

The *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act* ensures that domestic animal businesses throughout Victoria continue to meet community expectations. The Act does this by establishing a registration scheme for domestic animal businesses such as dog training establishments and adopting enforceable Codes of Practice for their business operations. It is an offence to attack train a dog unless that training is done through a registered dog training establishment, and in accordance with the Code of Practice.

Dog training establishments classified as domestic animal businesses are required by the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act* to comply with the *Code of Practice for the Operation of Dog Training Establishments*.

The purpose of the Code of Practice for the Operation of Dog Training Establishments is to define the minimum standards of accommodation, management and care which are appropriate to the physical and behavioural needs of dogs being trained in dog training establishments. The Code is to be observed by owners of, and workers in, dog training establishments, including those that conduct training at the residence of a client. The Code imposes specified procedures on the manager and staff of the establishment, as well as minimum husbandry requirements including nutrition, vaccination and health care, security, housing and minimum pen sizes where training is conducted on the premises and dogs are required to be housed. In the best interests of you and your dog, only those businesses that meet, as a minimum, the requirements of the Code are permitted to operate.

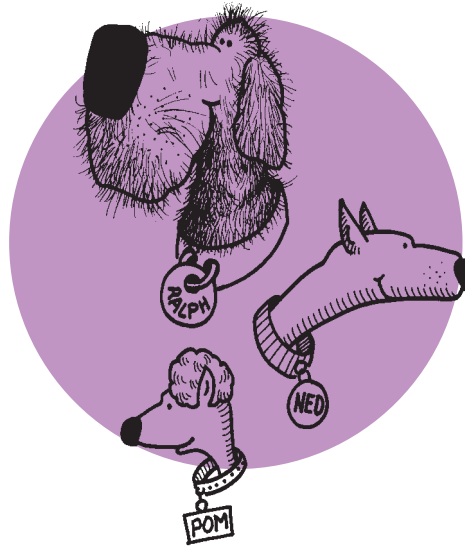
Before you engage your dog in a professional training programme, you should be aware of some important provisions contained in the Code of Practice.

BUSINESS REGISTRATION

A person must not operate a dog training establishment which is run for profit unless it is registered with the Council of the municipal district in which the business is conducted. You may want to check with Council as to whether or not the training establishment you wish to enrol in is required to be registered. If it is, then the following conditions will apply.

IDENTIFICATION

All dogs undergoing dog training must be identified as it is important that your dog can be clearly recognised at all times.



PRE-VACCINATION

Pre-vaccination against distemper, hepatitis and parvovirus is required before your dog will be accepted for training. A current vaccination certificate (ie. certifying that vaccination was done within the preceding 12 months and that the 'due date' for the next vaccination has not passed) must be produced for each dog before admission. Vaccination against canine cough and checking for heartworm infection is also recommended prior to training. Animals known or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease must not be admitted for training. These requirements will assist in providing protection for your dog from disease and other health risks.

SAFETY & WELFARE

The trainer or training establishment must ensure the safety and well being of the client and dog at all times, eg. in circumstances where a dog is aggressive, and displays a clear danger to other dogs or people it must be muzzled.

Slip collars (choker chains), must not be used on puppies under 12 weeks of age. Undue force must not be used when training any dog.

REDUCED REGISTRATION FEE

The legislation requires Councils to charge a reduced registration fee for dogs that have undergone obedience training which complies with the Regulations.

Organisations whose dog obedience assessment programs are approved under the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Regulations 2005* are:

VICTORIAN CANINE ASSOCIATION (VCA)

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL DOG TRAINERS INC

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF GENTLE MODERN DOG TRAINING INSTRUCTORS

DELTA SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

The program must be conducted by a qualified dog trainer who is a member of one of these organisations.

Dogs that have undergone an assessment program administered by the above and have been issued with the official 'Dog Obedience Certificate' are eligible for the reduced registration fee in the Schedule to the Act. The other certificates that qualify a dog for the reduced registration fee are certificates of obedience titles that are recognised by the Australian National Kennel Control.

PROTECTION TRAINING

Protection training is defined as training a dog to attack people or animals and includes the training of a dog to attack a human wearing padded protective clothing for any purpose including sport. It is not considered appropriate for a member of the community who is not a licenced security guard to have access to an attack trained dog and this is reflected in the strict provisions of the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act*. Dogs that have received this type of training will be declared as a dangerous dog by a Council.

LICENSED SECURITY GUARDS

Licensed security guards registered under the Private Agents Act 1966 are the only persons eligible to have their dogs trained as Protection Dogs, or to be trained in Protection Training.

Proof of Security Licence must be shown to the training establishment prior to commencement of Protection Training.

No member of the public may be trained in protection training unless the above pre-requisites are complied with.

ELIGIBLE DOGS

The minimum age of a dog before protection training is allowed is 12 months.

Only recognised guarding breeds of the large variety and cross breeds of these, are allowed to be trained in protection training. These breeds are:

German Shepherd;

Rottweiler;

Doberman;

Other breeds recognised by the VCA as large guarding breeds.

COUNCIL NOTIFICATION

An owner must notify the appropriate municipality immediately when attack training has commenced.

DANGEROUS DOGS

Dogs that have been trained to attack are dangerous dogs, and owners will be required to adhere to prescribed conditions (contact your council for details). This includes clear identification of the dog and methods of restraint that will protect the community.



The Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act is State legislation which is implemented by Municipal Councils.

A complete copy of the *Code of Practice for the Operation of Dog Training Establishments* is available for purchase from the DPI Information Centre, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne.
Phone 03 9658 4440.

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THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT DOG TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS

