

Christchurch City Council  
53 Hereford Street  
Christchurch Central City  
Christchurch 8013

12 December 2024

By Email

**Submission on behalf of the New Zealand Veterinary Association Te Pae Kīrehe regarding the Christchurch City Council Draft Dog Control Bylaw and Policy review**

The New Zealand Veterinary Association Te Pae Kīrehe (NZVA) is the largest professional organisation representing veterinarians across Aotearoa New Zealand. Our mission is to support our members through leadership, education, guidance, and advocacy.

This submission is presented on behalf of our members in response to Christchurch City Council's Draft Dog Control Bylaw and Policy review. We have consulted with our Companion Animal Veterinarians Branch to ensure this submission reflects the collective expertise of our members.

The NZVA strongly supports principles of responsible dog ownership and control, fostering a harmonious relationship between people, dogs and the environment. It is essential to minimise the environmental impact of dogs by promoting measures such as leashing to prevent predation, early socialisation to encourage positive behaviour, and ensuring waste is disposed of responsibly in public spaces.

The NZVA views dog ownership as a privilege rather than a right. To support this philosophy, we advocate for the implementation of owner licensing through an amendment to the Dog Control Act 1996.

We also emphasise the importance of education. Local councils should actively inform dog owners about their responsibilities, clearly defining what constitutes responsible ownership. Incentives within the registration system – such as discounts for ongoing training, effective containment, microchipping and desexing – should be implemented to encourage compliance and best practices.

The NZVA has specific feedback about the following areas of the draft policy:

**Dog walking limits**

We endorse the proposed limits on the number of dogs an individual can walk at one time. Exemptions should only be granted to individuals who demonstrate appropriate skills, assessed through a formal process. Establishing these limits will enhance safety and control, reducing the risk of incidents.

**Mandatory training and certification**

We recommend dog walkers undergo professional training and obtain certification. This ensures they possess the necessary skills to manage multiple dogs effectively and responsibly.

**On-leash and control requirements**

We agree that dogs should always remain on-leash in designated areas and under effective control. These measures are critical for reducing unwanted encounters and enhancing public safety.



### **Routine monitoring and enforcement:**

Councils must be resourced to conduct regular inspections and respond swiftly to complaints to ensure adherence to dog walking regulations.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the Dog Control Bylaw and Policy review and support Christchurch City Council's efforts to enhance responsible dog ownership and public safety.

Nāku iti noa, nā,

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Te Pae Kīrehe

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