



Apply for a Certificate of Exemption for rehoming organisations to keep an XL Bully dog

Use this form to apply for a Certificate of Exemption for up to 30 XL Bully dogs to be kept by a rehoming organisation.

Check if a dog under your care is an XL bully

On 31 December 2023, it became illegal to rehome, sell or transfer ownership of XL Bully dogs. Rehoming organisations should no longer rehome XL Bully dogs.

You can [check if your dog may be an XL Bully](#). This involves checking the dog's physical characteristics such as its size and height.

Send evidence with your application

You must send evidence about each dog you want to keep and your rehoming organisation.

Evidence for dogs you want to keep

To apply for a Certificate of Exemption you'll need to provide evidence that each XL Bully dog was taken into your care on or before 30 December 2023. Defra will accept:

- a microchip certificate showing you are the registered keeper of the dog
- correspondence showing the agreed date of handover of the dog
- veterinary records or invoices
- rehoming organisation internal records

Evidence about your rehoming organisation

You must also provide 2 pieces of evidence about your rehoming organisation – one document from list A and one document from list B. Both must be dated before 31 October 2023 and clearly show the name of your organisation. Defra must receive your application on or before 22 January 2024.

List A: When your rehoming organisation was established

You need to provide one piece of evidence to show that your rehoming organisation is an organisation that was established to rescue and rehome dogs. Examples of evidence Defra will accept include:

- constitution document
- charity registration certificate from the Charity Commission or charity number

List B: When rescue and rehoming activities began

You need to provide one piece of evidence that shows your rehoming organisation was also carrying out rehoming and rescue activities on 31 October 2023. Examples of evidence Defra will accept include:

- rehoming organisation internal records
- advertising materials stating the services you provide
- correspondence or an invoice from your vet practice

Where to send this form and accompanying documents

You should fill in this form and email it along with any accompanying documents to dogsindex@defra.gov.uk or post to:

Dogs Index
PO Box 68250
London
SW1P 9XG

Defra will process your application and will send you either a:

- Certificate of Exemption
- rejection letter or email

Third party public liability insurance

You must have third party public liability insurance which covers your XL Bully dog. The cover must start no later than 1 February 2024, and could be the organisation's existing public liability insurance as long as this adequately covers prohibited breeds.

You must check the policy:

- covers the policyholder for death or bodily injury to any person caused by the exempted dog
- is suitable for a prohibited breed type under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991

Neutering

If your XL Bully dog is:

- less than 1 year old on 31 January 2024, it must be neutered by 31 December 2024
- 1 year or older on 31 January 2024, it must be neutered by 30 June 2024

Once your XL Bully dog has been neutered you should ask your vet to fill in a [confirmation of neutering form](#).

If your dog has already been neutered, you can ask your vet to fill in a confirmation of neutering form and return it to Defra.

Microchips

You must make sure your dog is fitted with a microchip and registered under your name on a database. Dogs must be microchipped by the time they are 8 weeks old unless they are temporarily unfit to be microchipped. Search GOV.UK to find out how to [get your dog microchipped](#). If you're not sure if your dog is microchipped, you should ask your vet.

If your dog cannot be microchipped

If your dog is not microchipped at the time of application because it is unfit to be microchipped, you must provide Defra with either of the following by 31 March 2024:

- the dog's microchip number
- a copy of the veterinary certificate confirming when the dog will become fit to be microchipped – you must then arrange to have your dog microchipped and provide the microchip number to Defra within 28 calendar days of the expiry date of the veterinary certificate

Authorised representative details

Name of organisation

Name of authorised representative

Role of authorised representative

Organisation address where the dog will be kept

Organisation postcode

Is the rehoming organisation in England or Wales?

