



DRAFT ROYAL DECREE XX/2025 OF XX/2025 ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF COMPANION ANIMALS

Article 51 of Law 7/2023, of 28 March, on the protection of the rights and welfare of animals provides that companion animals shall be individually identified by means of a system and procedure to be developed by regulation, depending on what is established for each species and that, in any case, dogs, cats and ferrets shall be identified by microchip and birds by ringing.

However, this requirement to identify companion animals does not apply to all companion animals, as certain groups of animals are excluded from the scope of Law 7/2023, of 28 March. Taking this premise into account, animals used in sporting activities, falconry birds, sheepdogs and livestock guardian dogs, rescue dogs working in a professional environment, security animals or animals used in assisted interventions, as well as packs of hunting dogs and auxiliary hunting animals, would be excluded from the identification requirement, with only the corresponding regional regulations applying to them.

Furthermore, Article 39 of Law 8/2003, of 24 April, on animal health, whose scope does not exclude any category of companion animal, states that the General State Administration shall establish the bases and coordination of a single, uniform national system for the identification of different animal species.

Therefore, in the interests of administrative simplification, it is considered necessary to develop a single regulation covering the identification of all companion animals, including, for animal health reasons, those groups of animals excluded from the scope of Law 7/2023, of 28 March, without prejudice to the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the European legislation implementing this convention.

The need to establish a single and homogeneous system for the identification of companion animals has also been considered by the European Parliament both in its resolution, of 25 February 2016, on the introduction of compatible systems for the registration of companion animals across Member States (2016/2540(RSP)) and in its resolution, of 12 February 2020, on protecting the EU's internal market and consumer rights against the negative implications of the illegal trade in companion animals (2019/2814(RSP)).

Likewise, the regulation on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability establishes the obligation to identify and register all dogs and cats, helping to ensure traceability, which is an essential element in the system for the prevention and control of transmissible animal diseases, particularly rabies, thus contributing to the objectives of the European Union's animal health rules. In addition, identification and registration help to guarantee the rights of people purchasing companion animals, as they will have information on the origins of the animals before purchasing these same and on their actual age, enabling them to make informed choices, be less vulnerable to fraudulent operators and reduce the risk of animals being purchased under conditions that may negatively influence their future health and behaviour.



Finally, animal identification and registration is a tool to protect animals from abandonment and to facilitate action by the competent authorities.

This royal decree is structured into eight articles, a single additional provision, two transitional provisions, three final provisions and two annexes.

Article 1 establishes the subject matter and purpose of the regulation, such that it regulates the identification system for companion animals and develops a single, uniform identification system for all companion animals that are subject to mandatory individual identification. Article 2 determines the scope of application and Article 3 sets out the definitions applicable to this royal decree.

Article 4 sets out the general requirements for the identification of companion animals subject to mandatory identification, while Articles 5 and 6 establish the specific requirements for the identification of dogs, cats and ferrets and for the identification of other companion animals, respectively. Article 7 establishes the actions of the identifying veterinary professional with regard to the identification of companion animals and Article 8 establishes the penalties regime.

The single additional provision sets out the competences of the Ministries of Defence and Interior. The first transitional provision covers the conditions applicable to companion animals already identified prior to the entry into force of this royal decree, while the second transitional provision establishes a deadline for the autonomous communities and the cities of Ceuta and Melilla to adjust the registers corresponding to the provisions of this royal decree.

Finally, the first final provision establishes the title of competence, the second final provision establishes the power to amend the annexes and the third final provision establishes the date of entry into force of the regulation.

The royal decree respects the principles of good regulation referred to in Article 129 of Law 39/2015, of 1 October, on the Common Administrative Procedure of Public Administrations.

Specifically, it serves the principles of necessity and effectiveness, as it is the most appropriate instrument to ensure that the legislation is applied uniformly throughout national territory, which guarantees the general interest and meets the obligations of regulatory implementation set out in Law 7/2023, of 28 March, and Law 8/2003, of 24 April. It also respects the principle of proportionality, since there is no alternative that is less restrictive of rights or that imposes fewer obligations on the recipients. As regards the principles of legal certainty, transparency and efficiency, this regulation respects these same because it is consistent with the rest of the legal framework, and the participation of stakeholders has been sought through the public information and participation process. In the processing of this royal decree, the autonomous communities and the cities of Ceuta and Melilla have been consulted.

Furthermore, in accordance with the provisions of Law 50/1997, of 27 November, of the Government, the regulation has been subject to the prior public consultation procedure, as well as to the public consultation and information procedure.

