

Cats in the city



Get the facts on cats in the city

Cats are wonderful companions; they bring great joy to the people with whom they share their homes. Being a responsible cat owner is important and assists in keeping cats and communities happy and healthy.



Identification and registration

Under the NSW Companion Animals Act, cats and kittens must be microchipped by the time they are 12 weeks old, or at the time they change ownership. Cats must also be registered by the time they are six months old. Registration fees are set under legislation and are heavily discounted for desexed cats. Cats must also wear a collar with a tag showing the owner's contact details such as address and/or phone number.

Annual permits

From 1 July 2020 owners of non-desexed cats over the age of four months are required to pay for an annual permit. This is in addition to the one-off lifetime cat registration fee. A one-off permit is required for any cat that is desexed after the age of four months.

Desexing

Every year throughout Australia thousands of cats and dogs are euthanased because there are not enough homes for them.

The City of Sydney recommends that all cats be desexed before they are six months old unless they are owned by a registered cat breeder. Early age desexing at around eight weeks is offered by many vets and animal welfare organisations as a means of ensuring your cat does not contribute to the pet over-population crisis by producing an unwanted litter.

The City of Sydney offers discounted desexing and free microchipping services for cats and dogs owned by City of Sydney residents who are holders of a valid pensioner concession card.

Please contact the City on 9265 9333 to make a booking or to discuss any questions you may have regarding companion animals.



Keeping your cat safe

While cats are generally free to enter many areas, there are some places that cats aren't allowed to go, such as food preparation and wildlife protection areas. The City of Sydney strongly recommends that cats be confined to their owner's property at all times or at least overnight. While this is not a legal requirement, it does help keep our loved pets safe and free from harm.

Free roaming cats face many dangers, such as:

- Being run over by a car
- Being chased or attacked by dogs
- Becoming injured after fighting with another cat
- Infectious diseases such as FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus) and FeLV (Feline Leukemia)
- Parasites such as intestinal worms and fleas
- Skin cancer - cats with white noses and ears are prone to sunburn which can, over time, result in cancers
- Accidental poisoning
- Being stolen and, in some cases, being used by unscrupulous people to 'bait' other animals
- Becoming a victim of animal cruelty.

Free roaming cats can also be a cause of neighbourhood disputes. Some people do not wish to have a feline visitor on their properties and may contact the City to complain about:

- odours from territory marking
- faeces in their gardens
- predation of native wildlife such as birds, possums and lizards
- their own cats being injured in cat fights
- noise from cat fights
- damage to property.

Depending on the nature of the complaint received by the City it is possible for a cat to become the subject of an investigation which, in some cases, may result in the issuing of a Nuisance Cat Order.

While cats most certainly do enjoy sunshine, play and fresh air, a life confined indoors or on their owner's property does not mean they have to miss out. Several companies provide built to order cat enclosures or 'do it yourself' kits. Some cats also respond well to being walked on a harness and lead. A feline or canine friend and environmental enrichment such as toys, scratching posts and climbing frames help to keep indoor-only cats active and stimulated.

More information

city.sydney/keeping-a-cat-in-the-city

02 9265 9333