

From the Office of the Minister
Michelle O'Neill MLA



Department of
**Agriculture and
Rural Development**

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AN ROINN

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Forbartha Tuaithe**

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Suzanne Wylie
Chief Executive
Belfast City Council
Chief Executive's Department
City Hall
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SW/as
COR/1008/2015
17 February 2015

Suzanne, a chara

Thank you for your letter dated 6 February 2015 regarding the Dogs (Licensing and Identification) Regulations 2012 and the statutory requirement for a dog owner's name and address to be inscribed on the dog's collar or on a plate or badge attached to it.

Paragraph 6 of the Dogs (Licensing and Identification) Regulations 2012 (the 2012 Regulations) requires that the keeper of a dog in respect of which a licence is required shall ensure that the dog wears a collar with the name and address of the keeper inscribed on it or on a plate or badge attached to it. This has been a legislative requirement since 1983 and was subject to a full public consultation in 2009 when the Dogs Amendment Bill was taken forward.

I am aware that my officials have had some enquiries seeking clarification on the dog collar name and address requirement. There also appears to be confusion over the additional requirement for a telephone number, following publication of an article in the Council's City Matters residents' magazine. DARD officials have communicated with Dog Warden Service officials and the Councils' Dog Advisory Group (NIDAG) requesting that the legislative requirement at Paragraph 6 of the 2012 Regulations is made clear across the Dog Warden Service. That is, for the name and address of the keeper only to be on the dog's collar or inscribed on a plate or badge attached to it.

I acknowledge your request in relation to this statutory requirement and I have asked my officials to consider including the dog collar name and address issue when they are reviewing the dog licensing fee with Councils. It is intended to undertake the dog licence fee review once the new Council structures have bedded in.

Is mise le meas

MICHELLE O'NEILL MLA
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

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the Department via Text Relay. Dial 18002 + number

