



REVISED DRAFT OF DOG BREEDING ESTABLISHMENT GUIDELINES, NOV 2016

Legend

Changes proposed from the 2011 guidelines

PART 1

Construction and Maintenance of a Dog Breeding Establishment

1. GENERAL STANDARDS FOR ALL DOG BREEDING ESTABLISHMENTS

1.1 In order to comply with the Act the owner or manager of a dog breeding establishment should:

1.1.1 provide accommodation and equipment which suits the physical, behavioural and social requirements of the dogs held.

1.1.2 protect the dogs from other animals and adverse environmental conditions.

1.1.3 provide sufficient space for dogs to stand, move around freely, stretch fully and rest **in a comfortable and appropriate resting area.**

1.1.4 provide sufficient quantities of appropriate food and clean water to maintain good health and support optimal growth and reproduction.

1.1.5 provide an environment that allows all dogs to express normal behaviour and in particular to provide adequate socialisation and exercise for all dogs.

1.1.6 protect the dogs from disease, distress, injury, fear and pain.

1.1.7 maintain the hygiene of the breeding premises and health of the dogs held.

1.1.8 ensure the premises is appropriately licensed under the Control of Dogs Acts 1986 to 2010.

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2. ANIMAL HOUSING

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 Buildings which house dogs should be located away from sources of excessive noise or pollution that could cause injury or stress to animals.
- 2.1.2 Buildings which house dogs should not be a source of nuisance such as excessive noise or smell.
- 2.1.3 All kennels should have an adequate supply of clean water which should be available to all dogs at all times.
- 2.1.4 Suitable isolation facilities should be available on site.
- 2.1.5 A full site map of the Establishment, outlining all buildings, yards, exercise facilities and any other associated structures that are part of the application shall be submitted to the local authority as part of the application process.

2.2 Construction

- 2.2.1 The Dog Breeding Establishment should:
 - protect dogs from rain and wind
 - provide adequate shade
 - provide a sheltered sleeping area
 - be suitable for dogs as regards temperature, humidity and ventilation
- 2.2.2 Kennels should be separated from each other by a suitable barrier that will minimise noise, prevent fighting injuries and prevent the spread of infectious disease.
- 2.2.3 All contact surface for kennels should be constructed of an impervious material that facilitates thorough cleaning, disinfection and drainage in order to prevent/control disease. Similarly all surfaces that may come in contact with dogs should be capable of being easily cleaned and disinfected. Grassed or landscaped sections may form part of large outdoor runs and must be adequately maintained. There must be a separate whelping pen or room for each bitch in which to whelp.
- 2.2.4 Whelping bitches should be provided with a separate area away from interference by other animals. There must be a whelping bed raised off the floor and with sides high enough to prevent new-born puppies from falling out. The bed must contain bedding to ensure a soft surface for the bitch and to enable the absorption of foetal fluids resulting from whelping. The bed must be constructed of easily cleanable material and must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between litters.

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2.2.5 An area shall be provided within the whelping kennel where a bitch can rest away from her pups. Bitches in season must be kept out of range of entire males. There should be completely separate accommodation for bitches in season.

2.3 Size and Number of Occupants

2.3.1 Dog housing, whether for a single dog or for a group of dogs should provide enough space for each dog to feed, sleep, sit, stand, lie with limbs extended, stretch and move about unimpeded.

2.3.2 The accommodation of dogs in any way other than loose in a kennel is not acceptable and, in particular, the use of portable crates as a kennel will not be permitted.

2.3.3 A schedule of recommended kennel sizes is included at Annex 2.

2.4 Temperature

2.4.1 Dogs should be protected from extremes of temperature. It is recommended that the microclimate is maintained between 8C - 28C in kennels and 22C - 28C in whelping area.

2.4.2 Special consideration should be given to young and old dogs which are more sensitive to changes in temperature. They may require special provision of heating or cooling.

2.5 Noise

2.5.1 Noise from barking dogs should be managed to ensure that the premises is not a source of noise nuisance and to ensure that the noise does not adversely affect the dogs. For example noise may be reduced by limiting external stimulation by having partitions between kennels or the use of blinds, by holding dogs in singles or in compatible groups, by situating kennels so that they do not face each other, or by any other appropriate noise attenuating measure.

