

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Registration

When should I renew the licence for my pet? Every year, in January, you will receive the renewal of your pet's licence by mail. The licence is valid from January 1 to December 31.

Do I have to change the ID tag every year? NO. Your pet will keep the same ID tag and the same code. However, if he loses his ID tag, we will replace it free of charge.

Must I register my pet if I live in a rural area? YES. You must register your pet, even if you are living in a rural area.

My cat doesn't go outside. Why am I still required to have him registered and make him wear his ID tag? We are faced, on a regular basis, with cases of domestic indoor cats who are lost because they have escaped. Their families are rightly worried because these cats have no reference point to the outside and, thus, very vulnerable.

We therefore strongly urge owners who have an indoor cat to have him wear his Eastern Townships SPA ID tag at all times. Escapes are unpredictable incidents; from a simple door left opened, to an emergency evacuation, the risk is always potential, and for everyone.

Why are farm owners exempt from registering their cats? The municipalities made the request for MAPAQ accredited farm owners to be exempt from paying registration fees for cats that live in farm buildings. They consider these cats necessary on farms to control rodents.

I have a Mira dog in foster care; should I have her registered? YES. You must register the animal in accordance with the municipal bylaw. However, on presentation of the document issued by the MIRA Foundation certifying that you are a host family, the registration will be free for the duration of the animal's stay.

Who sets the cost of registration? This cost is set by municipalities.

Is the price of registration influenced by the weight of the animal? NO. This price is set according to the specie and a \$10 discount is given if the animal is spayed or neutered.

Why is the registration of a cat less expensive than that of a dog? We know, by comparing the number of animals registered in our database with the estimated population of cats and dogs in our area, that the registration and identification of cats is much less popular than for dogs.

Each year, thousands of not identified cats come through the doors of our shelter. By the social behavior of these cats, we estimate that 75% of them have a family somewhere. Unfortunately, without any identification, it is very difficult to find their family. This is a serious problem, and we want this situation to improve. Providing a financial incentive to cat owners is one way of increasing the number of registered cats and thus, to improve the fate of these animals.

Does the due date on the invoice correspond to the registration expiration? NO. The due date indicated on your invoice corresponds to your payment deadline. Registration is valid from January 1 to December 31 of the same year. The municipal bylaw also stipulates that all owners must obtain a licence for any new pet within 15 days of acquisition, regardless of the month of the year.

Why do you charge fees for late payments? These are not interest fees, but administrative and delay charges for the costs of issuing a new invoice and performing all steps of the unpaid licences' recovery process.

These fees would not have been added to the invoice if the payment had been made before the due date. By paying before the due date, you will avoid any concerns related to administrative fees.

Administrative fees are prescribed by municipal bylaws. It is the will of the municipal councils to encourage citizens to pay their pet registration fees on time. This measure was put forward because of too many late payments in the past.

It is also important to specify that every animal record is managed individually. It is not uncommon, for animals owned by the same person, to require various monitoring. The total number of animals registered thus influences the monitoring records' workload.

I paid my pet's registration at the end of last year. Why should I pay again early this year? The municipal bylaw is designed as follow: "registration is valid from January 1 to December 31 of the same year". However, we show some flexibility by accepting that the registration of an animal welcomed under your roof after November 1st will not be charged again in January of the following year. Nevertheless, we must set a deadline date and respect it.

If we had to manage, one by one, the date of registration for each pet (by dividing, for example, the \$30 fee by 12 months) and only charge the amount corresponding to the time of the year when registration is made, it would involve much more work. The registration fee would ultimately have to be higher in order to absorb these additional costs. Each registration invoice mailing and follow-up we do involves costs: some time, a stamp, administrative fees due to the financial institution, an envelope, an invoice, sometimes a call to the pet owner, etc.

Why do I have to pay the registration of a pet who I gave away after March 1st? The registration fee is not supposed to pay for the services of the entire year underway? A rigorous application of the bylaw would ensure that every citizen who has a pet as of January 1st would have to pay the registration of this pet, even if he or she gives him away later on.

It is indicated on the invoice that the amount due for the registration of the year underway will be cancelled if the Eastern Townships SPA is informed that you no longer own an animal before the due date, which corresponds to February 15th in a renewal case. We demonstrate flexibility by granting citizens a grace period ending on March 1st.

