

Responsible Breeder Code of Ethics

Our Code of Ethics, Standards and Membership Requirements:

1. Legislative Requirements

1.1 All RPBA members, both probationary and full, agree to and must always comply with the state and local government legislation, regulations, standards and Codes of practice that apply to the welfare, keeping, breeding and management of dogs and cats. Members in specific states may be required to also adhere to additional requirements which can be found in section 7 of the Code of Ethics.

1.2 It is the responsibility of the RPBA members to ensure they are up to date with the latest state and local government legislation, regulations, standards and Codes of practice that apply to the welfare, keeping, breeding and management of dogs and cats.

1.3 If a member becomes aware at any time of another member breaching the RPBA Code of Ethics or the relevant state legislation applicable to their location, they will report this to both the RPBA and local authorities.

1.4. Where applicable, members must ensure they have the appropriate licences/permits/registrations/ Breeder numbers for breeding animals in their local council area.

1.5 All animals(where age-appropriate) must be microchipped and registered with the members' local council.

2. Membership Requirements

2.1 To become a full member, a practising veterinarian must audit the breeder's property in order to ensure that the owner has taken all steps necessary to provide for their animal's welfare and are following the RPBA Code of Ethics.

2.2. Within 12 months of becoming a probationary member of the RPBA, a vet audit must be undertaken at the breeder's property in order for a member to retain their membership.

2.3 Membership applications must be accompanied by a form of photographic identification to verify a member

2.4 RPBA members, upon request of the RPBA, must supply updated images of their premises. This can be requested up to 4 times a year for both new and existing members.

2.5 RPBA members must not at any time have more than 10 breeding females of any kind per membership. This is inclusive of animals at guardian homes. A breeding female is defined as an intact/entire female over the age of 4 months old, regardless of whether cat or dog.

2.6 Members must notify in writing to the RPBA within 7 days any changes or updates to the following: Contact number, Contact Email, Address, Breeds, Number of Breeding animals, BIN/Source/Supply/Breeder Registration Number.

2.7 RPBA members understand that RPBA may choose to cancel or suspend membership of members who fail to meet requirements set out in the Code of Ethics. RPBA reserves the right to cancel membership at any time, without notice to the member, for breaches of the Code of Ethics.

3. Animal Husbandry Requirements

3.1 Animals must be kept under effective control always, for their own safety and for the safety of the neighbourhood.

3.2 Animals must be fed a complete, premium diet appropriate for their age/weight as outlined

3.3 Animals must come with first vaccinations and be up to date with worming/parasite treatment in order to keep them free from common infectious diseases and external and internal parasites. This applies to breeding parents, and the puppies and kittens available for sale.

3.4 Animals must come microchipped.

3.5 Members must seek veterinary care immediately for any animals/pets showing signs/symptoms of a disease and must consult with their primary veterinarian throughout the breeding process.

3.6 Animals must come with first vaccinations and be up to date with worming/parasite treatment in order to keep them free from common infectious diseases and external and internal parasites. This applies to breeding parents, and the puppies and kittens available for sale.

3.7 Cats and dogs shall not be housed in cages other than transport or illness treatment/quarantine (only if advised/approved by a vet).

3.8 Animals must spend the majority of their lives in communal runs or with free areas to move in, have access to natural lighting/ventilation, whereas cages may only be employed for transport, safety during recovery from disease or injury, and closely monitored crate training (only if advised/approved by a vet).

3.9 In the event that euthanasia is both necessary and humane (including cases of dangerous and intractable behaviours that preclude rehoming, where all other options have been exhausted, or life-threatening or chronically painful conditions that eliminate the reasonable probability of the animal having sufficient ongoing quality of life). The procedure must be performed by a qualified veterinarian and a detailed explanation must be provided.

