Compulsory Microchipping - FAQs for Pet Owners

Will compulsory microchipping for dogs be government-controlled?
The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2014 will be enforced by local authorities, police constables, community support officers and any other person which the Secretary of State may authorise to act as an enforcer of the regulations.

How do I update my contact details?
If you need to update your contact details such as address or phone number then you will need to contact your database company. There may be a fee for this service.

Is compulsory microchipping now proof of ownership / keepership?
No, microchipping will not be proof of 'ownership'. The words 'owner' and 'ownership' have been replaced by the words 'keeper' and 'keepership' for this very reason.

Will compulsory microchipping mean legal 'Keeper / Ownership'?
The words 'legally responsible' are used if your dog strays, bites or causes any unjust damage. As the keeper of the dog you are 'liable' for the dog that is registered to you. Therefore, as the 'keeper' you will be held responsible if your dog has been found to commit such an act, however the 'keeper' will be protected from prosecution if their dog attacks a burglar or trespasser on their land.

How long has a person got to get a dog microchipped if they get one after April 2016?
From the 6th of April 2016, all dogs must be microchipped and registered to an approved database by the time they are 8 weeks old. For every dog that is currently not microchipped, you will have until 6th of April to get them microchipped and registered on an approved database. If a keeper of a dog which is not microchipped gets served with a notice requiring them to have the dog chipped, they will have 21 days to do this.

At what age is a dog exempt?
There are no exemptions with regarding to age. A dog will be legally exempt from being microchipped only when a vet certifies that it cannot be microchipped for health reasons. This needs to done on a form approved by the Secretary of State.

What is the minimum age a puppy has to be before being chipped?
There is no minimum age specified in the regulations. The puppy only has to be microchipped and registered to an approved database by the time they are 8 weeks old. The government advises that the dog be healthy enough to be implanted and sufficient time is
allowed for the database to process the registration in order to ensure that the dog is compliant with the regulations by the time they are 8 weeks old.

**Is there a fine/penalty if I don’t get my dog microchipped?**
Yes. Under the regulations, your dog is considered microchipped when you (1) implant the dog with a chip and (2) register your details on an approved database. If you do not get your dog microchipped or your details registered on an approved database, then it will be considered as not complying with the regulations and a notice may be served. If the keeper does not microchip their dogs within 21 days of the served notice, then you will be liable to pay a fine of £500.

**Is there a fine/penalty if I don’t keep my database details up to date?**
Yes. Under the regulations, your dog is considered microchipped when you (1) implant the dog with a chip and (2) register your details on an approved database. If any keeper subsequently moves, changes contact telephone number, etc. then the dog is no longer considered microchipped under the regulations and enforcement can be taken and a notice served. If the keeper does NOT get their details up to date within 21 days of the served notice, then you will be liable to pay a fine of £500.

**What is the purpose of a microchip database?**
When a pet is microchipped the unique Microchip Number and your contact details along with important information on the pet – need to be held in a secure location / and be accessible 24/7 365 by any Authorised Agent finding the pet.

**What documentation will be issued to the registered keeper?**
The keeper should be able to download their confirmation of registration via the database company website for their microchip number upon validation of registration or may receive the information by post.

**Why do Microchip databases charge fees for amending / changing details?**
The fee that is paid at the point of microchip implantation does not go to the databases; this is the reason why databases request a fee when a change of details is required. Change of contact details can usually be completed online or via the telephone Transfer of keepership cannot be completed over the telephone. The new keeper will either receive paperwork from the previous keeper a re-homing centre or welfare organisation that can be sent in to us. If a new keeper cannot obtain paperwork or has nothing to confirm that the pet belongs to them they should contact the database company. When compulsory Microchipping comes into force, the old keeper will be responsible for ensuring that the details are updated. As such database processes will change to enable this.
**Will the microchip expire?**
The microchip will have an expiry date on the packaging but this is purely for implantation purposes and not an expiry date for the function of reuniting you with your pet.

**Will the Microchip act as a GPS tracker**
No the Microchip needs to be scanned by a hand held scanner – and once the unique 15 digit number is read – the Microchip database that you have chosen to store your details on will be contacted.

**If there is more than one Microchip database – how do I know where my details are being stored – do I get a choice?**
We always recommend that before having your pet microchipped you ask what microchip is being used and which database it is aligned to. Your pet’s details and your contacts details are very important – and you should consider where this information is being stored – and the service level that accompanies this.

**How will owners know which database their dog’s microchip is registered with?**
When a pet is microchipped the keeper will be given documentation by the implanter (vet, kennels, groomer etc) for them to keep, this contains the microchip number and database with contact details of where their record will be held.
The implanter will also forward this information directly to the respective database, where all the details will be held. If the keeper of the pet does not receive confirmation of registration within 14 days they should check the paperwork given by the implanter on the day and contact the relevant database company.

**How can owners “keepers” check the details on their dog’s microchip are up to date?**
This can usually be done on line or by ringing the database company

**What is the procedure for changing details? How much does it cost? What proof is needed? Can details be changed over the phone or in writing?**
For your information, the fee that is paid at the point of microchip implantation does not go to the databases; this is the reason why databases request a fee when a change of details is required. Change of contact details can be completed online or via the telephone.
Transfer of keepership cannot be completed over the telephone. The new keeper will either receive paperwork from the previous keeper a re-homing centre or welfare organisation that can be sent in to the database company. If a new keeper cannot obtain paperwork or has nothing to confirm that the pet belongs to them they should contact the relevant database company. When compulsory Microchipping comes into force, the old keeper will be responsible for ensuring that the details are updated.