obedience training
- Screen your dog from visual distractions
- Provide toys for your dog's amusement
- Change your dog from a chain to a run
- Take your dog with you when you leave the property
- Leave your dog inside (laundry/porch)
- Change feeding times, or food type
- Use electronic devices that are available to purchase
- Move the kennel/shelter (a change is as good as a rest).

Wandering Dogs

What can I do about the dogs that wander onto my property?

Firstly - If you know where the dog comes from report it to animal control. An officer will speak to the owner and check how it is contained on the property. If the problem persists, the owner may be required to improve the conditions their dog is kept in.

Secondly - You can request a dog trap (large cage fitted with a trapdoor), that will trap the dog without harming it. The dog will be impounded and its kenneling and the owner's methods of securing it checked before the dog can be released.

Dangerous dogs

A dog's behaviour reflects how it is treated and what the owner wants it to be. Any breed or size of dog can be dangerous.

Dog Attacks - the Law

A dog is not allowed to bite, scare or even intimidate you or your own pets.

Owners often ask victims not to complain, telling them that the dog has never done this before. If the dog attacked you, there is a strong likelihood it will attack someone else.

What commonly happens to a dog that has attacked?

Any of these things:

- 1 It may be classified as dangerous and remain with the owner who will have to meet new safety standards. The dog must be desexed to lessen its aggressive tendencies. The Council keeps a special track of the dog for the rest of its life.
- 2 It may be seized and held in custody until safety concerns are met by the owner.
- 3 The owner could be prosecuted or fined.

The dog may be destroyed, either with the owner's agreement or after an order from the Court

What about "Beware of Dog" signs?

A sign is a courtesy warning. It is no protection against owner liability should the dog bite a legitimate visitor.

Do I need to go to court if I report a dog attack?

Not always. The start of the process is to give a statement to the animal control officer, who can then advise you of your options and what is appropriate, given your particular case.

Does the neighbour need to know if I complain about their dog?

To legitimize your complaint, you need to tell the animal control officer who you are and provide a contact number. If the complaint goes to court, then

you may need to appear as a witness.

Am I entitled to compensation from a dog's owner?

The dog's owner must pay for any medical costs and any property damage done by their dog.

Should the owner be prosecuted, the complainant, on application to the Court, may be entitled to compensation.

Can dog owners be given an instant fine for not notifying a change of address and death of dog?

Yes, owners have 14 days to notify about a shift to a new address or death of a dog. This 14 day notification is also applicable when changing the dog's ownership.

To make a complaint about a dog contact
the Animal Control Office, Grey District Council on
03 769 8606 (office hours) or **027 437 5452**
(after hours).

Control of Dogs in Public Places

The Bylaw defines a number of places in the District where dogs are prohibited, must be kept on a leash or are areas where dogs may be exercised off leash. The Bylaw contains maps showing the location of these areas.

Exemptions

Prohibited and Leash Control Areas above do not apply to the owner of:

- a A Working Dog while it is working; or
- b Any dog which is confined completely within a vehicle or cage
- c Any dog which is secured on the open tray of a vehicle; or
- d Any dog taking part in a special event approved by Council, such as a dog show or dog training seminar
- e Any dog(s) in hunting situation on public land must be on a leash.

Bitches in Season and Diseased Dogs

Every Dog Owner must ensure that any bitch in season is continuously contained on his or her property in a secure and inaccessible manner so that it cannot freely leave the land or premises, or no other dog can enter that land or premises.

Every Dog Owner must ensure that any dog infected with a contagious disease is continuously contained on his or her property in a secure manner so that it cannot freely leave the land or premises other than when being transported to a registered veterinary clinic for treatment.

Dogs on Vehicles

Every Dog Owner allowing a dog (other than a working dog) to ride on the open tray of a vehicle shall ensure that it is secured by a short lead or chain at all times and kept under control.

Removal of Faeces

Where any dog defecates in a public place or on land or premises other than that occupied by the owner, the Dog Owner must remove the faeces immediately and dispose of them in a way that does not cause a nuisance.

Dogs on Beaches

Any Dog Control Officer, Dog Ranger, Inspector or Custodian may order the owner or any person in charge of a dog, to remove such dog from any beach or bathing reserve if, in the opinion of the Dog Control Officer, Dog Ranger, Inspector or Custodian the presence of the dog is likely to cause annoyance, inconvenience, danger or be hazardous to the health of the public for the time such beach or bathing reserve is being used.

Any person who fails to promptly obey such order commits an offence against this bylaw.

Limitation on Number of Dogs

- 1 No Dog Owner/s may keep more than two dogs over the age of three months for more than 14 days on a property unless that owner/s holds a valid permit for that purpose, issued by the Council.
- 2 Every application for a permit must supply the information that the Council requires to issue the permit and must be accompanied by any fee prescribed from time to time by resolution of the Council.
- 3 Every application for a permit will be considered on its individual merits, taking into account:
 - a type of dog
 - b location of property
 - c size of property
 - d consent of adjacent owners
 - e fencing and housing of the dogs
 - f removal of faeces

- g management factors eg. availability of supervision for the dogs;
- h personal factors eg. single/elderly people
- i past owner history eg. complaints
- j intensity of residential development surrounding the property
- k any other factors considered relevant by Council.

- 4 Every permit may be issued on such terms and conditions as Council considers appropriate and these conditions shall be complied with within one month of issue of permit or the permit may be revoked.