3.10 Members that are housing dogs that are being bred in foster homes must ensure that those homes are subject to the same process of approval by a veterinarian and breeders retain all responsibilities for animal care and welfare (including rehoming them, if necessary, upon retirement), as well as responsibility for selling puppies and kittens conforming with the RPBA's code of ethics and standards. It's recommended that a foster care contract outlining the various responsibilities and duties of the foster family and owner is provided, although the ultimate responsibility of the RPBA's code of ethics & standards remains with the owner & caretaker of the animal.

3.11 No animal may undergo any banned procedures (ear cropping, tail docking, dog debarking) unless for a medical reason which is supported with a written recommendation by a veterinary practitioner.

3.12 All animals must have access, in their housing area, at all times, to a supply of fresh, clean water.

3.13 Disinfection and hygiene must be undertaken on a regular basis to ensure all areas where animals have access to are clean and free of faeces and urine.

For dogs: All pens and kennels used to house animals must be clean and hygienic at all times, and must be cleaned of faeces, wasted food and soiled bedding daily.

For cats: All cages and modules used to house animals must be clean and hygienic at all times, and must be cleaned of soiled litter, soiled bedding and toys daily.

3.14 All new animals will undergo a vet assessment, any recommended testing, and a mandatory quarantine period before being introduced to any existing animals at the property.

3.15 Animals are fed, watered, exercised and cared for for appropriate age/breed/size/medical requirements. This includes regular appropriate enrichment, grooming and handling.

3.16 Animals are to be exercised each day for appropriate age/breed/size medical requirements.

Puppies under 8 weeks: normal movement in whelping box/pen area.

Puppies over 8 weeks but under 16 weeks: minimum of 20 min run/playtime daily in a secure area. Exercise may include an introduction to daily walks on a lead or basic obedience training.

Dogs over 16 weeks of age: minimum of 30 min exercise twice a day with at least 2 hours between each session.

Exercise may include on-lead walking or off-lead run/playtime in a secure area or obedience training.
[Pregnant bitches](#) over 7 weeks gestation: gentle exercise for a minimum of 20 min each day, twice daily
For all other dogs (senior, injured, ill or recovering): As per veterinary advice.

3.17 Animals are to be provided enrichment for appropriate age/breed/size/ medical requirements.

Puppies under 8 weeks: a variety of surfaces and textures to explore e.g. hard floors, soft bedding, newspaper, real or artificial turf.

Puppies over 8 weeks but under 16 weeks: a variety of surfaces and textures to explore, a variety of objects to develop motor skills e.g. toys. These must be rotated on a weekly basis.

Kittens under 4 weeks of age: a variety of surfaces and textures to explore e.g. hard floors, soft bedding, newspaper.

Kittens over 4 weeks of age: climbing and perching areas, scratch poles, variety of toys which must be rotated weekly, variety of items to stimulate senses e.g. catnip, grass.

3.18 Animals are to be socialised with other animals and humans (where age and vaccination status allows) on a regular basis.

Puppies under 8 weeks: must include exposure to humans daily and littermates.

Puppies over 8 weeks but under 16 weeks: must include exposure to humans through daily and positive interactions e.g. play with toys. May include interaction with other vaccinated dogs.

Dogs over 16 weeks: Must include exposure to humans through daily handling and positive interactions (such as playtime) outside of daily cleaning/feeding routine. Must include play and exercise time with a variety of other vaccinated dogs that are socially compatible.

Kittens under 8 weeks: Must include exposure to humans daily and littermates.

Kittens over 8 weeks: Must be provided with daily exposure to humans through handling and interactive play using toys outside of daily cleaning/feeding routine. Must be provided with the opportunity to socialise with other animals/cats of appropriate vaccination status and temperament

3.19 Animals must be handled for appropriate age/breed/size/medical requirements.

Puppies under 4 weeks of age: 5 min handling daily per puppy

Puppies over 4 weeks but under 8 weeks: minimum 30 min human handling per litter daily

Puppies over 8 weeks: minimum 30 min handling per puppy/dog per day

Kittens under 4 weeks of age: must be handled for a minimum of 5 min per kitten per day

Kittens over 4 weeks but under 8 weeks: minimum 30 min human handling per litter daily

4. Breeding Requirements

4.1 Members must ensure only healthy animals are bred.

4.2. Due consideration must be given before mating takes place to the potential health risks of such a mating. This includes sizes of the bitch and stud, bitch's ability to whelp puppies, predisposed breed conditions. RPBA reserves the right to revoke memberships in circumstances where there is a significant or problematic size difference between dam and sire.

