

## Annex A: Information on licensing of pet cats

### **Key information for cat owners to note during transition period**

Checklist for cat owners before applying for a pet cat licence:

- ✓ Complete a one-time free online pet ownership course at <https://go.gov.sg/petownershipcourse>
- ✓ Microchip their pet cat(s) – this should be done by a licensed veterinarian
- ✓ Strongly consider sterilising their pet cat(s) if they have not done so

Licensing their pet cat(s):

- ✓ Apply for a licence with the microchip number via PALS at <https://pals.avsgov.sg/>
  - Owners are allowed to license and continue to keep **all their existing<sup>1</sup> pet cats** if they license them during the transition period and are able to ensure that the cats' health and welfare are taken care of. Do not abandon pets.
- ✓ Licensing will be free during the two-year transition period
  - One-time licences with lifetime validity will be issued for sterilised cats while licences covering the transition period will be issued for unsterilised cats.

AVS strongly encourages cat owners to sterilise their cats before licensing them. Sterilising their cats will not only prevent unintended breeding but offers health benefits to the cats as well – sterilised cats will have a reduced risk of certain cancers, and are less likely to roam and caterwaul.

AVS has heard strong calls from some stakeholders for the mandatory sterilisation of pet cats, while others also feel strongly about not sterilising their cats for various reasons. AVS has adopted the approach to incentivise cat owners who sterilise their cats through the free one-time licences with lifetime validity instead of making sterilisation mandatory. Making sterilisation mandatory for pet cats may inadvertently deter those who have strong views against sterilisation or who are unable to sterilise their cats, from licensing and microchipping their cats, which is key for traceability to safeguard public and animal health.

During the two-year transition period, AVS will review pet cat sterilisation rates and assess if there is a need to introduce enhanced measures for sterilisation, including making pet cat sterilisation mandatory after the transition period. This phased approach ensures that those

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<sup>1</sup> When applying for the pet cat licences, owners will be required to declare that their cats were owned prior to the commencement of the transition period (i.e., owned prior to 1 September 2024).

who are unable to sterilise their cats or have strong views against sterilisation will still be able to license and microchip their cats.

### **Key information for cat owners to note after transition period**

After the two-year transition period, licensees who have not sterilised their cats will be subject to higher licensing fees on a renewal basis. Refer to **Annex B** for more information on the licence fees. Additionally, applicants for **new cat licences**<sup>2</sup> after the transition period will have to meet the following limits:

- Two cats (and one dog of an approved breed, as per the current limit) for each HDB flat
  - The number limit for pet cats in HDB flats was set in close consultation with HDB, taking into consideration the wide-ranging feedback provided while being mindful of the needs and concerns of different segments of the community.
- Three cats or dogs, or a combination of both (i.e., a maximum of three cats/dogs in total), for each private premises
  - The number limit for pet cats in private premises was set in consideration that the space that is available for pets at each private premises can vary considerably. This also took into consideration diverse views regarding pet cats, such as from those who have experienced cat-related disamenities.

The keeping of additional pets will be subject to approval by AVS, as well as HDB (for HDB residents).

### **One-time free online pet ownership course**

All first-time cat licence applicants will need to complete a one-time free online pet ownership course before they can apply for a cat licence<sup>3</sup>.

The course aims to share more about the basic pet care of cats and dogs, and responsible pet ownership, to help raise standards of pet care and build a harmonious living environment in the community. It covers four topics:

1. Biology such as life cycle and reproduction

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<sup>2</sup> Owners can continue to keep **all their existing pet cats** that had been licensed during the transition period. However, if the number of licensed pet cats already exceeds the limit, owners will not be able to license additional cats after the transition period.

<sup>3</sup> From 1 September 2024, first-time dog licence applicants will similarly need to complete this one-time free online pet ownership course before they can be issued a dog licence.

2. Pet care and health including understanding pet behaviour, husbandry and caring for sick pets
3. Responsible pet ownership
4. Rules and legislation related to pet ownership

It also provides online resources for owners who are interested to get more information on caring for their pets.