Offences and Penalties

Every person who fails to comply with the requirements of the Dog Control Bylaw commits an offence and is liable to an infringement fee of \$300 or a fine not exceeding \$20,000 and where the offence is a continuing one, then to a further fine not exceeding \$50 for every day or part thereof during which the offence has continued.

The Council may apply to the District Court under section 162 of the Local Government Act 2002 for an injunction restraining a person from committing a breach of this bylaw.

Impounding

If your dog is found outside your property or generally roaming, any animal control officer/dog ranger may seize and impound the dog.

Where a dog is seized and the owner has a good record, the ranger may opt to return the dog immediately so long as the owner can be readily located, is able to receive the dog, is willing and able to pay a recovery fee if applicable, and the dog is over three (3) months of age, is registered, and the conditions under which the dog is kept are satisfactory.

Impounding Fees

First time - \$98.50

Second time - \$196.00

Third time - \$181.00

\$14.00 per day is added to the fee for sustenance and time.

As soon as practicable, after any dog wearing a tag or disk has been impounded, the owner will be notified that the dog has been impounded.

Unless the dog is claimed and any fees owing paid within seven (7) days of receiving the notice, the dog may be sold, destroyed, or otherwise disposed of in such a manner as the animal control officer/dog ranger thinks fit.

Where the owner of any dog is not known or cannot be identified, the Council may, after the expiry of seven (7) days after the date of seizure, destroy or dispose of the dog in such a manner as thought fit.

Dogs that have been impounded due to lack of control shall not be released unless the animal control officer/dog ranger is satisfied that the conditions under which the dog is kept are of a standard to prevent the dog from being able to roam again.

Unclaimed Dogs

Unclaimed dogs will only be rehoused if the new owner undertakes to have the dog vaccinated and neutered at their own cost, and has facilities suitable to house and contain the dog, and is considered by the animal control officer/dog ranger releasing the dog to be a suitable person to own the dog.

What your registration pays for

24 Hour Response to Complaints

- Barking
- Wandering
- Attacks on people or stock
- Stock control

Impounding Service

- Maintenance of pound facilities
- Portable traps and cages
- Destruction of unwanted dogs
- Catching equipment/safety equipment.

Enforcement Activity

- Property inspections
- Issuing permits
- Court costs
- House to house dog registration checks
- Dangerous dog classification and follow up

- Issue and processing of infringement fines.

Annual Costs

- One full-time officer
- Registration tags/forms/postage
- Pamphlets - forms/advertising
- Vehicle maintenance, replacement, mileage
- Maintenance of the National Dog Database and collection and accounting of National Dog Database levies.

Associated Costs

- Maintenance of dog register
- Office space, computer system
- Phones and on-call numbers
- Maintenance of signs
- Secretarial work
- Ranger education
- Public education information and educational school programs.

Definitions of Key Terms

(from the Grey District Dog Control Bylaw 2008)

Copies of the full bylaw may be purchased from Council offices. The Bylaw was authorized by the Dog Control Act 1996 and came into force on the 27th June 2008.

Act means the Dog Control Act 1996

Beach means any land covered and uncovered by the ebb and flow of the tide between mean low water springs and mean high water springs, but does not include any such land along the banks of any river or stream.

Control means that the dog is not causing a nuisance or danger and that the person in charge of the dog is able to obtain an immediate and desired response from the dog by use of a leash, voice commands, hand signals, whistles or other effective means.

Council means the Grey District Council.

District means the Grey District.

Dog Owner means every person who:

- a Owns the dog; or
- b Has the dog in his or her possession, whether the dog is at large or in confinement, otherwise than for a period not exceeding 72 hours for the purpose of preventing the dog causing injury, damage, or distress, or for the sole purpose of restoring a lost dog to its owner; or
- c The parent or guardian's household living with and dependent on the parent or guardian.

On a Leash means that the dog is kept under control by means of a leash, lead or chain which is secured or is held by a capable person so that the dog cannot break loose.

Private Way means any way or passage whatsoever over private land within

the district, the right to use which is confined or intended to be confined to certain persons or classes of persons, and which is not thrown open or intended to be open to the use of the public generally.

Public Place means:

- a A place that, at any material time, is open to or is being used by the public, whether free or on payment of a charge, and whether any owner or occupier of the place is lawfully entitled to exclude or eject any person from that place; and
- b Includes any aircraft, hovercraft, ship or ferry or other vessel, train, or vehicle carrying or available to carry passengers for reward.
- c For the purposes of clarity, this includes any Beach or Reserve.

Reserve means:

- a Any land vested in the Council and declared as a reserve by resolution of the Council, under section 14 of the Reserves Act 1977; or
- b Any park, domain or recreational area under the control or ownership of the Council.

Working Dog means:

- f Any guide dog, hearing ear dog, or companion dog
- g Any dog -
 - (i) kept by the Police or any constable, the Customs Department, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Fisheries or the Ministry of Defence, or any officer or employee of any such Department of State solely or principally for the purposes of carrying out the functions, powers and duties of the Police or the Department of State or that constable, officer, or employee; or
 - kept solely or principally for the purposes of herding or driving stock.



Contact Details

If you have further enquiries contact animal control officers on:

Daytime: 03 769 8606
027 437 5452

After hours: 027 437 5452

Email: gdc-Dogs-Mail@greydc.govt.nz