4.3 Retired breeding cats and dogs are required to be desexed and be kept as family pets or rehomed.

4.4 Breeding females must be retired from breeding before they become 6 years old.

4.5 Breeding males must be retired from breeding by before 6 years of age, unless a veterinary breeding clearance certificate has been obtained. Annual breeding clearance certificates are required for male dogs to continue breeding beyond 6 years of age.

4.6 All animals must be at least 12 months of age prior to their first mating.

4.7 Members must make all reasonable attempts to ensure that animals they are breeding from are free from heritable diseases.

4.8 Breeding females are not to have more than 3 litters in any two-year period without the written approval of a veterinary practitioner.

For dogs: females must have no more than 5 litters in their lifetime.

For cats: females must have no more than 8 litters in their lifetime.

4.9 Proper records must be maintained of all breeding activities and must be produced when requested to the RPBA. This includes, but is not limited to: vaccinations, flea and worming treatments, microchipping, veterinary visits, new owner information, matings and methods, litter dates, litter sizes and pre-mating and postpartum health checks. These records must be kept for a period of 7 years.

4.10 Breeding mates must not be closely related i.e. first-degree mating (father and daughter, brother and sister, or mother and son) must not occur, and second-degree mating is not recommended without prior veterinary advice.

4.11 Pre-breeding health checks must occur prior to first mating of any animal, and at least annual health checks are required thereafter.

4.12 Female dogs and cats should have postpartum health checks within 8 weeks postpartum.

4.13 Bitches and Queens are to have an area separate from other animals where they can raise their litter.

4.14 Puppies and kittens under 6 weeks of age must be kept separate from animals from outside of the household/premise.

5. Sale Requirements

5.1 Kittens and puppies may be sold and rehomed only after [8 weeks old](#) (age). They must have had their 6-week first vaccination.

5.2 Kittens and puppies, when sold commercially, may only be sold to RPBA-audited pet stores, or stores that are members of PIAA, never at shows or fairs.

5.3 Sale of kittens and puppies cannot be made by or to a person under 18 years of age.

5.4 All advertisements for dogs and cats for sale must include the animal's microchip number, relevant Breeder/Supplier number and vaccination status

5.5 RPBA members shall honestly share the upbringing/breeding/temperament of their kittens or puppies with prospective owners.

5.6 Breeders must ask potential owners the following questions and be satisfied to a reasonable degree by the answers from prospective buyers that the animals' welfare will not be compromised:

- How long has it been since you decided to buy a puppy/kitten, and what preparation have you undertaken?
- Do you live in a house, and is your property fully fenced/secure for the type of animal you are hoping to purchase? What sort of housing do you have for the puppy or kitten?
- What made you choose this particular breed?
- Are you fully aware of the life expectancy, ongoing cost expectations, and dietary/housing/exercise/health/training needs of a puppy or kitten?
- Do you have other pets, and are they up-to-date with their vaccinations and parasite prevention?
- Do you have pet insurance, or will you set aside savings for the unfortunate event of disease or injury in your pet's future?

5.7 Breeders must fully disclose any and all known hereditary and or pre-existing conditions in writing to the new owner.

