

Puppy and kitten farms

Don't support the intensive farming of puppies and kittens

Policy

The Animal Justice Party (AJP) recognises that people love companion cats and dogs, they care about their wellbeing, and we do too. Therefore, the AJP calls for an immediate end to puppy and kitten farming across Australia. Animals currently in the industry must not be killed, but adopted out.

Key Objectives

1. End the intensive breeding of companion animals.
2. Promote adoption and rescue as the best way to bring a companion animal into your family.
3. Require "pet" shops to keep only rescue animals for adoption, as they are currently a major outlet for puppy and kitten "farmers" (refer to our Companion Animals Policy).
4. Implement traceability for companion animals by integrating all state/territory systems into a national online register which documents the history of every animal from birth.
5. Ensure that people cannot use the Internet or other media to deceive the public regarding the origin of listed animals, and hold publishers accountable for advertisements that do not comply with legislation.
6. Allocate sufficient resources to enforce animal protection laws in each state (see our Animal Law policy), including annual inspections and audits of breeders and breeding facilities.
7. Introduce a cap on the number of breeding dogs/cats held at any one property and a cap on the number of litters a breeding dog/cat can have per year and over their lifetime.
8. Ensure that when puppy and kitten factories close, the animals are rehomed through appropriate rescue groups, and not killed.
9. Prevent businesses from calling themselves "registered breeders" simply because they have a local government permit.

Background

Australians love companion animals, with many of us regarding dogs or cats as members of the family.

Yet across Australia, there are thousands of cats and dogs condemned to a life of suffering in commercial intensive breeding facilities. These are also known as puppy/kitten farms and are more akin to factory farms, where dogs and cats are often kept confined and intensively bred, having litter after litter. The animals in these "farms" are often kept in squalid conditions, such as concrete pens, with minimal or no bedding, poor hygiene and may be *denied veterinary*¹ treatment.

Many of the animals are *deprived*² of their basic needs and natural behaviours including socialisation, exercise and companionship. As a result, they may develop a range of *behavioural problems*³, such as a heightened sensitivity to touch, unnatural fear, separation anxiety and aggression, and complete shutdown. Puppies and kittens may also have physical abnormalities from poor breeding or poor nutrition.

When no longer useful for breeding, animals may be *shot*⁴, killed by *blunt force trauma*⁵, or *left to die*⁶. Puppies and kittens are sold to the public in "pet" shops and online in a way that hides their origin. Most people do not realise a new puppy may come from a facility housing hundreds of other ill-treated dogs.

There is a horrendous lack of legislation to stop puppy and kitten farms. Victoria is the only state so far to have enacted comprehensive legislation for puppy and kitten factories. This legislation bans the sale of puppies and kittens in pet shops. The Victorian Government also implemented a *Pet Exchange*

¹<https://www.qt.com.au/news/puppy-farms-raided-after-pregnant-dog-dies/4100635/>

²<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2011.09.006>

³<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jveb.2017.01.001>

⁴<https://www.animalsaustralia.org/puppies>

⁵<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/weekend-australian-magazine/puppy-factories-how-oscar-the-dog-inspired-a-campaign-to-close-them/news-story/c9d43c44aef962572ff919807ace72d2>

⁶<https://www.news.com.au/national/nsw-act/news/two-nsw-puppy-farms-raided-over-alleged-extreme-animal-cruelty/news-story/9160972866815e407f3e732b4573a9d5>

Register to follow all cats and dogs sold online (to ensure effective traceability of animals and accountability of the people breeding them).

The Victorian Government has introduced a limit of ten fertile breeding dogs per breeder. However, the impact of this legislation has unfortunately seen many Victorian puppy farmers moving interstate to New South Wales, where the current legislation protecting these animals is weak (AJP representatives in New South Wales are currently campaigning on this).

This response reinforces the need for nationally-consistent legislation across all states and territories.

Related Policies

- Animal Law
- Companion Animals

Photo: Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals Media

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