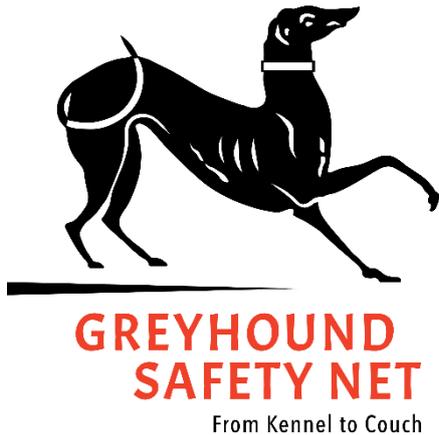


Muzzling Fact Sheet



🐾 From 1st January 2019 the legal obligation for pet greyhounds in Victoria to be muzzled changes.

This means that pet greyhounds (your adopted greyhound that you have registered with your local council), will **legally** no longer have to be muzzled. This is irrespective of whether the greyhound has been awarded, or is wearing, the GAP green collar.

🐾 This does not change the **legal responsibility** of owners of pet greyhounds to manage their dogs, so that both greyhounds and other dogs are kept safe. Even with the changes to the muzzle law, the *Domestic Animals Act* requires **all greyhounds**, including pet greyhounds, to be **kept on-leash**, even in designated off-leash areas.

🐾 We consider taking your greyhound to an **off-leash park is unsafe**, as greyhounds will naturally want to run freely, but it is not safe and it is **against the law**. If the greyhound becomes frustrated or agitated in this situation (seeing other dogs loose, while it is restrained), it could slip its collar or pull the leash out of your hands, so even if you don't intend to let your greyhound off-leash, it may take the matter into its own paws.

🐾 Most greyhounds have very poor recall. Combine that with being able to run at more than 60 km/h (much faster than most other dogs) and your greyhound is a danger to itself and other dogs if off-leash.

🐾 If your greyhound is overly **excitable, or reactive**, around other dogs, please consider whether it will be safer, for all concerned, to keep using the muzzle.

🐾 The law changes do not apply to **racing greyhounds**, which must remain muzzled, and they do not apply to greyhounds in **foster care**, as they will generally not be registered with the local council, and we are still assessing their temperament for adoption.

🐾 All of us who love greyhounds want to maintain the reputation of the greyhound breed as great pets. With the removal of muzzles comes a greater **risk of incidents** involving greyhounds. Even an inadvertent accident (say a large greyhound steps on a small dog which yelps, causing a normal exchange of snarls and snaps between the dogs) can cause people to have elevated concerns about greyhounds.

🐾 There **will** be a level of community anxiety with the muzzles coming off, and we need to expect and respect that, and ensure nothing we do, as greyhound owners, contributes to that.

🐾 It is important to know your greyhound, not just assume that everything will be all right. Don't assume that because your greyhound has been **assessed** as safe around other dogs, that this assessment is set in stone. Dogs change. A dog that has been attacked by another dog may develop fear aggression, so that it starts behaving on the basis that 'attack is the best form of defence'.

🐾 If you have a greyhound that has not had a temperament assessment (you may have got it directly from a trainer) please be especially careful when introducing it to other dogs.

🐾 Reading your dog's body language (set of eyes, ears, mouth, tail, body posture) is key to understanding your greyhound's behaviour. Read up as much as you can on this fascinating topic e.g lip licking in a dog can not only indicate it would like to eat, but is also something it will do when it is anxious or unhappy. If your greyhound is licking its lips when meeting another dog, that is **not** a good sign, so please remove your dog from the situation.

🐾 Any dog that attacks or even 'rushes' another dog, or other animal, can be declared a dangerous or menacing dog. Don't let this be your dog, through poor management and control.

🐾 For greyhounds that have their GAP green collar, GAP are recommending that you keep their numbered collar on your dog as an extra layer of security – if a greyhound is found wandering, rangers will often contact GAP to get the owner's details, which can mean you are reunited with your dog more quickly.

🐾 Regardless of what collar you put on your greyhound from 1st January, please remember to attach your contact details (in case it gets loose, which is a danger at this time of year with fireworks and having lots of visitors who may not be as careful as you about shutting doors and gates) and **update your council and microchip registry with your current details and an emergency contact**, who they can deal with if you are away.

More information is, and will become, available at the following websites:

Victorian Agriculture Dept (Animal Welfare)

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/pets/dogs/greyhounds/faqs-removal-muzzling-requirements-pet-greyhounds>

Greyhound Racing Victoria <http://gap.grv.org.au/2018/09/24/lead-muzzles/>

Greyhound Equality Society <http://www.greyhound-equality.org/>

RSPCA <https://rspcavic.org/adoption/greyhounds-as-pets>