2.6 Lighting

2.6.1 Lighting should be as close as possible, in duration and intensity, to natural conditions.

2.6.2 Sunlight is the preferred means of lighting, provided shaded areas are available to the dogs.

2.6.3 Artificial light should be provided where necessary to allow animal housing areas to be thoroughly cleaned and dogs to be checked.

2.7 Ventilation

Suitable ventilation should be provided and should ensure that dampness, draughts, noxious odours and the spread of infectious disease is minimised.

2.8 Bedding and Sleeping

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2.8.1 All kennels must be provided with a distinct sleeping area that is a suitable size for the breed of dog being kept. Ideally this area should be raised and predominantly enclosed to allow dogs to have a secure refuge.

2.8.2 Beds and bedding shall be capable of being easily cleaned, disinfected and sited away from draughts. All bedding material in use shall be absorbent, clean, non-irritant and dry. Examples of acceptable bedding which may be used are straw, sawdust, wood wool, blankets, rugs, fleece, cushions, waterproof dog pad or mat, shredding paper etc.

2.8.3 Whelping bitches should be provided with a suitable whelping area that is provided with clean bedding.

2.9 Safety

2.9.1 In the event of an emergency any security methods used should allow for ready access by staff to dogs, and ready exit of staff and dogs from the premises.

2.9.2 Under Health and Safety legislation adequate fire-fighting equipment must be readily available.

3 HYGIENE

3.1 Cleaning and disinfection

3.1.1 In order to facilitate cleaning and disinfection of dog kennels, housing and exercise areas should be kept clean and maintained in a good state of repair. A disinfectant approved for use against Parvo virus and enteric viruses is required.

3.1.2 To aid a thorough sanitation programme a supply of hot and cold water and a convenient method of delivering water, such as the appropriate number and location of hose points, should be available.

3.1.3. Eating and drinking vessels shall be suitable bowls, designed so that they are not easily overturned, that are capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected to prevent cross-contamination. They shall be maintained in a clean condition and cleaned or disposed of after each meal.

3.1.4 Each occupied kennel shall be cleaned daily. All excreta and soiled material shall be removed from all areas used by the dogs at least twice daily and as necessary.

3.2 Pest Control

3.2.1 A suitable vermin control programme should be in place.

3.3 Waste Disposal

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3.3.1 All dog breeding establishments should be constructed such that all waste, including washings, urine and faeces is managed by a suitable waste, drainage, storage and disposal system.

3.3.2 All waste should be collected and stored in suitable, closed, lidded, leak proof containers held in a dedicated waste storage area. Waste removal or storage should not be a source of nuisance or public health risk, **and must comply with local authority requirements.**

4 EXERCISE

4.1 A Dog Breeding Establishment should have a suitable written exercise programme in order to:

- allow dogs to urinate and defecate
- allow dogs contact with humans and, if appropriate, with other dogs
- **provide for on leash walks, where appropriate in order to promote socialisation and contact with humans**
- allow dogs to be checked over
- allow dogs to exercise appropriately.

4.2 **A plan of the breeding establishment, to include exercise yard or area, shall be submitted to the local authority.**

5 FOOD STORE

5.1 A Dog Breeding Establishment should have a suitable enclosed room or area to store dog food. The food store should;

- allow food to be stored in vermin proof conditions
- **guard against extremes of heat, cold and condensation and should be refrigerated as appropriate**
- be secure from contamination
- be located to facilitate orderly feeding of dogs

6 CHEMICAL STORE

6.1 A Dog Breeding Establishment shall have a suitable enclosed room or area to safely store chemicals, including cleaning agents and disinfectants. The storage area should be

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secure, suitably located for operational reasons and should not be a source of contamination.

7 EQUIPMENT AND WASHING FACILITY

- 7.1 The dog breeding establishment should have a suitable facility to properly wash all equipment, including utensils. All feeding bowls to be maintained in good working order and in a hygienic state, and disinfected as appropriate.