It has also been subject to the information procedure in the area of technical rules and regulations relating to information society services provided for in



Directive (EU) 2015/1535 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 9 September 2015, laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical regulations and of rules on Information Society services, as well as that set out in Royal Decree 1337/1999, of 31 July, regulating the transmission of information in the field of technical standards and regulations and of regulations on information society services.

By virtue thereof, at the proposal of the Minister for Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and 2030 Agenda, with the prior approval of the Minister for Digital Transformation and the Civil Service, in agreement with the Council of State and after deliberation by the Council of Ministers at its meeting on XXXXXX

THE FOLLOWING IS DECREED

Article 1. *Object and purpose.*

1. The royal decree regulates the identification system for companion animals on Spanish territory.
2. The purpose of the royal decree is to establish a single and homogeneous identification system for all companion animals subject to mandatory identification and, in particular:
 - a) Improve the control and traceability of companion animals to ensure their animal welfare conditions.
 - b) Have appropriate mechanisms in place to prevent the spread of transmissible diseases throughout national territory.
 - c) Provide information on the origin and characteristics of companion animals to ensure traceability and combat illegal breeding and trafficking.
 - d) Prevent the abandonment of companion animals and facilitate the actions of the competent authorities.

Article 2. *Scope of application.*

1. This royal decree shall apply to the following animals:
 - a) Dogs, cats, ferrets and birds.
 - b) Those animals included in the list of domestic companion species or in the positive list of companion animals whose identification is determined to be mandatory.
2. The application of this regulation is understood to be without prejudice to any applicable sectoral regulations, particularly international, European Union and national regulations on trade, labelling and possession of CITES specimens, and without prejudice to the powers of the environmental or foreign trade authorities.

Article 3. *Definitions.*

1. For the purposes of this royal decree, the definitions established in Law 7/2023, of



28 March, on the protection of the rights and welfare of animals and in the Law 8/2003, of 24 April, on animal health shall apply.

2. In addition, the following definitions shall apply:
- a) Animal used for assisted intervention: an animal owned by a natural or legal person who is professionally engaged in an assisted intervention activity, that is trained for that activity and that, under the guidance of technical staff, participates in a planned, structured therapeutic intervention directed by health, education or social professionals.
 - b) Animal used in sporting activities: an animal used in any sporting activity, other than hunting, that is recognised by the Higher Sports Council by virtue of the provisions of Article 43, Paragraph 5, of Law 39/2022, of 30 December, on Sport and whose owner holds the corresponding valid federative licence.
 - c) Hunting ferret: a ferret used as an auxiliary hunting animal, whose owner holds a hunting licence issued by the competent authority in any autonomous community, and that is used in an authorised hunting activity.
 - d) Individual identification of companion animals: a procedure that consists in implanting in or assigning to a companion animal an authorised means of identification for its species and registering it in the corresponding identification register, so that it can be associated with its owner, whether this is a natural or legal person.
 - e) Means of identification: an identification element authorised for each species by the competent authority and that has a unique identification code.
 - f) Hunting dog: a dog used in hunting activities, whose owner has a hunting pack (pack of hunting dogs, pack of hounds or a small game hunting group of dogs) in accordance with the applicable regulations or a hunting licence issued by the competent body for hunting in any autonomous community.
 - g) Rescue dog: a dog specifically trained to assist in search and rescue operations for missing or trapped persons, and belonging to an association registered for that purpose.
 - h) Security dog: a dog used for a specific security-related purpose, and whose owner is the Security Forces and Corps authorised in accordance with Royal Decree 2364/1994, of 9 December, approving the Private Security Regulations.
 - i) Livestock guardian dog: a dog employed or trained to protect livestock from predators, whether alone or accompanied by a responsible person, and whose owner provides their services or is the holder of a livestock farm duly registered in the General register of livestock farms (Registro general de explotaciones ganaderas).
 - j) Sheepdog: a dog employed or trained to herd, move or control livestock, whether alone or accompanied by a responsible person, and whose owner provides services or is the holder of a livestock farm duly registered in the General register of livestock farms.



- k) Identifying veterinary professional: those registered veterinary professionals recognised by the competent authority for companion animal identification functions.
- l) Habitual residence: the place in which the animal spends most of the year (more than 183 days during the calendar year).

