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Selling animals as pets

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On 1 October 2018, the [Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(England\) Regulations 2018](#) came into force. This legislation has changed the way certain activities involving animals is licensed and regulated. This includes selling animals as pets.

The new licence will be referred to as an 'Animal Activity Licence'.

Do I need a licence?

If your business imports, distributes or sells animals you are subject to licensing. This applies to premises open to members of the public, other businesses where animals are available for purchase and to businesses or individuals operating from domestic premises for commercial purposes.

The following are indicators of running a business of selling animals as pets:

- The import, distribution and sale of animals by means of a fixed fee
- The purchase of animals with the express intent to sell them on
- Where animals are bought and then re-advertised for sale or sold within a short period of time
- The number, frequency and/or volume of sales - systematic and repeated transactions using the same means of advertising are likely to indicate a commercial activity
- High volumes of animals sold or advertised for sale or high number of litters or progeny could indicate a business
- Low volumes of animals sold or advertised could indicate a business where high sales prices or large profit margins are involved
- High range and variability in the animals traded. A wide variety of species or taxa being traded could indicate the commercial nature of the activity
- High numbers of advertisements of animals for sale, including on classified websites, could indicate commercial behaviour, even where there is no actual sale taking place via the internet. This could be high numbers of advertisements at any one time or over a short period of time, and/or regularly
- Advertising through a variety of sites, forums or media could indicate a commercial activity

The following are examples of activities that are not subject to licensing:

- The infrequent sale of a small number of surplus offspring/excess stock by a private individual who breeds animals as a hobby, for pleasure, exhibition for prize, or for education, study or scientific advancement. For low value species that may produce large numbers of excess stock, consideration should be given to the value of the stock and the likelihood that the seller is making a profit
- Organised events where people meet to sell surplus animals they have bred, or animals that are surplus to their requirements, whether or not this is open to the public. Selling pet animals as a business from a market or stall is prohibited under Section 2 of the Pet Animals Act 1951

Irregular transactions, low and/or irregular numbers of adverts/sales or low numbers/values of animals sold are likely to indicate the activity is not commercial in its nature.

Making an application

- Complete the [application form \[PDF 132KB\]](#)
- Pay the application fee of £140 (please note this is subject to change)

On receipt of your application we will arrange to carry out an inspection of all premises where licensable activities are to take place before the application can be determined.

Contact

Licensing service

Municipal buildings, Corporation Street, Blackpool, FY1 1NF

Telephone 01253 478570

Email licensing@blackpool.gov.uk

The licensing service is available to contact by telephone or to visit in person to the licensing desk at Blackpool Council's Customer First Centre on Corporation Street between 10.00am and 4.00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Wednesday 10.00am to 1.00pm.

Additional information

[DEFRA guidance on selling animals as pets](#)

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