

# Media Release

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



Friday, 6 September 2024

## CAT DESEXING GRANTS TO PRESS PAWS ON UNWANTED LITTERS

The Allan Labor Government is supporting vulnerable cat owners and addressing cat over-population by providing grants to local councils to partner with animal rescue shelters to increase cat desexing rates.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence today visited Second Chance Animal Rescue in Craigieburn to announce 14 councils will share in \$300,000 to deliver targeted cat desexing programs within their communities.

Hume City Council will receive a \$25,000 grant to partner with two vet clinics, including Second Chance Animal Rescue to desex around 80 cats. This will lead to fewer unwanted litters and reduce the number of cats in animal shelters or requiring euthanasia in the long-term.

The Council-run desexing programs will support people who care for semi-owned and unowned cats and help them take full ownership of these cats. By providing free desexing, microchipping, and in some cases free registration for the first year, these people are encouraged to become registered and committed owners.

The program will also provide free and low-cost desexing services to cats owned by Victorians who may be experiencing financial hardship in the identified target areas.

Cat management is a significant and complex challenge in Victoria with more than 227,000 registered cats and a substantial number of unregistered, unowned, or feral cats in our urban and natural environments. Although 95 per cent of registered cats are desexed by the age of two, cats can have multiple litters in this time.

The program specifically targets semi-owned cats and addresses problem cat populations, as well as cats often overlooked by desexing programs.

The Government invested \$1.3 million from the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* for three cat management initiatives, the state's first long-term Cat Management Strategy will be released later in 2024.

For a full list of council grant recipients visit [agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals](https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals).

### Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

*"This targeted cat desexing program supports local councils to provide free or low-cost desexing programs which will help to manage the overpopulation of cats, while reducing the strain on our state's animal shelters."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Greenvale Iwan Walters

*"Second Chance Animal Shelter is an amazing shelter doing such important work in our community by providing genuine care and support to animals in need - and I am glad that this program will enable them to support vulnerable cats and their owners."*

### Quote attributable to Marisa Debattista CEO of Second Chance Animal Rescue

*"One of the main reasons people don't desex their pets is because they can't afford it. These grants make cat desexing more accessible for vulnerable community members."*