Article 4. *General requirements for the mandatory identification of companion animals.*

1. Animals must be registered in the register of companion animals of the autonomous community or city of the animal's habitual residence, without prejudice to any other documentation required by the applicable regulations. The same animal may not be registered in more than one autonomous community or city at the same time.
2. The minimum information to be entered in the corresponding register of companion animals and to which access shall be permitted through the Central system of animal protection registers (Sistema Central de Registros de Protección Animal) shall be that set out in Annex I. This information shall be recorded by the identifying veterinary professional or the competent authority, as applicable. The owner of the animal shall be responsible for keeping the information up to date and for the accuracy of the information under their control.
3. Natural persons who own a companion animal may designate one or more responsible persons in the register of companion animals of the respective autonomous community or city. In the case of legal persons, or where a judicial authority has entrusted care of the animal to persons other than those listed as owners in the register, the designation of a responsible natural person shall be mandatory.
4. Animals subject to non-commercial movement from other countries shall retain their original identification and, if they are to remain in Spain for more than six months, they must be compulsorily entered in the register no later than a period of five days prior to reaching six months from their arrival.
5. Animals referred to in Paragraph 4, whose electronic identification means do not comply with the provisions of Annex II must be identified in accordance with the provisions of this royal decree, unless the stay is less than six months, in which case the owner or responsible person shall provide the reading device that enables the identification of the animal to be verified.
6. Animals from outside the European Union that are the subject of a commercial movement must comply with the relevant Community regulations.
7. In the case of companion animals from other autonomous communities whose habitual residence is changed without transfer of ownership, it will be mandatory to register these same in the register of companion animals of the autonomous community or city of destination within a maximum period of one month from their arrival. The autonomous community of destination shall notify the autonomous community of origin of the deregistration.
8. In the event of transfer, the new owner shall inform the relevant register of companion animals for the purposes of updating the information contained in the register of companion animals, within three working days of signature of the transfer



contract.

9. Should the electronic means of identification cease to be readable, a new electronic means of identification with the same code shall be implemented. For dogs, cats and ferrets, the identifying veterinary professional shall record the duplicate number in the corresponding register of companion animals. In the case of non-electronic means of identification, a new means of identification shall be implemented with another code that must be recorded in the database.
10. Production animals must never be directly identified as companion animals. Should an owner wish to register as a companion animal a production animal that has lost its productive purpose, they must maintain the original identification number for those animals already individually identified in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 787/2023, of 17 October, which lays down provisions to regulate the traceability, identification and registration system for certain species of land animals in captivity. At the request of the owner to the competent authority, in the case of bovine, ovine and caprine animals registered in the establishments referred to in Article 5, Paragraph 2, Letter b) and Article 6, Paragraph 4, Letter b), of Royal Decree 787/2023 of 17 October, the original means of identification may be replaced by a ruminal bolus or injectable transponder.

In the case of porcine animals that are registered in the establishments referred to in Article 7, Paragraph 3, of Royal Decree 787/2023, of 17 October, at the request of the owner, the means of identification pursuant to Article 7 of Decree 787/2023, of 17 October, may be replaced by an electronic transponder that complies with the provisions of Article 5, Paragraph 3.

all other production mammals, shall be identified by means of a device complying with the provisions of Article 5, Paragraph 3, and Annex II of Royal Decree 787/2023, of 17 October.

11. The offspring of companion animals shall be identified under the name of the owner of the breeding female.
12. In the event of death, the owner of the animals shall communicate the removal from the relevant register within seven working days. The autonomous communities and the cities of Ceuta and Melilla shall establish the documentation necessary to process the deregistration of companion animals whose carcass cannot be recovered or has been buried by private individuals pursuant to the exception provided for in Article 19, Paragraph 1, Letter a) of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 21 October 2009, laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002.

Article 5. *Specific requirements for the identification of dogs, cats and ferrets.*

1. The identification of dogs, cats and ferrets by injectable electronic transponder shall be mandatory. The device shall be implanted subcutaneously on the left side of the neck. If it is not possible to install it in that place for some justified reason, it shall preferably be placed in the cross-shaped area between the two scapulae. In any case, their exact placement shall be recorded in the register of companion animals.



2. Electronic transponders must comply with the technical specifications set out in Annex II.A.
3. The structure of the transponder code shall comply with the structure set out in Annex II.B.
4. Dogs, ferrets and cats other than community cats shall be identified before they reach three months of age and, in any case, prior to the first transfer.
5. Community cats shall be identified under the name of the competent local administration in which the colony is located at the time of their capture or, in the case of newborn kittens whose identification is not advisable due to their age, shall be identified at the time determined by the veterinary professional responsible for the health programme.

