

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture
Acting Minister for Local Government
Acting Minister for Suburban Development



Sunday, 12 September 2021

FREE DESEXING FOR CATS AND DOGS OF VULNERABLE VICTORIANS

The Victorian Government is supporting local councils and not-for-profit organisations to desex thousands of cats and dogs owned by vulnerable Victorians at little or no cost.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas said 21 organisations would receive a Pet Desexing Grant under Round One of the \$1.5 million program, including the City of Port Phillip and the Bendigo Animal Relief Centre. The grants could see more than 4,000 cats and 650 dogs desexed.

As part of the \$500,000 offered in Round One, the City of Port Phillip has been awarded \$47,521 to establish the Pets of Port Phillip Clinic, which will offer free desexing services for an estimated 225 cats and dogs owned by disadvantaged people living in public housing estates in the area.

A \$15,725 grant will support the Bendigo Animal Relief Centre to deliver the Bendigo Community Cat Program which will desex, vaccinate, microchip and register 50 cats whose owners are low income earners.

Pet Desexing Grants are funded through the *Animal Welfare Fund Grants Program* and will provide \$1.5 million over three years to support councils and not-for-profit organisations that provide free or low-cost desexing of cats and dogs for disadvantaged members of our community.

Since the *Animal Welfare Fund Grants Program* was launched in 2012, 169 grants have been awarded to not-for-profit and community organisations, totalling almost \$4.2 million, to improve responsible animal ownership and provide better welfare services for companion animals in the community.

For more information visit animalwelfare.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"These grants will ensure Victoria's most vulnerable pet owners can access free or low-cost desexing and help limit the numbers of unwanted cats and dogs in shelters across the state."

"The funding is an important step to support councils and not-for-profit organisations to provide critical desexing services and improve animal welfare outcomes for our much-loved pets."

Quote attributable to City of Port Phillip Mayor Louise Crawford

"This grant means we can assist more than 200 residents living in public housing by providing free desexing, vaccination and microchipping for their dogs and cats at the Pets of Port Phillip Clinic."

Quote attributable to Bendigo Animal Rescue Centre Operations Manager Fra Atyeo

"Through the Bendigo Community Cat Program we are aiming to provide an affordable service to residents that will increase the number of micro-chipped, desexed, and registered cats in the community."

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