



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Veterinary Guidance for the completion of forms VCE01, VCE02 and VCE03

Update to Dangerous Dogs Act 1991

Date: February 2024

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We are responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy, sustaining thriving rural communities and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

We work closely with our 33 agencies and arm's length bodies on our ambition to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, and to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.



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Background

The Government has added XL Bullies to the list of dogs banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. It is a criminal offence to own an XL Bully in England and Wales unless the owner has a Certificate of Exemption for the dog.

Before the ban came into force, XL Bully owners had two options:

- To keep the dog after the ban, owners could apply for a Certificate of Exemption. Applications closed at midday on 31 January 2024.
- Any owners who instead chose to have their XL Bully euthanised by a veterinary surgeon by 31 January 2024 are eligible to claim compensation. Applications must be received by 15 March 2024.
 - £200 is available for dog owners, and those with a licence to breed or sell dogs.
 - £100 is available to rescue and rehoming centres, and any owners who accessed a free charity service for the euthanasia.

Evidence of Euthanasia

Guidance for owners is available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), including the forms, which owners must submit to Defra as evidence that their XL Bully was euthanised by 31 January 2024.

XL Bully dogs euthanised after 31 January 2024 are not eligible for compensation and vets should not complete or sign the form. Vets will not be expected to report XL Bully dogs and their owners to the police.

If an XL Bully was euthanised by 31 January 2024 and the owner has lost their completed VCE01, VCE02 or VCE03 form, it is acceptable for the vet to complete a new form retrospectively. The euthanasia must have taken place by 31 January 2024 and the form must be signed by the vet who performed euthanasia.

Evidence of Payment

As well as the form, a receipt or invoice for the euthanasia is required for all claims. Please ensure that this is issued to the owner once the procedure has been completed. They will not be able to claim without it.

Claims will be processed and paid through Rural Payments systems. Veterinary practices should direct any queries from owners to the relevant [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) pages.