Guidance for registration of kept birds

New rules make it a legal requirement for everyone in Great Britain who keeps birds to register with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

Keepers must register before 1 October 2024 in England and Wales and between 1 September and 1 December in Scotland.

What you need to know (England and Wales)

Keeper of less than 50 poultry or other captive birds (including pets, aviary birds and wild birds)

If you have a County Parish Holding (CPH) number

You can register in 2 ways, either by:

- using the form to register to be a keeper of less than 50 poultry or other captive birds
- emailing customer.registration@apha.gov.uk

If you do not have a CPH number

You can register online, it should take about 10 minutes.

You will be asked for:

- your contact details
- details of the owner of the birds (if this is not you)
- the location where you keep the birds
- details of the birds you keep (species, number and what you keep them for)

Where birds of prey are already registered under an A10 Certificate OR detailed on an Animal Activities License, you will still need to complete this separate APHA registration.

When you do not need to register

You do not need to register psittaciformes or passeriformes (such as budgies, parrots, cockatiels and finches) if they are both:

- fully housed in a dwelling (your home or another indoor structure)
- with no access to the open air

You do not need to register an exempt bird to visit a veterinary practice.

If your birds are taken outdoors at any time, for example to be exercised, trained, or taken to bird gatherings or shows, they must be registered.

After you have registered

If your details have changed you'll need to tell APHA within one month when:

- you no longer keep or own birds
- your contact information changes
- you change the species of poultry or other captive birds you keep

- you change the purpose or purposes for which you keep birds
- you start keeping 50 or more poultry or other captive birds

Keeper of 50 or more poultry

You'll need this information to complete the form:

- your contact details
- details of the person or company that owns or rents your site
- your site's location and county parish holding (CPH) number - (find out how to get a permanent CPH number in England and Wales)
- details of the birds you keep and how you farm them (species, number you usually keep, what you keep them for, your farming system)
- how many birds of each species you usually keep each month (your stocking arrangements)
- a list of other livestock you keep on the site

Keeper of 50 or more other captive birds (including pets, aviary birds and wild birds)

You'll need this information to complete the form:

- your contact details
- name and address of the owner of the site
- your site's location
- details of the birds you keep (species, number you usually keep, what you keep them for)
- how many birds of each species you usually keep each month (your stocking arrangements)

After you have registered

If you've registered but your details have changed, you'll need to tell APHA within a month if:

- you no longer keep or own birds
- the contact information you gave changes
- the size of any of your flocks changes by 20%
- you change the species you keep

What you need to know (Scotland)

Who needs to register

The same conditions apply in Scotland as England and Wales, except those who keep birds in Scotland will need to complete a different form.

If you are already a registered keeper

The Scottish Kept Bird Register replaces the previous GB Poultry Register for bird keepers in Scotland.

If your premises is registered on the GB Poultry Register you will need to re-register on the Scottish Kept Birds Register.

How to register

You can register for free online at the Scottish Kept Birds Register. You must do so by 1 December 2024.

- You will be asked to provide details of the birds and where you keep these.
- You will need to keep your details up-to-date and you must update them at least annually.
- Once registered, you can access and update information online at any time.

What happens when you register

By sharing some simple information, such as your contact details, how many birds you keep and what kind of birds they are, you'll help to improve the overall picture of where at-risk birds are located across Great Britain. This helps APHA know where to focus its resources, as they work to prevent and mitigate the spread of notifiable animal disease outbreaks.

This also means APHA will be able to contact you if there's a disease outbreak, such as bird flu, in your local area. This free service is a helpful heads-up on when you should take extra precautions to protect your flock.

In the 10km Surveillance Zone (disease control zone) of a confirmed case of notifiable animal disease, most keepers will just be sent information and guidance. Most premises within the 3 km Protection Zone (disease control zone) will receive a veterinary inspection to provide reassurance that their birds are fit and healthy. This is also performed at no cost to the keeper. In some cases, sampling of waterfowl may be needed, as these birds often do not show signs of infection, but could still be carrying (and spreading) the virus to other birds.

What you need to know (Northern Ireland)

The requirement to register birds in Northern Ireland has been in place for quite some time now. All keepers of birds (except keepers of pet birds kept in the owner's home) are required to register with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). A registration form can be downloaded from the DAERA website.

Two forms are available to register bird premises:

- If you have a Commercial Bird Premises, use the application form entitled 'Application for Commercial Bird Premises.'
- If your premises is not commercial, use the application form entitled 'Application for Other Bird Premises'