



Mark Speakman
Attorney General
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

MEDIA RELEASE

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PROTECTING WOMAN'S BEST FRIEND: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ANIMAL GRANTS ANNOUNCED

Nineteen domestic violence refuges and animal shelters from across NSW will receive a share of \$500,000 to support more victim-survivors and their companion animals.

Attorney General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence Mark Speakman congratulated the Pets and Animal Welfare Support (PAWS) Grants recipients from regional and metro areas that received between \$6,000 and \$40,000.

"This is welcome news prior to Christmas, as these funds will help ensure women can leave violent homes without worrying their pet will be harmed," Mr Speakman said.

"The one-off grants will enable women's refuges to become pet-friendly so they can offer accommodation and veterinary care for victim's companion animals, as well as training for staff," Mr Speakman said.

One of the recipients, CatholicCare Western Sydney, has been awarded funds to build fencing and stables to provide free horse accommodation for victims fleeing abuse.

Another, Goulburn Veterinary Clinic, will use the grant to provide a 24/7 secure shelter to establish a safe space for victims and pets to spend time together.

Gunida Gonyah Aboriginal Corporation will use the funding to install cat and dog enclosures on crisis accommodation, provide pet food, transport and vet services, and roll out staff training in animal welfare.

Mr Speakman said this NSW Government funding was critical, as perpetrators often abuse animals as an instrument of coercive control designed to torment victims.

"Perpetrators use pets to intimidate, retaliate against, and manipulate victims during relationships and after separation, as punishment for leaving," Mr Speakman said.

The grant program funds formed part of the NSW and Commonwealth Government's [\\$21 million boost to frontline domestic violence services](#) during COVID-19.

It also comes after the NSW Government [passed Apprehended Domestic Violence Order \(ADVO\) reforms](#) to greater protect victim-survivors and their companion animals in November.

*For confidential support for domestic and family violence, contact: **1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732), The NSW Domestic Violence Line (1800 65 64 63) or Men's Referral Service (1300 766 491).***