Dogs Victoria Fact Sheet
Breeders and Breeding

The Pet Exchange Register & Source Numbers

Recent anti-puppy farming legislation changes have seen the introduction of a 'Pet Exchange Register' in Victoria.

This Victorian State Government register aims to provide *'increased traceability'* and to make it '*easier for prospective buyers to know that their pet has come from a valid source.*'

The Pet Exchange Register uses '***Source Numbers***' to register anyone who is involved in supplying dogs and cats to families or individuals – this includes shelters and pounds, foster carers, commercial breeding establishments, pet shops or small scale/hobby breeders.

How is the Pet Exchange Register meant to work?

It is now a legal requirement that all advertisements in Victoria for dogs and cats, puppies and kittens, include a valid Source Number as well as the microchip number of the animal being sold or given away.

Potential pet owners can visit the Pet Exchange Register Website and check that the Source Number they have been quoted is valid, and the details match the person they are dealing with.

They simply enter the number into the search area on the Pet Exchange Register Website and the details associated with the source number are displayed.

Note: *The default information displayed for recreational breeders includes the municipality in which you are registered and your Dogs Victoria membership number, but you can choose to have more information displayed if you would like.*

Potential purchasers who find advertisements with no Source Number, or an invalid one, are encouraged to report them to the Pet Exchange Register for investigation.

The Victorian Government has committed significant resources to policing of compliance in this area.

Important!

*Regular Dogs Victoria members **do not qualify** for a Source number as a Recreational Breeder.*

Only Dogs Victoria breeder members who have a current, financial Breeder's Prefix are classified as 'Recreational Breeders'.

This sets them aside from 'Micro breeders' (those who only have one or two fertile females), Domestic Breeding Businesses (people with between 2-10 fertile females who are not a member of an Applicable Organisation) and 'Commercial Breeding Businesses' (those breeders with 10 or more fertile females that have been approved by the Minister to breed at a commercial scale).

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What is a Source Number and how do I get one?

Source Numbers are issued by the Pet Exchange Register, which is part of Animal Welfare Victoria. Animal Welfare Victoria is currently part of the Agriculture sector of the Victorian Government's Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

Registering for a Source Number is easy and can be completed online through the Pet Exchange Register website. Those who do not have internet access can contact the Pet Exchange Register for a hard copy form.

The Source Number is valid for one year and needs to be renewed annually. Although they were initially free of charge, since July 2021, there is a fee to pay when you apply for or renew your Source Number.

You are able to let your Source Number lapse, and reactivate it when needed, but it must be valid at the time that you have a litter or are advertising dogs or puppies for sale or give away (including rehoming older pups/dogs).

The Source Number itself consists of two letters and six digits.

The letters indicate the category of the supplier – in the case of Dogs Victoria registered breeders the letters are 'RB' – Recreational Breeder.

Micro breeders, commercial breeders, foster carers, and shelters are also required to have a source number, however theirs will begin with a different set of letters – i.e. 'MB' for Microbreeder, 'FC' for foster carer.

The numbers are a unique identifier for the individual breeder.

When is a Source Number required?

When the Pet Exchange Register was first established, a Source Number was only required when you were advertising puppies for sale. For many Dogs Victoria breeders who already had waiting lists for puppies, there was no need to apply for one.

However, on the 1st July 2020 the rules changed, and now all Dogs Victoria breeders who are actively breeding need to have a valid number.

This is because it is now a requirement that a valid Source Number is provided at the time of microchipping any dog or cat in the state of Victoria. The Source Number forms part of the 'Prescribed Information' that MUST be included on the microchipping form.

Important!

Your veterinarian will need you to provide your Source Number to complete the microchip registration form that is sent to the accredited database at the time of chipping your puppies, so you will need to have one by the time your pups are ready to be chipped – usually at six weeks of age.

Advertising your puppies or older dogs

All Victorian advertisements for puppies or kittens, adult dogs or cats, need to have ***both*** the animal's unique microchip number AND the Source Number listed.

This applies whether you are selling or giving them away.

