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Safe Families - Paws and All



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## Safety plan for animals

Planning to leave from threats of domestic and family violence has many similarities to preparing to leave in the case of a natural disaster such as bushfire, flood or other major weather event.

If you are taking animals with you, particularly large animals, planning is essential. Remember to secure your animals first, so they are nearby when you are ready to leave. If animals become anxious, they could hide, run away or be difficult to catch or transport. This will affect how quickly and easily you can leave.

Animals, like humans, can feel stressed and anxious when their daily routines are disrupted. They may also pick up on your stress. When animals are frightened, they can become aggressive, can bite, scratch or kick (even if this is not part of their normal behaviour).

- Try to remain calm, be as clear and decisive as possible.
- Remember that your safety is the most important thing. If you have a lot of animals:
  - Are they ALL at risk of injury or death if you leave them?
  - Are you able to reduce the number of animals by giving some away, selling them or rehoming them elsewhere until you are resettled?

## Preparation

Decide where your animals will go. If your pets are to be cared for by friends or family, how easy would it be for the perpetrator to re-acquire the animals? For example, are they to be left unsupervised in an unlocked backyard or paddock? Is your dog going to stay at the only kennel in town? Would the transporter be easily traceable, for example, via an electronic funds transfer to them from an account that the perpetrator has access to? Research your options — where could you relocate your animals that is outside your local area if needed?

### Small animals

- Not all refuges co-house. Check ahead of time if animals are allowed
- If your pets are to be boarded, what are the hours of operation?
- Is the facility secure?
- Birds in aviaries, reptiles in specially heated enclosures, tropical fish in large tanks, may need special consideration.





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## Large animals

- If moving large animals, pick a route where the transports are less likely to be seen by the perpetrator.
- Who will move the animals? Avoid using the transporter that you usually use, if possible.
- If moving multiple animals, transport them all at once. This may require larger or multiple transport vehicles.
- Do you have suitable transport to move them and have you worked out long it will take? Will you need to make several trips? Will you need others to help you?
- Make notes about relevant incidents of violence or harassment; keep text messages/voice mails/emails to help if you seek legal advice.
- Remember that larger animals might be included. Be aware of bio-security and tagging obligations. Most farm animals will be tracked by their tags or other legal tracking requirements. Consider if transporting the animals to the place where you are going will potentially alert the perpetrator to where you will be staying. Remember- your safety must come first- you cannot protect the animals if you are not safe.

## Animal grab and go kit

- A 3-7 day supply of food (including instructions on feeding)
- Water, Food and Treats (plus can opener and spoon)
- Bowls/Buckets/Tubs for eating and drinking
- Any medicines, tablets or creams (with instructions)
- A first-aid kit with bandage, tape, antibiotic ointment, flea and tick prevention etc
- A collar, leash and ID tag
- Toys
- Towels and/or a blanket and bedding
- Identification Tags
- Litter trays and waste bags for clean-up
- Registration, insurance and vaccination papers/ certificates, any receipts from veterinary visits you have paid for. Any receipts that prove you provided primary care.
- Crates, carriers, cages and leads.





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## Microchips and Property Identification Code (PICs)

If you have livestock you are required by law to have a PIC for the properties where your livestock resides. Small animals are required to be microchipped, unless they are exempt. These identification systems may be used to track the whereabouts of your animals. When escaping violent situations, it is important to keep the new location of animals private and secure. Be aware that you may be tracked via microchips and PICs. Not sure if your animal has a microchip? Ask your vet who will check with a small microchip scanner.

## More information

The NSW Pet Registry allows you to update your contact details, report your pet missing, change the ownership of pets, and pay the lifetime registration fee.

[www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au](http://www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au)

More information on Property Identification Codes [www.lis.nsw.gov.au/i-want-to/apply-for-a-property-identification-code](http://www.lis.nsw.gov.au/i-want-to/apply-for-a-property-identification-code)

RSPCA South Australia - planning to leave from bushfire with animals video

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLjVolUlpNg&t=259s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLjVolUlpNg&t=259s)

NSW State Emergency Service – Animal Emergency Plans

[www.ses.nsw.gov.au/get-ready-animals/get-ready-animals-splash-page/get-ready-animals/](http://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/get-ready-animals/get-ready-animals-splash-page/get-ready-animals/)



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