

## **RSPCA WA PET STERILISATION PROGRAM – FAQ's**

### **Can you help me pay to get my dog/cat sterilised?**

If you have a Pension, Healthcare Card or WA Seniors card, then yes, you can apply for the pet sterilisation program. Under the program, eligible pet owners pay just 25% of the cost at participating vet clinics – RSPCA WA will fund the other 75% with State Government funding. This card must be in the same name as the owner of the pet so that these details match (i.e. it cannot be in a child's name or other person/s).

### **How does it work?**

You apply for the program on the RSPCA WA's website – you must have a current health care card, pensioner card or WA senior's card. When you apply to the program you will be required to select your nearest participating veterinary clinic. Your application will be reviewed by RSPCA WA and either approved or declined. To qualify, owners will need to provide a valid concession card and proof of identification.

### **What happens when if I am approved?**

Approved applicants will be sent an email with instructions on what to do next, their unique voucher code, and the voucher expiry date. In this email you will also receive an approximate cost of the sterilisation and the percentage you will be required to pay.

### **What if I am not approved?**

Declined applicants will be sent an email informing them their application has been unsuccessful and provided information as to why they were unsuccessful.

### **How many pets can I get sterilised?**

There isn't a limit, but you can only apply for 4 pets at any one time. If you have more than this, you would need to complete the application for your 4 highest priority animals and then submit another application later.

### **How long will it take to hear if I have been approved/not approved?**

We will be trying to process applications as quickly as possible but please expect at least 14 days to receive a response. This may be longer, especially if we are receiving a high volume of applications.

### **How long is the program open for?**

The program will be available until the State Government funds have been exhausted, which we expect to be approximately over a 12-month period, but this could be shorter or longer as required.

### **Can I just book the sterilisation at my regular vet?**

No. RSPCA WA has partnered with vets across WA to deliver the program. A list of vets taking part in the program are available as part of the application process and you will need to select from one of those. If you qualify for the program, you will then need to book in with your chosen participating vet clinic, using the vet clinic you chose with the voucher code that will be provided to you. You can't contact a vet clinic directly to book in without going through the application process.

### **How much will I have to pay**

If eligible, you will only pay 25% of the total cost of sterilisation which will vary according to several factors including:

- The type of animal (e.g. dog or cat)
- The pricing schedule of the individual vet clinic
- The age of the animal
- The animal's size
- The animal's gender
- Whether your pet has any underlying medical conditions

When an applicant is approved for the program and receives a voucher code, they will be provided with an estimation of their required co-payment contribution.

### **Is it just for cats and dogs?**

Yes. Cats and dogs only are eligible to be sterilised under this program.

### **What age does a cat/dog need to be before they can be sterilised?**

8 weeks and over for Cats

5 months and over for Dogs

RSPCA WA strongly advocates for pre-pubertal desexing in cats (around 4 months of age) to prevent the opportunity for ongoing breeding to occur. Some veterinary clinics will be happy to do this from an earlier age, while some may prefer to wait, in this instance we may need to match you with a different veterinary clinic than what you have selected.

Generally, dogs will be sterilised when they are over 6 months of age. Accounting for the fact that it may be a few weeks until the application is processed, and the sterilisation procedure booked in, we recommend applying when your dog is over or around 5 months of age. We are aware that a recommendation may be made in some instances to not sterilise your dog until they are over 12 months if you have a large breed dog. Unfortunately, we can't hold a voucher for this long so you will need to wait until this time to apply if you have been given this advice or contact us to discuss further.

**What happens when if my pet is found to have a complication/other issue outside of the sterilisation process?**

Under the program only standard sterilisation procedures are included, if the animal has other considerations which increase these costs (i.e. cryptorchid, pregnant, in-heat) these additional charges will be charged to you and should be discussed with by the vet clinic at the time.

**Are vaccinations and microchips covered?**

No, these are not covered under the program, these would be charged to you choose to have these services added. You should discuss these additional services (and any other than may apply) and their respective fees with your veterinary clinic.

**I just had my dog/cat sterilised – will you give me 75% back?**

No. You have to apply BEFORE you take your pet to the vet. If your pet has already been sterilised, you can't get a rebate. To access the Pet Sterilisation Program, you must qualify through the scheme via the RSPCA WA website.

**What do I do if I am having trouble completing the application form online?**

Please send an email to [psp@rspcawa.org.au](mailto:psp@rspcawa.org.au).

**I don't have a concession card, but I can't afford to sterilise my pet – what can I do?**

A lot of vet clinics offer payment plans, and some councils offer sterilisation subsidies. There are also some not-for-profits who can help limited numbers of pet owners with sterilisation costs.