



XL Bully Guidance

XL Bully breeds and the law

From 1 February 2024, it is a criminal offence under Section 1(3) of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 to be in possession of an XL Bully breed type without a valid Certificate of Exemption.

What is an XL Bully type dog?

The XL Bully is the largest dog of its type. It is not a breed recognised by the UK Kennel Club as it is a cross breed. A suspected XL Bully breed type does not need to fit the physical description perfectly. We recommend that you visit the [Government's official guidance](#) which describes the characteristics for the banned breed.

What does the ban mean for owners?

From 31 December 2023 the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 was amended, and it is a criminal offence to:

- Breed from the dog
- Sell or exchange the dog
- Give the dog away
- Allow the dog to be in a public place without it being muzzled and kept on a lead
- Abandon the dog or allow it to stray

The muzzle must be sufficient to prevent the dog from biting a person. The lead must be held securely by a person at least 16 years old.

What do owners need to do?

Owners of XL Bully type dogs had to apply for a [Certificate of Exemption](#) to be registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs.

As part of the process to exempt the dog, they need third-party liability insurance to cover them if their dog injures another person. This is available at a small cost through [Dogs Trust](#).

The dog must be microchipped (which is already a legal requirement).

The dog needs to be neutered. If an XL Bully puppy was less than a year old on 31 January 2024, they must be neutered by 31 December 2024. If the dog is older than a year old on 31 January 2024, they must be neutered by 30 June 2024.

Owners without a Certificate of Exemption could receive a criminal record and an unlimited fine if they are found to be in possession of an XL Bully type dog. Once the dog has been exempted owners must stick to the conditions, otherwise they could be committing a criminal offence and the dog could be seized.

Residents must be able to show the Certificate of Exemption when asked by a police officer or a council dog warden, either at the time or within five days of being asked.

Further information and advice for owners of XL Bully type dogs

The [Blue Cross website](#) contains muzzle training advice.

If you are concerned about your dog's behaviour, we would encourage you to speak to your vet who can refer you to a [clinical animal behaviourist](#).

What are tenants obligations under their tenancy agreement?

We encourage safe and responsible pet ownership; balancing the positive impact pets can have, while ensuring they don't negatively affect others or cause a nuisance.

However, we don't allow residents to own dogs outlined in the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, unless they abide by the government guidelines outlined below.

Residents who don't follow the guidelines are in breach of their tenancy agreement.

Our stance on new pet permission requests for XL Bully type dogs

As of 31 December 2023, we have not considered or approved any 'Pet Permission Request' forms from residents to take in XL Bully type dogs.

Our stance on existing owners of XL Bully type dogs

Residents who already own an XL Bully type dog will need to follow the process below to get permission to keep the dog:

- Complete and return the Pet Permission Request form.
- Provide us with a copy of their 'Certificate of Exemption' to prove they are legally allowed to keep the dog. This will be kept on file.
- For a residents to have received a certificate of exemption they will need to:
 - have the dog microchipped
 - keep the dog on a lead and muzzled at all times when in public
 - keep the dog in a secure place so it cannot escape
 - have the dog neutered

As the owner, they must also:

- be over 16 years old
- take out third party public liability insurance against their dog injuring other people
- be able to show the Certificate of Exemption when asked by a police officer or a council dog warden, either at the time or within five days

We are under no obligation to approve requests to keep XL Bully type dogs. We will review applications on a case-by-case basis.

Information about the new guidelines for XL Bully type dogs

Owners of XL Bully type dogs should visit the [UK Government website](#) for advice and guidance.

What can you do if you suspect that a dog is dangerous or on the banned list
Dangerous dogs are dealt with by the police under the Dangerous Dogs Act. In an emergency, contact the police directly on 999. Banned or stolen dogs should be reported directly to the police on 101.

If you believe an CCHA customer has a dangerous or banned dog, please contact us on 0800 085 1171 to advise us of your concerns after you have informed the police. We will then work with the police to establish if the animal is licenced and exempt or if action needs to be taken.