



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Comhairle Contae
an Chabháin
Cavan
County Council

Guidelines for Completing the Application Form for a Certificate of Exemption to keep an XL Bully type dog in Ireland

You must apply individually for each dog (one application form for each dog).

The owner of a dog must be 16 years of age or older and is defined in the Control of Dogs Act 1986 as follows;

“**owner**” in relation to a dog includes the occupier of any premises where the dog is kept or permitted to live or remain at any particular time unless such occupier proves to the contrary: Provided always that where there is more than one dwelling in any house, the occupier of the dwelling in which the dog is kept, or is permitted to live or remain, shall, until the contrary is proved, be presumed to be the owner;

Use the [XL Bully Type Physical Conformation Standard](#) to check if your dog is an XL Bully type. If you are not sure after checking, you may apply for a Certificate of Exemption as a precaution.

Where to send this form

Complete this form and send by post or email to your Local Authority at one of the following;

Email: dogs@cavancoco.ie

Postal: Environment Department, Old Library Building, Farnham St, Cavan, Co Cavan

The following documentation is required before the Certificate of Exemption can be issued

1. Copy of valid Dog Licence.
2. Copy of Microchipping Certificate.
3. Copy of Veterinary Confirmation of Neutering Status Form.
4. Photographic Proof of Identity (Copy of Passport, Drivers Licence, public services card etc.).
5. Proof of Address (Copy of Utility Bill or bank statement within previous 3 months etc.).

We will process your application and send you either a:

- Certificate of Exemption.
- Request for Further Information.
- Refusal Letter.

If your dog is already neutered, your Certificate of Exemption will be issued providing all other conditions of application are fulfilled before 31st May 2025.

If your dog is not neutered, your Certificate of Exemption will be issued on receipt of the Veterinary Confirmation of Neutering Status Form, providing all other conditions of application are fulfilled.

Identification of your Dog as XL Bully Type

The only legally recognized method of identification of your dog as an XL Bully Type in Ireland is by use of the [XL Bully Type Physical Conformation Standard](#). You may assess your dog against the standard using the link above.

Neutering

You must arrange to have your XL Bully dog neutered by your Veterinary Surgeon/Practitioner. Neutering must be carried out through castration for male dogs or spaying for female dogs.

Once your dog has been neutered, you must complete a **Veterinary Confirmation of Neutering Status Form**. This form must be counter-signed and stamped by your Veterinary Surgeon/Practitioner and forwarded to your Local Authority.

When you need to do this depends on how old your dog is on 1 October 2024:

- If your dog has already been neutered, you must fill in this form as soon as possible, have it counter-signed by your Veterinary Surgeon/Practitioner and return with this application form.
- If your dog is 18 months or older and unneutered, you must return this completed form as soon as possible or at the latest by **30th June 2025**.
- If your dog is younger than 18 months you must return the form to your Local Authority within one month of the dog turning 18 months or at the latest **1 July 2026**.

No forms will be accepted **after 1st July 2026**. Any applications that do not have a confirmation of neutering form by this date will be void.

Microchipping

You must make sure your dog is implanted with a microchip and registered on an approved database by the time it is 12 weeks old. For more information on micro-chipping and registration of your dog, please visit

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/905aa-my-legal-responsibilities-as-a-dog-owner/>

List of approved microchip databases:

[gov - Animal Welfare \(www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/905aa-my-legal-responsibilities-as-a-dog-owner/)

If you are unsure whether your dog is microchipped, a Veterinary Surgeon/Practitioner will be able to scan and confirm.

Refusal of Certificate of Exemption

In the event of Refusal of your Application for a Certificate of Exemption for any reason you will be notified in writing by your Local Authority.

Application Review Process

If you are refused a Certificate of Exemption on the grounds of missing documentation, which you are now able to provide, you can reapply for the Certificate of Exemption to a senior officer of your Local Authority. Re-applications must be made within 10 working days of the issuing of the refusal and must set out the grounds on which you are reapplying. You will be advised of this process in the letter of refusal.

Certificate of Exemption requirements

As the registered owner of the XL Bully type dog

You must:

1. Keep the dog at the same address as the certificate holder, except for a maximum of 30 days per year.
2. Apply to your Local Authority for a revised Certificate of Exemption if you change address, excluding changes within the 30-day period mentioned above.
3. Notify your Local Authority of the dog's death or export.
4. Keep the dog securely muzzled and on a short strong lead not exceeding 2 metres in length, when in a public place. Muzzling must adequately prevent the dog from biting, and the lead must be held by someone over the age of 16 years.
5. Ensure that the dog is accommodated in a premises that is secure, appropriate to its welfare and in such a manner as to prevent the dog's escape.
6. Provide access for reading the dog's microchip upon request by an Authorised Officer (i.e. Dog Warden).
7. Ensure that you are compliant with all other relevant legislation with regard to dog ownership.
8. Provide the Certificate of Exemption to an Authorised Officer (i.e. Dog Warden) or member of An Garda Síochána within 10 days of their request.
9. If the dog is older than 18 months on 1st October 2024, provide completed Veterinary Confirmation of Neutering Status form by 30th June 2025.
10. If the dog is younger than 18 months, provide completed Veterinary Confirmation of Neutering Status Form within one month of neutering or before 1st July 2026 at the latest.
11. Additional information is also available at www.drccd.gov.ie/xlbully.