5.8 Breeders must provide new and potential owners with comprehensive general information including feeding, desexing, vet care, worming, and flea treatment for their animal. These fact sheets must include at a minimum the below:

- General care requirements of the species, including appropriate diet and feeding regimes and expected costs
- The usual lifespan of the breed/species
- The minimum and recommended requirements for humane and secure shelter and accommodation, as well as common-sense advice in this area (e.g. maximum time an animal can be left unattended, shelter from the sun and water requirements during summer, etc.)
- The minimum and recommended requirements for social contact with humans and other animals of the same species, as well as recommended types and levels of exercise
- The minimum and recommended requirements for the prevention and control of common diseases, parasites, behavioural conditions and emergencies, both in general and in relation to the particular species or breed, and advice on identifying and managing or responding to such events
- Relevant information about the legal requirements for pet ownership in your state or area
- Any other information that the purchaser must reasonably be made aware of

5.9 RPBA members must accurately represent the breed of any animal sold.

6. Post Sale Requirements

6.1 RPBA members are solely responsible for rehoming any owned animals in their care or that have been bred during the animal's lifetime. Should an animal be rendered homeless, the RPBA is happy to assist and provide advice where possible.

6.2 Upon the sale of a puppy or kitten, RPBA members must agree to provide a three-day 'cooling off' period, in which the animal may be returned for any reason. If this is done during the cooling-off period, it is at the Breeders discretion what refund will apply, however a minimum of 50% refund* is required to be given (This may exclude any transport expenses incurred during the sale). *A 75% refund is required in the state of Victoria

6.3 A post-sale agreement outlining all health tests completed by a veterinarian must be provided at the time of sale, including information on other unpreventable and/or untestable conditions, and for which conditions refunds will be offered

6.4 Expenses for the treatment of genetic and/or health problems which can be tested for, which are present from birth, or which arise in the first 12 months of the dogs' or cats' life, or from 12 months from point of sale, which are not disclosed/have not presented prior to sale, are the sole responsibility of the RPBA-approved breeder, up to the price of the animal. This also includes costs and veterinary care associated with any disease or injuries present during the time of sale. Breeders must cover these costs up to the price of the animal (no more than the cost of the animal is claimable) once written confirmation from a vet has been received. Alternatively, if both parties are in agreement, the breeder may receive the animal back with a refund of the original cost of the animal (as well as taking responsibility for the medical condition and if possible, for the re-homing of the animal), or replace the animal with a healthy individual. Conditions which have been disclosed in writing prior to sale or are not able to be tested for are the responsibility of the buyer. *Extra conditions are required for VIC members – See Section 7.4

7. State Specific Requirements

The below requirements must be adhered to for all members located in Victoria:

7.1 Vaccinations must be administered for animals as specified as per sections 6(2)(a) or 6(2)(b) (for dogs) and 7(2)(a) or 7(2)(b) (for cats) of the Victorian Code.

6 (2) (a) Vaccination and parasite prevention for dogs under 12 weeks of age

Puppies must be vaccinated against and treated for the following in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations (except where a veterinary practitioner advises and records that treatment would prejudice the animal's health):

- Canine Distemper
- Infectious Canine Hepatitis
- Canine Parvovirus
- Canine Cough (parainfluenza (Type II) and Bordetella bronchiseptica)
- Heartworm
- Internal and external parasites (for example, fleas and ticks).

First treatment/vaccine must not be given before 10 days of age.

Vaccination certificates, including dates of next treatment, details of the treatment required, and a record of who administered the treatment, must be signed by a veterinary practitioner at each vaccination.

6 (2) (b) Vaccination and parasite prevention

for dogs 12 weeks of age or older

All dogs 12 weeks of age or older in the business must have current vaccination against and treatment for the following, in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, (except where a veterinary practitioner advises and records that treatment would prejudice the animal's health):

- Canine Distemper
- Infectious Canine Hepatitis
- Canine Parvovirus
- Canine Cough (parainfluenza (Type II) and Bordetella bronchiseptica)
- Heartworm
- Internal and external parasites (for example, fleas and ticks).

Vaccination certificates, including dates of next treatment, details of the treatment required, and a record of who administered the treatment, must be signed by a veterinary practitioner at each vaccination.

