

Only guide dogs are allowed in food outlets

I REFER to the letter, “Get tough with errant pet owners” (*my paper*, April 19).

Under the Environmental Public Health (Food Hygiene) regulations, it is an offence to take pets or animals into a food outlet and its outdoor refreshment areas.

Operators should remind their patrons that pets are not allowed on their premises.

Any person who infringes this regulation will be liable to be fined up to \$2,000.

NEA officers conduct regular checks at food outlets and we have, since last January, taken enforcement action against nine patrons and four operators for infringing the regulations.

The exemptions are guide dogs used by the visually handicapped. The guide

dog must be on a leash and kept at the owner’s side at all times.

There are also certain food outlets licensed by the National Environment Agency (NEA) as “pet cafes”.

A “pet cafe” must put in place additional measures to ensure that hygiene standards are not compromised, such as having separate storage and preparation areas for food meant for pets, and providing separate utensils and crockery for pet owners.

Members of the public who come across people taking their pets into food outlets may call our 24-hour call centre on 1800-CALL NEA (1800-225-5632) with details for our follow-up action.

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