It is an offence if you do not provide these details in an advertisement, meaning both you and the place hosting or publishing the advertisement (such as an online provider or newspaper) can be fined if these numbers are not displayed.

This includes pups listed for sale through Breed Club websites or newsletters, so clubs need to be aware that they must enforce the requirement. It also includes advertisements on national pure-bred dog websites such as Dogzonline and Dogdom.

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Important!

If you advertise your puppies or older dogs for sale or placement into pet homes (regardless of if you are giving them away or charging), you will need to list your Source Number, along with their individual microchip numbers.

When do I NOT need to list a Source Number?

There are instances where you are NOT required to have or publish a Source Number –

» If you are simply advertising that you are a breeder, you do not have to list your Source Number.

Examples of Breeder Advertising might include:

Your own 'Kennel' website - where you provide information about your dogs, the breed, your show wins etc.

Advertising in a Breed Club catalogue, newsletter or website 'Breeder Listing' where your are promoting your Breeder Prefix and your dogs

» If you are advertising a planned litter, or a litter that is 'on the way' (not yet born), you are not required to list your Source Number.

However **as soon as the pups are born**, you are required to list BOTH your source number and the unique microchips of each pup - as it is considered advertising an animal for sale.

This poses a dilemma as puppies are generally not microchipped until the time of their first vaccination at 6 weeks of age.

Of course if you choose to include your Source Number voluntarily in these instances, that is OK - just make sure that your Source Number is current/valid.

So how do I register?

Registering for a Source Number is relatively simple, but you will need to make sure you have all of the required information handy before logging on.

Once you have been granted your Breeder's Prefix, you can go to the Pet Exchange Register site and select 'Register Now'.

Important!

Regular/General members of Dogs Victoria are NOT eligible for a 'Recreational Breeder' Source Number – only holders of a current/financial Breeder's Prefix qualify.

Simply having a Dogs Victoria Membership number does not make you a Dogs Victoria 'Breeder'.

Dogs Victoria is required to report monthly to the Pet Exchange Register any lapsed Breeder Prefixes, and the Pet Exchange Register undertake regular audits of Source Numbers granted to Recreational Breeders.

The registration process takes about 15 to 20 minutes (depending on how many animals you have) and, if completed online, the Source Number is generated immediately.

The first questions determine the breeder category that you fall into:

» **Do you breed dogs and/or cats in Victoria?**

» **Are you a *breeding member* of an Applicable Organisation?**

You should only answer 'YES' to this if your membership is current AND you hold a Dogs Victoria Breeder's Prefix

» **Do you have more than ten fertile females?**

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You are then asked to enter your email address, and a confirmation email is automatically generated containing a link that allows you to progress to the next stage of registration.

The next step is to set a password, which you will use to log in and access your account in future. This allows you to renew your Source Number, add or remove dogs, update your contact information, and change your account preferences at any time.

You will then be prompted to provide your details and the address at which any breeding will take place.

To ensure that applicants are genuine, you will need to enter details from a valid form of identification such as a Driver's License or Passport (or similar), so make sure you have that handy.
Finally, you are asked to enter the details of the animals that you currently house at your address (whether they are used for breeding or not) – so you will need details such as microchip numbers, dates of birth, and any whelping dates (if applicable) for each of your dogs.

You will also have to provide your Dogs Victoria membership number.

Once you have completed this, you will be immediately assigned a source number, and a confirmation email with the source number will be sent to your email address.

Important!

You can only use this Source Number for litters registered under your Dogs Victoria Breeder Prefix.

It can not be used for any other breeding activities (such as if you breed cats or someone else at your property breeds dogs outside of the Dogs Victoria rules and regulations).

Once issued, you will receive an email confirming your Source Number.

Because the Source Number is only valid for a year, you are expected to Log In to your account and update your details each year, along with paying a renewal fee.

If you don't plan to have another litter for some time, you can let your Source Number lapse, and then Log In and renew it when you have your next litter.

Important!

Make sure that you keep a record of your Source Number and your Log In details for future use.