

Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding dogs and cats (the Breeding Code)

August 2021 updates

The table below provides a summary of the updates made to the Breeding Code. The updates focused on the key areas of concern raised by stakeholders and are aimed at clarifying the Code so it can be more easily understood and followed.

This is intended as a useful resource but should not replace reading the entire Code.

2009 BREEDING CODE	2021 BREEDING CODE REVISION	OUTCOME ACHIEVED
Enclosure and housing requirements		
Required housing fence heights of 180 cm for all dog breeds/sizes.	Enclosure fence heights for dogs have been differentiated by three sizes (related to breed size) (6.1.1.6). If roofed, enclosure fence height remains 180 cm (6.1.1.8). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> < 40 cm height at shoulder, 120 cm enclosure fence height 40 – 60 cm height at shoulder, 150 cm enclosure fence height > 60 cm height at shoulder, 180 cm enclosure fence height 	Enclosure fence height requirements are now more appropriate for small and medium breeds of dogs. Enclosures used for large breed dogs still require 180 cm enclosure fence heights. Roofed enclosures require a fence height of 180cm to allow for proper cleaning of the enclosure.
No definition of 'enclosure'.	A definition of 'enclosure' has been added to the Breeding Code to help clarify where these heights apply.	The definition of enclosure clarifies that dogs and cats kept in houses and backyards (rather than in an enclosure) do not need to comply with fence height requirements.
'Facility' was the defined term used for a breeding premises.	The term 'Facility' has been replaced with ' Premises ' throughout the Code.	The use of 'premises' makes it clear that the Code applies to the activity, regardless of location and size.
Dog vaccination requirements		
Code required dogs to receive a C4 vaccination.	C3 vaccinations required for dogs and puppies (8.2.1.6) New guideline stating additional vaccines should be given on a risk basis (8.2.2.1)	C4 dog vaccination requirements are no longer regarded as best practice in all situations. Requiring a C3 aligns with Australian Veterinary Association recommendations.
Age of first mating for female dogs		
Code required that female dogs and cats are not intentionally mated during their first oestrous cycle.	Female dogs must not be intentionally mated until after they are one year of age (10.1.1.2)	Mating dogs after one year of age improves welfare outcomes for young dogs.

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OTHER KEY REVISION AREAS:

- The word 'staff' has been replaced with '**assistant**' as this is more appropriate for the breeding industry which may not always use formal staff structures
- '**Guardianship**' has been defined to highlight the different responsibilities of guardians and owners.
- Updates to record keeping provide clarity on requirements for each person involved (5.1.1 and 5.1.2)
- The requirements for evacuation plans (5.1.6) and pest control plans (5.1.5) have been simplified
- Clarification that firefighting equipment (6.3.1.4) needs to be functioning and appropriate to the situation
- Biosecurity (6.1.1.13 and 6.1.1.14), cleaning and disinfection requirements (7.3.1) have been simplified
- Provide assurance that having an accessible veterinarian's phone number includes having the number in a phone or on a business card (8.2.1.2)
- The standard requiring heartworm protection in all circumstances has been replaced with a risk based standard and guideline (8.2.1.10)