7.2 Written agreements should be in place between breeders and a veterinary practitioner that include arrangements as per section 2(3) of the Victorian Code

2 (3) Veterinary practitioner

A written agreement between the proprietor and the veterinary practitioner, who has relevant experience in small animal health and management, must be established and include arrangements for:

- the use of the veterinary practitioner's facilities for the treatment of animals
- the provision of isolation housing if the business does not have a separate isolation housing and the supervision of animals in isolation at the business
- advice and development of the health management plan for the business
- providing vaccination certificates for kittens and puppies being sold from the business to accompany the guarantee
- providing a general health check and certificate for kittens vaccinated by the breeding business
- providing veterinary assistance for the business at all times and able to provide treatment and/or services to the business within 6 hours of notification that veterinary attention is required

- 24 hour contact or treatment or provision of services through an alternative 24 hour or emergency practice.

Where the veterinary practitioner is also the proprietor of the business, the business must undergo an annual inspection by an independent small animal veterinary practitioner.

The inspection must review the health management plan for the business and the vaccination and health status of all animals at the business.

7.3 Health Management plans are to be developed and reviewed annually in conjunction with a veterinary practitioner, and should include elements as per section 3(5) of the Victorian Code. *(RBPA has a Health Management Plan available for members to use)*

3 (5) Health management plan

Every business must have a health management plan which is reviewed annually. Health management plans must be formulated in consultation with a veterinary practitioner. Plans must be signed by a veterinary practitioner on

an annual basis and whenever veterinary practitioners change, whichever is more frequent.

Note

Proprietors and operations managers should draft their health management plan prior to consulting their veterinary practitioner. This will reduce the time and cost associated with having the plan approved by a veterinary practitioner.

A checklist for the health management plan and guides for developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) can be found at www.vic.gov.au/pets.

The health management plan must include protocols for:

- assessment for admission of new breeding animals to the business
- protocols for quarantine and movement of animals, including new animals introduced to the business
- provision of appropriate diet for all animals at the business
- hygiene, disinfection and disease prevention
- vaccination programs
- external parasite prevention and treatment programs including screening for ear mites, dermatophytes, ticks, and ringworm
- internal parasite prevention and treatment programs
- investigation and treatment of animals showing signs of chlamydia
- a procedure for the investigation and management of FIP (Feline Infectious Peritonitis). Businesses with repeated cases of diarrhoea leading to the suspicion of FIP must undertake investigation by means of autopsy of cats that die or are euthanised due to their symptoms. Cats showing clinical symptoms must be provided with palliative care prior to humane euthanasia. A management and breeding plan should be developed where businesses have confirmed multiple cases
- response to a general outbreak of disease
- grooming requirements
- approved methods of euthanasia for emergency situations
- birthing protocols
- management of isolation facilities (where isolation facilities are constructed at the business)
- exercise, environmental enrichment and socialisation programs

- assessment programs for the health and welfare of animals being reared for sale or as replacement breeding animals
- health assessment for puppies and kittens for sale
- behavioural and welfare assessment of animals on a daily basis
- processes for determining the suitability of breeding animals to continue breeding within the business
- processes for long term management, desexing and/or assessing suitability for rehoming or euthanasia of retired breeding animals
- risk assessments of housing and exercise areas and risk management plan/s
- pest management protocols
- development and display of emergency response plans for both humans and animals including evacuation procedures at the business.

7.3 All breeders are required to keep records as per sections 4(3)(a) and 4(3)(b) of the Victorian Code

4 (3) Animal records

All treatment records of any type must include the date and time of the treatment administration, person prescribing the treatment, dosage and details of treatment, person administering treatment, dosage administered and any relevant observation of the animal during and post treatment, and the name and signature of person administering the treatment corresponding to the animal being treated.

Records of daily observations and inspections, in accordance with the requirements of this Code, must be kept and retained for a minimum of 5 years.

4 (3) (a) Animals under 12 weeks of age

Animal record files must be established at birth for each individual animal born and maintained according to the following requirements until the ownership of the animal changes hands or the animal is deceased. Copies of records of animals sold from/retained by the business must be kept for a minimum of 5 years.