PART 2

Operation and Management of a Dog Breeding Establishment

1. REGISTRATION

- 1.1 Any premises containing six or more female dogs over 6 months of age and capable of breeding, is a Dog Breeding Establishment as defined under the Act.
- 1.2 In accordance with Section 15 of the Act, the operator of a Dog Breeding Establishment must apply to the local authority responsible for the area in which it is situated for registration as a Dog Breeding Establishment.
- 1.3 The application should be completed without delay and returned to the relevant local authority. Unless the premises is fee exempted as described by section 9 (18) of the Act, it must be accompanied by the appropriate registration fee. Any false or misleading information will invalidate the application and will be an offence under the Act. Fee exempt premises include registered hunt clubs¹, charitable organisations (Charities Act 2009 or having a Revenue CHY number), and commercial boarding kennels.

¹ For the purposes of these guidelines, fee exemption under the “hunt club” means a registered hunt or game club—

(a) registered with a national hunting association that is a member of—

(i) the Hunting Association of Ireland or

(ii) the Irish branch of the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the European Union (FACE),

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- 1.4 In processing the application, the local authority may visit the premises and/or may request further information. In such instances the local authority will give at least 24 hours notice for the initial assessment visit.
- 1.5 If registration is granted the applicant will be notified within 14 days. A registration certificate will be issued to the applicant who should display this certificate in a prominent location at the establishment. The details of the registration will also be entered into a register maintained by the local authority and will include details of the applicant, the address of the dog breeding establishment, the maximum number of bitches over 6 months that may be kept and, if applicable, any conditions attached to the registration.
- 1.6 Where a local authority proposes to either attach conditions or refuse the application, it will notify the applicant in writing and the applicant may make representations to the local authority within 14 days after receiving this notification. These representations will be considered by the Local Authority Veterinary Officer - as outlined in Section 18 (1) (a) of the Act.
- 1.7 The local authority shall notify the applicant of its decision within 14 days of making that decision. Appeals against a refusal or against any conditions attached to the registration may be made to the appropriate District Court within 14 days of receipt of the notification, or such longer period as a judge of the District Court may determine.

2. STAFF

- 2.1 Staff must comply with dog welfare legislation and must have experience in handling dogs. Formal training in animal care is encouraged. There must be an induction and training Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for all staff. The SOP should detail exactly what members of staff are required to do with all dogs on site and provide sufficient knowledge to allow staff to undertake their duties competently. For dog breeding establishments licensed for over 30 bitches it will be a requirement to have at least one staff member formally certified to have undertaken training to appropriate standards. This person will have overall responsibility for animal welfare, animal health and husbandry, exercise regimes, breeding and socialisation.
- 2.2 All staff should be competent and be aware of their responsibilities.

(b) that operates in accordance with the guidelines for kennel management issued by the HAI.

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- 2.3 An adequate number of staff/persons should be available, appropriate to the size of the establishment and the number of dogs being kept. It is recommended that this will be equivalent to one wholetime equivalent per 30 bitches. A documented workforce plan shall be submitted outlining how the Dog Breeding Establishment is staffed.

3. ANIMAL CARE

- 3.1 Grooming must be to at least a minimum standard of care required for that breed. Coats should not be left unduly dirty, tangled or unkempt.
- 3.2 Dogs should be protected from distress or injury.
- 3.3 Dogs should be protected from excessive or rough handling.
- 3.4 Dogs should be fed adequately and regularly to maintain good health as appropriate to their breed. It is recommended that for most dogs in breeding establishments two meals should be provided daily. Pregnant bitches will require increasingly frequent meals of higher quality food as their pregnancy progresses. Lactating bitches also need frequent high quality food to prevent excessive weight loss. Puppies must initially be offered food five times a day. Staff must ensure that each pup takes the correct share of the food offered.
- 3.5 Clean water must be available to all dogs at all times and in the case of automatic devices or nipple drinkers these shall be checked at least daily to ensure proper function and cleanliness and disinfected as appropriate.
- 3.6 Bedding, where provided, should be appropriate and cleaned at suitable intervals.
- 3.7 To ensure bio-security all reasonable measures should be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious disease. This also applies to both staff and persons visiting the premises.
- 3.8 A suitable animal health programme agreed with/by a veterinary practitioner will be required. This will include vaccination programmes, control programmes for endo and ecto parasites, a responsible breeding programme and a bitch/stud dog retirement plan. Breeding stock must be selected on their temperament and their physical and genetic health irrespective of other factors such as breed standard.

