

What do new Animal Welfare Laws mean?

Overview: The Animal Welfare Act came into effect on 1 June 2024.

The new laws aim to ensure that all kept animals on the Isle of Man are treated with care and respect.

It means owners and keepers of pets such as cats, dogs, rabbits, horses and other kept animals have a duty of care to their animals and must make sure they meet their need:

- for a suitable place to live;
- for a suitable diet;
- to exhibit normal behaviour patterns;
- to be housed with, or apart from, other animals (if applicable); and
- to be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease

The new laws also protect domestic animals from unnecessary suffering at the hand of their owner – in the same way the Animal Health Act 1996 makes farmers legally responsible for the welfare of farm animals.

People who fail to comply may be prosecuted.

What help is available?

The Department for Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) has published a series of Codes of Practice for the most popular domestic animals to help owners understand their responsibilities, however, pets each have individual needs that must also be met.

Codes of Practice can be found at gov.im/animal-welfare-act-2023

Reporting Concerns: People can flag general welfare issues with DEFA's animal health team by calling **01624 685844 (office hours)** or emailing animalwelfare@gov.im

Enforcement: DEFA will handle complaints, investigations, and enforcement relating to the Act.

Animal Cruelty: People with concerns related to serious neglect, starvation, or intentional harm of animals should speak to the police.



**Isle of Man
Government**
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