Article 6. *Specific requirements for the identification of companion animals other than dogs, cats and ferrets.*

1. The identification of birds by ringing shall be mandatory, in accordance with the provisions of Article 51, Paragraph 2, of Law 7/2023, of 28 March, if their species, subspecies or breed is included in the List of domestic companion species (Listado de Especies Domésticas de Compañía) or in the corresponding Positive list of companion animals (Listado Positivo de Animales de Compañía), without prejudice to other regulations requiring their identification.
2. The breeder shall fit the closed ring at the moment when the growth of the leg is consistent with the size of the ring, in order to prevent it from being lost.

Sports federations, as well as associations and entities responsible for the selection and breeding of birds, may be authorised by the competent authority to carry out the identification of birds. To this end, they must guarantee the traceability of the identification, communicate the information contained in Annex I.B annually and comply with the provisions of Article 28 of the General Data Protection Regulation in their capacity as data processors.

In all other cases, identification shall be carried out by the identifying veterinary professional, with the identification code to be determined by the competent authority.

For the purposes of the provisions laid down and without prejudice to the provisions of Paragraph 1, the federations, associations and entities mentioned may make identification by means of an injectable transponder complying with the provisions of Article 5, Paragraph 3, and using the identification code format reflected in Annex II.8 to Royal Decree 787/2023, of 17 October, in the following situations:

- a) If the identifying veterinary professional identifies circumstances that endanger the animal's health and prevent rings being fitted. In the case of birds that cannot be identified by transponder because they weigh less than 50 g, a veterinary certificate shall be required stating that this is the case.
 - b) At the request of the owner, in addition to the ring.
3. The requirements for the identification of companion animals other than birds shall be determined when their species, subspecies or breed is included in the List of



domestic companion species or in the corresponding Positive list of companion animals. The type of identification shall be determined by the Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and 2030 Agenda, by ministerial order, following a report from the Scientific and Technical Committee for the Protection and Rights of Animals.

Article 7. *Actions of the identifying veterinary professional with regard to the electronic identification of companion animals.*

1. The identifying veterinary professional shall check that the companion animal has no means of identification implanted, before proceeding to:
 - a) Perform the clinical act of implanting the injectable transponder in the animal.
 - b) Verify that the electronic identification code can be read correctly, before and after its implantation.
 - c) Enter the information specified in Annex I in the corresponding regional register of companion animals once the transponder has been implanted.
2. The identifying veterinary professional must comply with the provisions of Article 28 of the General Data Protection Regulation in their capacity as data processor.

Article 8. *Penalties regime.*

1. In the event of non-compliance with the provisions of this royal decree by owners or owners of companion animals falling within the scope of Law 7/2023, of 28 March, the offences and penalties regime laid down in the aforementioned law shall apply.
2. In the event of non-compliance by the owners or owners of companion animals excluded from the scope of Law 7/2023, of 28 March, the offences and penalties regime laid down in Law 8/2003, of 24 April, shall apply.

Single additional provision. *Competences of the Ministries of Defence and the Interior.*

In accordance with the third additional provision of Law 8/2003, of 24 April, the identification regime used for animals assigned to the Ministries of Defence and the Interior shall be governed by the specific provisions issued by those departments, with this royal decree being applied on a supplementary manner in matters not covered by those provisions.

First transitional provision. *Companion animals already identified prior to the entry into force of this royal decree.*

Companion animals identified prior to the entry into force of this royal decree shall maintain their original means of identification, unless it is no longer readable, in which case action shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of this royal decree.

Second transitional provision. *Registers of companion animals.*



Within a maximum of 12 months, the autonomous communities and cities must adjust their registers to include the content set out in Annex I. The owners of the animals must update the information in Annex I within a maximum of 12 months of adjustment of the registers.

First final provision. *Attribution of powers.*

This royal decree is issued pursuant to Article 149, Paragraph 1, Subparagraphs 13, 16 and 23, of the Spanish Constitution, which respectively grants the State exclusive jurisdiction over bases and coordination of general planning of economic activity, bases and general coordination of health matters and basic legislation on environmental protection.

Second final provision. *Power of amendment.*

The Minister of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and 2030 Agenda shall be empowered to amend the annexes to this royal decree in order to bring them into line with European Union or international legislation.

Third final provision. *Entry into force.*

This royal decree shall enter into force on the day after its publication in the 'Official State Gazette'.

