

The law, by-laws and implementation

[00:10] - Rochelle Deane

So New Zealand has an Act called the Dog Control Act, which governs the powers of our animal management officers in the field. The Act is mostly around the responsibilities of a dog owner. In the most part, that's registering their dog so that we know who owns the dog and it's also around keeping your dog under control and confined to your property at all times.

The Act also allows local authorities, local councils to make their own rules for the area. In the Far North District Council, this means that we can limit access or restrict access to certain times for dogs to go on beaches and in our parks.

It's also for dog owners to make sure that they are responsible around their dogs, keeping them on leashes and picking up after their dogs when they've been to the toilet.

[00:59]

There is a requirement in New Zealand that all dogs must be registered annually from the age of three months by the dog owner. On each registration, the dogs receive a registration tag. That tag has an individual number which is on our council's database. That allows us to recognise who the owner of the dogs are. All dogs in New Zealand also must be microchipped.

[01:25] - Kellie Cook

All of our jobs are received via members of the community. These can range from just concerned members or it can be barking dog complaints, wandering dog, aggressive dogs in public or on a private property, or attacks being on another dog, a person or another animal.

[01:46]

For all dogs that arrive at our shelter, we complete what's called an impound sheet. What is covered on this impound sheet is details relating to the dog, being the breed, colour, age and sex, along with details relating to the job, being the location of the pickup, the time, etc.

We also take a photo of the dog, scan to check to see if there is a microchip and also complete an overall health check.

[02:15]

When a job is received, an officer will arrive at a property and depending on the seriousness of the job, this can either vary from an officer having an educational conversation with a dog owner, offering tips on how to prevent this behaviour happening again or this could involve the dog being seized if it has been involved in an attack.

[02:39]

If a job is received in relation to a wandering dog, an officer will begin to patrol that area in the hopes of locating this dog. If the dog is located, it will be brought back to the shelter and impounded.

[02:58] - Rochelle Deane

When a dog comes into our shelter and it's registered and microchipped, it's easy for us to be able to locate the dog owner. If it's not registered and microchipped, then it's up to the owner to come to us to claim their dog.

Dogs that are in our shelter have a period of seven days for the owners to come forward. After that time, if we are able, we will rehome the dog.