In this context, a citizen receives free services directly related to the payment of the registration of his pet during the months of January and February. *For example, a citizen who gives away his pet on February 15th, and lets us know about the situation will not have to pay for the registration of this pet for the year underway and will have benefitted of the protection of the ID tag for 45 days.* Moreover, citizens benefit all year round of the different services that the Eastern Townships SPA offers to their municipality.

Nevertheless, we have to impose a deadline; a grace period of 60 days, between January 1st and March 1st, seems fair for all.

What will happen if I refuse to pay the registration of my pet or the administration fees that I owe to the Eastern Townships SPA? The recovery procedures are enforced. It is important to pay the registration of your pet, as well as the administration fees that you owe to the Eastern Townships SPA. In the opposite case, you may receive a statement of offense and have to pay, in addition, the sums that are due for the licence and the administration fees.

All fees related to registration and administration fees that the Eastern Townships SPA applies are prescribed by municipal bylaws.

If I do not pay the registration, will my pet be taken away from me? Do not worry! The Eastern Townships SPA will not take away your pet. We know how much you care about him. However, if you do not pay the registration fees of your pet, you may receive a statement of offense, and have to pay the registration fees as well.

Why do I have to pay for the registration of my pet, in addition to the taxes that I already pay?

Municipal taxes do not finance the animal control services; they are rather financed by the incomes provided by the registration of pets at the Eastern Townships SPA.

All registration incomes go to the Eastern Townships SPA (and not to municipalities) and are dedicated to the services the organization offers to the residents of your municipality (including the enforcement of municipal bylaws and a 24/7 emergency service for injured and distressed pets). Therefore, the registration incomes are entirely redistributed to you in the form of different services.

The Eastern Townships SPA aims to maintain a harmonious relationship between residents and pets of your municipality (nuisance, wandering pets, advice and tips). Furthermore, your pet benefits from the protection of the ID tag.

What are the services provided by the Eastern Townships SPA? The Eastern Townships SPA provides numerous services like the following:

Shelter

- Adoption of cats and dogs who are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, dewormed, and microchipped.
- Canine behavior consultations and customized counselling on animal behaviour.
- Shop for pet food and accessories.
- Reception of animals.
- Searches to find the owner of a lost animal or of a pet declared lost by its owner/claims of lost pets.
- Material rental (trap-cage, scarecrow, etc.)
- Adoption request service (for a certain type of animal or a specific breed).

Road Service

Our patrol officers are on the road to provide various services.

- Transportation of animals who are lost, abandoned, wounded, trapped, seized, in distress, captured in trap-cages, etc.
- Capture of pets.
- Reception and handling of complaints regarding municipal bylaws.
- Reception and handling of complaints and of inspections regarding mistreatment cases, in accordance with the Canadian Criminal Code and the provincial law.
- Investigations and seizures for cases of mistreated animals.
- Patrol service by vehicle, on foot or by bicycle on the territory served.
- Emergency service 24 hours a day.

Registration

- Registration of cats and dogs (ID tag included).
- Update of the database regarding all registered cats and dogs.
- Reception and handling of calls (complaints, licences, advices, etc.)
- Census all the cats and dogs on the territory served.

Communication and Education

We make it our duty to communicate as much information as possible to the population and to educate people regarding the needs of their pets through different means of communication.

- Website and Facebook page.
- Awareness-raising campaigns regarding different issues.
- Press releases.
- Columns for municipal bulletins and websites of the communities served.
- Pamphlets and other printed info (services, care, bylaws, stands, etc.).
- Awareness-raising programs for elementary and high school students.
- Biting prevention program.

Services for Animals

In accordance with our mission, we offer our support to animals in order to protect them.

- Stands on different issues (exotic animals, animals performing in circuses, puppy mills, banning of certain breeds or types of dogs, etc.).
- Lobbying to improve laws.
- Working with other protection organizations to make progress the animal cause.

I never use the Eastern Townships SPA services. Why should I still pay for registration? Just like taxes, registration incomes allow us to offer services to the entire community.

Incomes provided by the registration of pets are dedicated to the services the Eastern Township SPA offers to the residents of your municipality, like the enforcement of municipal bylaws and a 24/7 emergency service for injured and distressed pets. The Eastern Townships SPA aims to maintain a harmonious relationship between residents and pets of your municipality (nuisance, wandering pets, advice and tips). You personally benefit from these services, since you live in a community where animal control is made professionally and with respect.

In fact, even as a responsible citizen, you might need to use our services in the event that:

- Your pet escapes;
- A skunk sets up at your place and you need an advice;
- You find a wandering or injured animal;
- Your dog or your cat develops a behavior problem and you need counselling.