

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Friday, 10 November 2023

PAWSITIVE NEWS FOR VICTORIA'S PETS

The Allan Labor Government is improving Victoria's animal welfare services and providing free or low-cost pet desexing services to pet owners in need.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence today visited Second Chance Animal Rescue in Craigieburn to announce the successful recipients of the third round of the Pet Desexing and Equine Rehabilitation grants.

The overpopulation of dogs and cats poses a significant threat to our environment and also puts pressure on Victoria's animal shelters - these grants tackle this problem by ensuring all Victorians – no matter their income, can desex their pets.

The new round of grants includes \$500,000 to support councils and not-for-profits to deliver free or low-cost desexing programs for cats and dogs and \$330,000 to organisations that rescue, rehabilitate, and rehome horses.

Since 2021, the Labor Government has delivered more than \$1.5 million in Pet Desexing grants to 32 organisations across the state.

Second Chance Animal Rescue has been awarded \$75,000 in the latest round of the Pet Desexing Grants program and aim to host a series of free 'desexathon' days – with the goal of desexing 340 cats.

Minister Spence also officially opened applications for Round 11 of the Animal Welfare Fund Grants Program – offering grants of up to \$200,000 to support animal shelters, community foster care networks, expand or upgrade their equipment or services – while also helping veterinary clinics provide low-cost services.

Eligible organisations can now apply for funding for projects that benefit companion animals such as rabbits, caged birds and 'pocket pets', in addition to cats and dogs.

Since 2014, the Animal Welfare Fund has awarded more than \$10 million to not-for-profit animal shelters, foster care organisations and community vet clinics to improve companion animal welfare in Victoria.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* builds on Labor Government's strong support for animal welfare and pets - with an additional \$20 million to deliver more dog parks, establish a new wildlife hospital and support animal welfare organisations.

Applications for Round 11 of Grants are open until 9 December 2023. To apply, visit animalwelfare.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"These grants will alleviate the pressure on animal shelters while ensuring our companion animals and owners have access to affordable services."

"These grants will help to strengthen animal welfare and keep these essential services accessible to all Victorians."

Quotes attributable to Second Chance Animal Rescue CEO & Founder Marisa Debattista

"Second Chance Animal Rescue not only rescues, rehabilitates and rehomes homeless companion animals, but we also support vulnerable pet owners through tough times."

Media contact: Alex Woods 0422 572 228 | alex.woods@minstaff.vic.gov.au

“This funding will assist organisations such as ours to improve our equipment and facilities, which will help us continue to provide the best and most-affordable care for Victoria’s much-loved furry friends.”