4. EXERCISE AND SOCIALISATION

- 4.1 All dogs should be exercised appropriately. Such exercise regimes will facilitate dogs to urinate and defecate, stretch limbs, allow contact with humans and dogs if appropriate, and allow dogs to be checked for signs of ill health.

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4.2 A written programme showing exercise, socialisation, enhancement and enrichment shall be made available to the council inspector for approval.

Enhancement is an increase in quality of the life of the pups and dogs and will improve their daily experience. Enrichment makes the lives of pups and dogs more meaningful, substantial or rewarding and meets their behavioural needs. Examples of environmental enrichment are: play, contact with humans (e.g. grooming, training or playing) and food finding activities (e.g. puzzle feeders or scavenging exercises).

4.3 All dogs must have access to an exercise area and must be allowed a minimum of two periods daily of at least 30 minutes to run free. From approximately 3 days after parturition, bitches should be given short periods of exercise away from their litter.

4.4 Exercise may be provided by walking individual or small groups of dogs or by access to an exercise run appropriate to the size and breed of dog. The use of further enrichment such as swimming or fetching a ball should be encouraged.

4.5 Puppies must be handled regularly from shortly after birth to habituate them to human contact and to examine them for any sign of disease and to ensure they are feeding properly. From 3 weeks old puppies must be habituated to events likely to be encountered in a domestic environment. This should include the sights and sounds in households, such as appliances, as well as differing surfaces on which to walk. Toys and activity feeders that are changed regularly are ideal enrichment. There should be more toys or feeders than there are dogs in the kennel. The use of raised beds and the ability to move out of other dogs' sight should be provided.

5. BREEDING

5.1 Bitches do not give birth to more than 6 litters of pups each.

5.2 During any period of 3 years, not more than 3 litters of pups are born to a bitch.

6. HYGIENE

6.1 In order to facilitate cleaning and disinfection, dog kennels, housing and exercise areas should be kept clean and maintained in a good state of repair.

6.2 Faeces should be removed at least twice daily.

6.3 Kennels and associated housing and exercise areas should be cleaned and disinfected as appropriate, and on a risk basis e.g. before new dogs or puppies are introduced or after an outbreak of infectious disease.

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- 6.4 After cleaning/disinfection, housing or kennels should be free of surface water.
- 6.5 Cleaning and disinfection agents should be chosen on the basis of their suitability, safety and effectiveness. The manufacturer's instructions in respect of the correct use, dilution and contact time for the product should always be followed.
- 6.6 A suitable vermin control programme should be in place.

7 HEALTH CHECKS

- 7.1 Each dog should be checked at least once a day to monitor its health and well-being, and more frequently as appropriate, for example in the case of whelping bitches.
- 7.2 The person checking the dogs should observe their general health, for instance checking that they are eating, drinking, defecating, urinating and are of normal appearance and behaviour.
- 7.3 Any change in the health status of any dog should be reported promptly to the person in charge. Prompt veterinary attention should be obtained as appropriate.
- 7.4 Dogs known or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease should not be admitted to the premises or else placed in suitable isolation.

8 VETERINARY CARE

- 8.1 The operator of the premises should be a client of a veterinary practice.
- 8.2 Any dog(s) showing signs of disease/ill-health should receive timely and appropriate treatment including, where necessary, veterinary examination and treatment
- 8.3 Veterinary attention must be obtained immediately in cases of suspected exotic diseases such as rabies.
- 8.4 A suitable and secure medicines cabinet shall be available for the correct storage of medicines, with suitable refrigeration as necessary.

9 RECORDS AND IDENTIFICATION OF DOGS

- 9.1 A Dog Breeding Establishment operator should establish and maintain a system to record the details of births, deaths, sale, movement or other event relating to dogs kept within the establishment. These records must include all microchip details, dates of whelping of each bitch, number of pups in each litter (including the number of live and dead pups), and details of sale or disposal. The premises should also have a separate record of all bitches, over 6 months of age and capable of breeding.