ANNEX I

Minimum information on companion animals subject to mandatory identification:

A. In the case of dogs, cats and ferrets:

1. Animal identification code.
2. Duplicate number, if applicable.
3. Location of the means of identification.
4. Date of implementation of the means of identification.
5. Registration number and province of the identifying veterinary professional carrying out the identification, where applicable.
6. Animal identification passport number, if applicable.
7. Date on which the transponder was read, in the case of passport renewal.
8. Species, sex, subspecies and breed, if applicable.
9. Date of birth.
10. Parent identification code, if available.
11. Category:



- a) Basic category: this will be the default classification.
- b) Community cat.
- c) Categories for animals associated with human activities:
 1. Animal used for assisted intervention..
 2. Animal used for hunting: this category includes hunting dogs and hunting ferrets.
 3. Animal used in non-hunting sporting activities.
 4. Animal used in experimentation.
 5. Assistance dog, in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 409/2025, of 27 May, regulating the activity and welfare of assistance dogs.
 6. Sheepdog and livestock guardian dog.
 7. Rescue dog.
 8. Security dog.
12. Animal identified as coming from an unregistered breeder (yes/no).
13. Potentially dangerous dog status (yes/no).
14. Aptitude tests: date, result, and identification of the professional conducting these same.
15. In the case of dogs, the date of any aggression on persons or animals known to the administrative or judicial authorities.
16. Breeding specimen (yes/no/one-time breeding), breeding status (intact/sterilised).
17. Relevant veterinary information:
 - a) Therapeutic mutilations performed and observed, where applicable.
 - b) Mandatory vaccinations and deworming.
 - c) Date of the annual veterinary examination.
 - d) Number and date of litters.
 - e) Number of caesarian sections.
18. Date and cause of deregistration.
19. Place of residence of the animal, if different from that of the owner.
 20. Full name, NIF (tax ID number), NIE (foreigner ID number), address, email address if available and telephone number of the owners. Hunting licence number, in the case of owners of hunting dogs or hunting ferrets; identification code in the General register of livestock holdings of the undertaking at which the dog is registered, in the case of owners of livestock guardian dogs or sheepdogs.
21. Full name, NIF/NIE, address, email address if available and telephone number of the person responsible, as appropriate.



22. Owner history: this will contain the history of the animal's owners since its identification (full name and NIF/NIE).
 23. In the case of dogs, if applicable, the public authority having issued the document attesting to their completion of the responsible keeper course and the date thereof.
 24. Animal status (localised, lost, stolen) and date.
 25. Information for locating the owner in the event of misplacement or loss.
- B. In the case of birds:
1. Ring or transponder number or ring range, if applicable.
 2. Registration number and province of the identifying veterinary professional carrying out the identification, or the name and address of the sports federation, association or entity responsible for the selection and breeding of birds, as appropriate.
 3. Species.
 4. Year of birth.
 5. Full name, NIF, address, email address (if available) and telephone number of the owner.
 6. Owner history: this will contain the history of the animal's owners for at least 25 years from the date of its identification (full name and NIF) or for five years after notification of its death.
 7. Animal status (localised, lost, stolen) and date.
 8. Deregistration date, if applicable.
 9. Information for locating the owner in the event of misplacement or loss.
 10. Animals identified as coming from an unregistered breeder (yes/no).

ANNEX II

PART A. Technical specifications for electronic transponders.

Electronic transponders shall be:

1. Not reusable.
2. Made of unalterable material.
3. Forgery-proof.
4. Easily readable throughout the life of the animals.
5. Encapsulated in a biocompatible material ensuring that it is completely sealed.
6. Passive read-only devices that use HDX or FDX-B technology and comply with Standards ISO 11784, ISO 11785 and ISO 24631-1.
7. Readable by devices that comply with Standards ISO 11785 and ISO 24631-2.



PART B. Transponder code.

The transponder code shall consist of the 23-digit format specified in Standard ISO 11784. Pursuant to Annex II to Royal Decree 787/2023, of 17 October, these digits, read from left to right, shall correspond to:

- First digit: use of the identifier, which will be a 1 when the target is an animal.
- Second digit: re-identification counter, 0 to 7.
- Third and fourth digits: 06
- Fifth and sixth digits: reserved digits (for future uses, pursuant to Standard ISO 11784).
- Seventh digit: presence of a data block, which will be a 0.
- Eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh digits: country code according to ISO 3166, preceded by a '0'. For Spain it is 0724.
- Twelfth and thirteenth digits: 26
- Fourteenth and fifteenth digits: code of the Autonomous Community or of the City of Ceuta or Melilla, according to Table II of Annex III to Royal Decree 787/2023, of 17 October.
- Sixteenth to twenty-third digits: individual identification of the animal.