For each animal under 12 weeks of age in the business, the following records must be available:

- name (or other identification)
- microchip number (when implanted)
- sex
- breed
- birth date (or where the animal was purchased from another breeder or private person and birthdate is unknown an approximate age based on veterinary assessment)
- distinguishing features
- home pen location at the business (pen/cage location and details)
- dam breed and sire breed, birth date, microchip number and owner details
- a complete health care and veterinary history including:
 - vaccination records
 - internal and external parasite control
 - heartworm records (dogs only)
 - disposal records including date and method of disposal, and the name and address of new owners

- a copy of the vaccination certificate and breeder health declaration for the animal
- name, address and contact number of the purchaser
- return records, including date, reason for return and copies of supporting documentation, where applicable.

4 (3) (b) Animals 12 weeks of age or older

Animal record files must be established at birth for each individual animal born and maintained according to the following requirements until the ownership of the animal changes hands or the animal is deceased. Copies of records of animals sold from/retained by the business must be kept for a minimum of 5 years.

For each animal 12 weeks of age or older in the business, the following records must be available:

- council registration certificate
- name (or other identification)
- microchip number
- sex
- breed
- birth date (or where unknown an approximate age based on veterinary assessment)
- distinguishing features
- home pen location at the business (pen/cage location and details)
- dam breed and sire breed, birth date, microchip number and owner details (where known)
- animal acquisition date and details of previous owner (where applicable)
- a complete health care and veterinary history including:
 - vaccination records
 - internal and external parasite control
 - heartworm records (dogs only)
 - breeding status
 - complete breeding history for each fertile female including dates of mating and birthing, number of offspring born for each litter including weeks gestation at birth, number of offspring born alive, number of offspring born dead, any birth complications and a record of treatment administered; number of offspring alive at 8 weeks of age, and microchip number for all offspring alive at 8 weeks of age; any veterinary treatment provided post birthing and/or during lactation
 - complete breeding history for each fertile male including dates of mating and identification of female mated with
 - disposal records including date and mode of disposal, and the name and address of new owners
 - return records, including date, reason for return and copies of supporting documentation, where applicable.

7.4 If an animal is diagnosed with, suffering from, dies of, or is euthanised from a physical defect or disease that is traceable to the point of sale within 3 years of purchase, the business (breeder) must refund 100% of the purchase price where the owner of the animal provides supporting statements from a veterinary practitioner, including test results where a suitable test is available. Owners of the animal must make veterinary records available to the breeder for the breeder to obtain their own veterinary advice (second opinion) for the purpose of informing future breeding management.

7.5 Members must comply with the housing requirements outlined below for dogs and cats:

For Dogs:

6 (5) (d) (i) Housing

Sleeping areas must be able to be cleaned and disinfected weekly.

Each dog older than 16 weeks of age must be provided with a separate bed or sufficient bedding material that all animals can sleep comfortably at the same time.

Where dog housing is constructed indoors, but not inside a place of residence (such as a kennel building), natural daylight during daylight hours must be provided and temperature, humidity and ventilation must be managed.

Ventilation must be adequate to keep animal housing areas free of dampness, noxious odours and draughts.

Fully enclosed kennel areas must:

- have an air change rate of 8-12 changes per hour to prevent the build-up of foul odours
- have ventilation devices that avoid draughts and distribute fresh air evenly to all of the housing areas.

Where forced ventilation is the only form of air, all of the following are required:

- air recirculation units incorporating effective air cleaning and filtration to ensure the removal of infectious organisms and chemicals
- a back-up and alarm system in case of power failures or breakdown of ventilation and temperature control mechanisms must be maintained
- temperature must be maintained in the range of 10-32°C.