England

Wales

Date of birth

Use DD/MM/YYYY format

Phone number

Email address

Dog details

	Name of dog	Date of birth of dog (Estimate the date if you do not know it)	Colour of dog	Sex of dog (Male or female)	Is your dog neutered? (Yes or no)	Microchip number (Leave blank if the dog is not microchipped and is unfit to be microchipped)	Insurance policy start (DD/MM/YYYY)	Payment reference number (10 digits)
Dog 1								
Dog 2								
Dog 3								
Dog 4								
Dog 5								
Dog 6								
Dog 7								
Dog 8								
Dog 9								
Dog 10								
Dog 11								
Dog 12								
Dog 13								

This form was withdrawn on 23 January 2024.

	Name of dog	Date of birth of dog (Estimate the date if you do not know it)	Colour of dog	Sex of dog (Male or female)	Is your dog neutered? (Yes or no)	Microchip number (Leave blank if the dog is not microchipped and is unfit to be microchipped)	Insurance policy start (DD/MM/YYYY)	Payment reference number (10 digits)
Dog 14								
Dog 15								
Dog 16								
Dog 17								
Dog 18								
Dog 19								
Dog 20								
Dog 21								
Dog 22								
Dog 23								
Dog 24								
Dog 25								
Dog 26								

This form was withdrawn on 23 January 2024.

	Name of dog	Date of birth of dog (Estimate the date if you do not know it)	Colour of dog	Sex of dog (Male or female)	Is your dog neutered? (Yes or no)	Microchip number (Leave blank if the dog is not microchipped and is unfit to be microchipped)	Insurance policy start (DD/MM/YYYY)	Payment reference number (10 digits)
Dog 27								
Dog 28								
Dog 29								
Dog 30								

This form was withdrawn on 23 January 2024.

Certificate of Exemption requirements

You must:

- A. Ensure the dog lives at the address specified in the Certificate of Exemption at all times unless it is relocated in the event of a fire or other emergency.
- B. Notify Defra in writing if the dog is relocated due to an emergency and provide Defra with the address to which the dog has been relocated within 14 days of the relocation.
- C. Ensure that the premises at which the dog is kept has a sufficient number of staff present each day to allow for the care and management of the dogs being kept at those premises, including 1 suitably capable member of staff for every 3 XL bullies during the premises' usual working hours.
- D. Notify Defra of the dog's death or export.
- E. Maintain suitable third-party insurance.
- F. Keep the dog muzzled and on a lead in public places. Muzzling must adequately prevent biting, and the lead must be held by someone at least 16 years old.
- G. Keep the dog in sufficiently secure conditions to prevent the dog's escape.
- H. Provide access for reading the dog's microchip upon request by a police constable or authorised local authority officer.
- I. Provide confirmation of suitable third-party insurance to a police constable or authorised local authority officer within 5 days of their request.
- J. Provide the Certificate of Exemption to a police constable or authorised local authority officer within 5 days of their request.
- K. Provide evidence the dog is neutered by 30 June 2024, if over 12 months old on 31 January 2024, or by 31 December 2024, if under 12 months old on 31 January 2024.
- L. Where the dog was not required to be implanted at the time of application, for example, due to a veterinary exemption, provide the dog's microchip number or a veterinary certificate confirming when the dog will become fit to be microchipped by 31 March 2024.

Declaration

I understand the requirements listed above must be complied with throughout the lifetime of the dog, or by the date specified in the condition, for the dog to remain exempted.

I understand that I must not do any of the following in relation to the dog:

- breed from it
- sell it, exchange it or otherwise transfer ownership
- advertise or expose it for sale, give it as a gift, or advertise it as a gift
- abandon it or allow it to stray

I understand that if I wish to change the registered address on a certificate I need to obtain approval from Defra based on evidence of a legitimate business need, unless the dog is being relocated in response to an emergency.

I acknowledge that providing false details or failing to comply with the Certificate of Exemption requirements will invalidate the certificate, and the dogs will not be exempt from the prohibition. In such cases, I may face prosecution, and the dogs mentioned in this application may be seized and destroyed.

Signature

Date of signature