



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Question and Answer Requirements for Docking Working Dogs' Tails

### What kind of dogs can be docked?

Working dogs of the following types (but not combinations of breeds) are eligible to be docked:

#### Spaniels:

English Springer Spaniel  
Welsh Springer Spaniel  
Cocker Spaniel

#### Terriers:

Jack Russell Terrier  
Cairn Terrier  
Lakeland Terrier

Norfolk Terrier

#### Hunt, Point, Retrieve:

Braque Italian  
Brittany  
German Long Haired Pointer  
German Short Haired Pointer  
German Wire Haired Pointer  
Hungarian Vizsla  
Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla  
Italian Spinone  
Spanish Water Dog  
Weinmaraner  
Korthals Griffon  
Slovakian Rough Haired Pointer  
Large Munsterlander  
Small Munsterlander

### How do I know if my dog's tail has been legally docked?

The exemption allows certain types of working dogs to have their tails docked by a vet. This must be done when the dog is not more than 5 days old. If your dog has had its tail docked by a vet, the breeder or seller of the dog will have been given a certificate which they should pass on to you.

The docked dog will also have to be microchipped before it is 3 months of age. If you get the dog before it is 3 months old, we would encourage you to make sure that it is microchipped before taking ownership and that the certificate has been completed in all parts. Veterinary surgeons are the only people allowed to dock a working dog, and it is their decision alone as to whether the animal is tail docked or not.

### **Are there any exceptions to the Regulations?**

The only exception is if a dog (of any breed) has damaged its tail and needs it amputated on medical grounds. No paperwork is required for this procedure, however it is advised that the veterinary surgeon that carries out the procedure keeps a record of it on the dog's file.

### **Is there any paperwork to prove the procedure has been carried out legally?**

Yes, a certificate must accompany the dog detailing where it was docked and for what purpose (e.g. pest control).

### **How do I obtain the certificate?**

The Welsh Government issues certificates directly to veterinary surgeons for them to complete. Veterinary surgeons can obtain them by contacting the animal welfare team of the Welsh Government via the following methods:

Tel: 03000 256316/03000 255652

Email: [companionanimalwelfare@gov.wales](mailto:companionanimalwelfare@gov.wales)

Veterinary surgeons are able to design their own certificate, however it must be in line with Schedule 2 of the Docking of Working Dogs' Tails (Wales) Regulations 2007. It is preferred that certificates are ordered from the Welsh Government so if there are issues that need to be resolved we can quickly help and advise.

The owner of the dog must produce the following evidence to prove that the dog is likely to be used as a working dog:

- (a) Evidence of the dam (mother) of the dog;
- (b) a completed statement, made in Part 1 of a certificate signed and dated by the owner of the dog or by another person whom the veterinary surgeon reasonably believes to be representing the owner; and
- (c) one of the following—
  - (i) where the dog is presented for certification on behalf of one of Her Majesty's armed forces, armed forces identification;
  - (ii) where the dog is presented for certification on behalf of a body providing an emergency rescue service, emergency rescue identification;
  - (iii) where the dog is presented for certification on behalf of a police authority, police identification;
  
  - (iv) where the dog is presented for certification on behalf of Her Majesty's Prison Service or of an organisation contracted to provide custodial services on behalf of the Secretary of State, prison service identification;
  - (v) where the dog is presented for certification on behalf of Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs, HMRC identification;
  - (vi) evidence that the owner of the dog, or an agent or employee of the owner most likely to be using the dog, will be using the dog for work in connection with lawful pest control;
  - (vii) a current shotgun or firearm certificate issued to the owner of the dog, or to the agent or employee of the owner most likely to be using the dog for work in connection with the lawful shooting of animals;
  - (viii) a letter from a gamekeeper, a land-occupier (or his or her agent), a person with shooting rights, a shoot organiser, a club official, a person

representing the National Working Terrier Federation, or a person engaged in lawful pest control, stating that the breeder of the dog whose tail is to be docked is known to him or her and that dogs bred by that breeder have been used (as the case may be) on his or her land, or in his or her shoot, or for pest control.

**Does the same vet that docked my dog have to microchip it as well?**

No, a dog can be microchipped at any vet, although some may not be willing to carry out the procedure if they cannot prove that the certificate relates to the same dog. The microchip number must be recorded on the docking certificate.

**Can I still show dogs that have been docked?**

Dogs docked after 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007 will not be able to be shown at events where the public have paid an entrance fee. However, this ban does not apply where the dog is shown for the purposes of demonstrating its working ability.

**To whom do I report a suspected case of illegal tail docking?**

To report a suspected case of illegal tail docking, please contact your Local Authority's animal welfare team (usually part of Trading Standards).

**I own a dog that had its tail docked illegally before coming into my care – is it illegal to own this dog?**

No; even though the procedure may have been carried out illegally, it is not illegal to own the dog. Owners are advised to pass the details of the breeder from where they obtained their animal to their Local Authority.