Where sleeping areas are outdoors, the following minimum standards must be met:

- weatherproof housing must be provided for each dog
- materials must be selected for ease of maintenance and cleaning, durability and non-toxicity
- beds must be protected from the weather (wind, rain, sun and extremes of climate), vermin and harassment from other animals
- beds must not be made predominantly of concrete or metal
- beds must be raised off the ground
- soft, warm bedding material must be provided in all housing and changed weekly or more often if required
- bedding must be able to be kept dry at all times
- housing must be cleaned daily and disinfected weekly.

Where small businesses choose to build housing pens or kennel facilities, those facilities must comply with the housing area requirements set out in Table 3.

One third of the minimum pen size for each dog must be weatherproof and include raised sleeping quarters.

The flooring of this area must be made impervious to liquids to assist cleaning, disinfection and drainage, and must have solid walls. No part of the pen floor may be constructed of wire.

The floor of the remaining pen area may be made from any material (except wire), but must be easily cleaned of faeces, old food, etc. This area must not be allowed to become infested with parasites.

The breed/type of dog, including their grooming requirements, must be taken into consideration when determining the flooring in this area of the pen.

The entire pen floor must not be allowed to remain muddy or sufficiently dusty that the dogs are likely to suffer, or are suffering, from respiratory or eye conditions.

This area must be drained to prevent pooling of liquids.

All pens must provide the dogs with continuous access to natural daylight during the day.

Pens may be separated by solid partitions, galvanised chain wire or weld mesh wire dividers.

The pens and flooring of the pens must be of a design that will not cause injury to the animal.

The internal surfaces of the external walls of kennel buildings must be constructed of impervious, solid, washable materials to facilitate cleaning and disinfection.

Table 3. Minimum pen sizes

Height of dog at shoulder (Cms)	Min area (Sq.m)	Min width (Cms)	Min height (Cms)	Increased floor area for each pup between 8 and 16 weeks age (Sq.m)
Below 40	7	120	180	0.5
40 to 70	10	180	180	1.0
70 and above	15	240	180	1.5

Note: The minimum pen sizes are for one adult dog (older than 16 weeks) or one bitch and a litter up to 8 weeks of age.

6 (5) (d) (ii) Mating areas

When dogs are mating, they must be provided with an area physically isolated from all other animals at the business.

6 (5) (d) (iii) Whelping/lactating areas

Separate whelping areas must be provided for each bitch and her puppies containing a whelping box.

The whelping box must be large enough for the bitch to lie comfortably while whelping and to accommodate the bitch and her puppies for the first 4 weeks after whelping.

The whelping box must have solid sides that can be easily disinfected, and must be of a height that will allow the bitch to exit readily but will prevent puppies under 4 weeks from falling out.

Whelping areas must be physically separate from all other animals.

Lactating areas must contain a fully screened bedding area to allow the bitch physical separation from all other animals.

Whelping and lactating housing must be maintained at a temperature between 10 and 32°C at all times.

It is important to provide a heat source for the puppies, particularly during colder weather, to ensure they can maintain their body temperature as their internal temperature regulation systems are not working at this age.

Note

[Newborn puppies](#) prefer an ambient temperature of 32°C up until about 4 days of age. After 4 days, the temperature can be gradually reduced over a period of 2–3 weeks. However, during this period of time, the bitch may not be comfortable in an environment at a constant 32°C. Breeders should consider installing lamps over bedding areas (25 watt globe is sufficient) for puppies, however it is important to provide an alternative cooler area for the bitch.

Sleeping areas must be raised off the floor to prevent draughts, but not be of such a height that puppies could fall out and become injured or stranded.

Lactating/whelping areas must contain bedding that is soft, absorbent and easily disposed of or cleaned and disinfected when soiled.

Note

Bedding material should be chosen very carefully. Deep, thick bedding material can result in adverse outcomes for puppies, such as suffocation or squashing if the puppies get themselves under layers of bedding.

Lactating areas must have a divider to allow the bitch access to an area where she cannot be reached by her puppies, to allow her to rest.

Whelping and lactating areas must have access to natural daylight.