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- 9.2 Records of all micro-chipped dogs must be recorded in a register maintained at the Dog Breeding Establishment and this register must be available for inspection by an authorised officer. A Register must be maintained and kept for 5 years of all puppies sold showing the name and contact details of the purchaser, the pup's identification number and the date of sale. Records may be an integral part of the breeders' records and may be kept manually or electronically.
- 9.3 Records of all complaints shall be maintained and open to inspection by authorised persons.

10 INSPECTION OF A DOG BREEDING ESTABLISHMENT BY AUTHORISED OFFICER

- 10.1 A person appointed by a local authority as an authorised officer under this Act is allowed to inspect a dog breeding establishment at all reasonable times. Routine inspections will be by arrangement. The inspection process should be managed by the authorised person as outlined by Section 18 (1) (a) of the Act.
- 10.2 An authorised officer may inspect, take copies or remove and detain any books, records or other documents found in the course of an inspection and may require the operator to answer any questions relative to the dog breeding establishment. Obstruction of an authorised officer will be an offence under this Act.
- 10.3 In cases of significant deviation from the standards outlined in the Act, an authorised officer may serve a Fixed Payment Notice or an Improvement Notice. An Improvement Notice will outline the remedial actions required and the time scale within which these actions need to be completed. An Improvement Notice may be appealed in the District Court within 7 days of service. Enforcement actions will be overseen by a Local Authority Veterinary Officer (authorised person as outlined by Section 18 (1) (a) of the Act).
- 10.4 In cases where the authorised officer is of the opinion that a serious and immediate threat exists to public health or animal health and welfare, a closure notice may be issued, requiring the operator of the dog breeding establishment to cease the breeding and keeping of dogs at the premises and to surrender the registration certificate. A closure notice must state the grounds for this action, and will outline the measures required to be taken by the operator to enable any dogs affected to be kept at suitable alternative accommodation at the expense of the operator. A copy of the notice will be affixed to the premises by the local authority who will also publish the notice.. This notice may be appealed in the District Court within 7 days of service. Enforcement actions will be overseen by a Local Authority Veterinary Officer (authorised person as outlined by Section 18 (1) (a) of the Act).

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ANNEX 1

Transportation of Dogs

The transportation of dogs and puppies to and from a commercial dog breeding establishment is covered by specific European legislation (Council Regulation (EC) No. 1 of 2005). The authority responsible for enforcing this legislation is the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). The requirements of this legislation in relation to commercial dog transport are summarised in the DAFM “Guidelines for the Welfare of Non-farming (“Other”) Species During Commercial Transport” which are available at

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/animaltransport/>

Managers of dog breeding establishments should familiarise themselves with the contents of these guidelines. It is their responsibility to ensure that dogs and puppies in their care are transported in line with the guidelines, in particular in relation to the following:

- Fitness for transport (section 1.1 of the DAFM guidelines provides a detailed list of conditions that would render a dog unfit for transport),
- Transport practices (issues such as appropriate segregation of dogs during transport, feeding/watering requirements and care of sick or injured dogs).
- Transport vehicles (including general requirements applicable to all vehicles used to transport dogs and additional requirements, including the need for DAFM approval, for vehicles transporting dogs on journeys greater than 8 hours in duration).
- Requirements for commercial dog transporters to be authorised by DAFM if they are transporting dogs on journeys in excess of 65km.

Further information on any of the issues included in the DAFM guidelines can be obtained from the DAFM website or by contacting the DAFM Transport Section on 01 5058647.

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Annex 2

Guide to Sizing of Kennels*

Small Dogs (<10kg)

No. dogs	Free access to exercise	Limited access to exercise
1	2.5 sq m	4.5 sq m
2	2.5 sq m	4.5 sq m
3	4.5 sq m	6.5 sq m
4	6.0 sq m	8.5 sq m

Medium Dogs (10-20kg)

No. dogs	Free access to exercise	Limited access to exercise
1	2.5 sq m	4.5 sq m
2	4.5 sq m	6.5 sq m
3	6.0 sq m	8.5 sq m

Large Dogs (>20kg)

No. dogs	Free access to exercise	Limited access to exercise
1	4.5 sq m	6.5 sq m
2	6.0 sq m	8.5 sq m

* for hunt clubs the Guidelines for Hunt Kennels in Ireland 2016 may apply