

Grant guidelines

Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector Emergency and Operational Support Program

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

NSW GOVERNMENT

Acknowledgement of Country

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

This resource may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.



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Artist and designer Nikita Ridgeway from Aboriginal design agency Boss Lady Creative Designs created the People and Community symbol.

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S Lorigan/DCCEEW

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Summary

Program purpose	To provide practical operational support to wildlife rehabilitators and targeted emergency support in locations affected by identified H5 bird flu and flying-fox events.
Stream A	**Operational expenses rebate:** statewide support of up to $200 per eligible person. Eligible costs incurred from 16 October 2026 to 31 March 2027 may be claimed.
Stream B	**H5 bird flu support:** $250,000 for eligible support of up to $150 per eligible person in specified local government areas with identified events. Eligible costs incurred from 1 July 2026 to 31 March 2027 may be claimed.
Stream C	**Flying-fox emergency relief:** $100,000 for eligible support of up to $500 per person in specified local government areas with identified events. Eligible costs incurred from 16 September 2026 to 31 March 2027 may be claimed.
Total funding available	$1.44 million across the 3 streams.
Evidence required	Applicants must provide receipts showing the expense, date and amount paid and evidence that the expense meets the requirements of the relevant stream.
Program dates	Applications open: November 2026. Applications close: 31 March 2027, or earlier if funding is exhausted.

Before you apply

Check that your expense is listed as eligible, was incurred within the eligible period for the stream, and is supported by a receipt.

Background

The NSW Government is delivering a $9 million package in response to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Review. The package includes $3.89 million for grant funding and sector support. This includes $2.49 million for operational expenses, durable assets and strategic regional assets.

The Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector Emergency and Operational Support Program provides $1.44 million to help eligible wildlife rehabilitators cover wildlife rescue, rehabilitation and care costs through 3 streams:

- **Stream A**: $1.09 million for everyday wildlife rehabilitation expenses across New South Wales
- **Stream B**: $250,000 in joint Australian and NSW Government funding for personal protective equipment (PPE) to prepare for H5 bird flu
- **Stream C**: $100,000 for flying-fox emergency relief.

Streams B and C support specified local government areas with identified events.

Stream A is the first grant stream under the NSW Government's $9 million, 4-year package to implement the Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector Review.

The program provides practical support for ordinary rehabilitation costs and targeted emergency needs, recognising that volunteers largely deliver wildlife rehabilitation services in New South Wales through licensed providers and organisations.

Program purpose and objectives

The program provides practical operational and emergency support through 3 streams to:

- support eligible individual wildlife rehabilitators and volunteers with ordinary day-to-day costs through Stream A
- provide targeted H5 bird flu PPE through Stream B in specified local government areas that have at least one confirmed H5 bird flu event at the time of application
- provide additional and immediate flying-fox emergency relief through Stream C in specified local government areas with identified events, including mass starvation
- help sustain safe, volunteer-based wildlife rehabilitation services across New South Wales.

Table 1 Eligibility, funding and application requirements across the support streams

Eligibility	Stream A – operational expenses rebate	Stream B – H5 bird flu support	Stream C – flying-fox emergency relief
Purpose	Supports an individual's ordinary costs of wildlife rescue, rehabilitation and care.	Supports access to PPE required for H5 bird flu preparedness.	Supports additional and immediate costs arising from an identified flying-fox emergency.
Who can apply	Eligible individual wildlife rehabilitators and volunteers authorised under a current biodiversity conservation licence for wildlife rehabilitation.	Eligible individual wildlife rehabilitators and volunteers authorised under a current biodiversity conservation licence for wildlife rehabilitation.	Eligible individual wildlife rehabilitators and volunteers authorised to care for flying foxes under a current biodiversity conservation licence for wildlife rehabilitation.
Geographic scope	Statewide.	Only specified local government areas that have at least one confirmed H5 bird flu event at the time of application, see Appendix 1.	Only specified local government areas which have confirmed flying-fox camps, see Appendix 2, and flying-fox starvation events.
Eligibility trigger	The applicant has incurred an eligible operational expense linked to wildlife rescue, rehabilitation or care.	The PPE is required for H5 bird flu preparedness associated with an identified event in an eligible location.	The cost is directly linked to the response to an identified flying-fox emergency.

Eligibility	Stream A – operational expenses rebate	Stream B – H5 bird flu support	Stream C – flying-fox emergency relief
Funding basis	One rebate of $100 to $200 per eligible person. If eligible expenses are less than $200, the department will pay the total eligible amount incurred. The department may accept additional rebate applications subject to sector needs and available funding.	One rebate of $100 to $150. Support from the $250,000 Stream B funding pool. The department may accept additional rebate applications subject to sector needs and available funding.	One rebate of $100 to $500 per eligible person. Event-specific support from the $100,000 Stream C funding pool. The department may accept additional rebate applications subject to sector needs and available funding.
Eligible costs	Ordinary individual expenses listed in Table 2, including feed, medicine, fuel, consumables, equipment and other approved rehabilitation costs.	PPE only: fit-for-purpose P2 or N95 respirators, disposable coveralls or body suits, disposable gloves, eye protection such as safety glasses or face shields, and disposable boot or shoe covers as per Table 3.	Additional emergency response costs listed in Table 4, including bulk fruit and feed, food preparation and delivery, volunteer travel and accommodation, emergency consumables, and operating costs for intensive rehabilitation and pre-release facilities.
Eligible expenditure period	Costs must be incurred from 16 October 2026 to 31 March 2027.	Costs incurred from 1 July 2026 to 31 March 2027, including eligible costs incurred before applications open.	Costs incurred from 16 September 2026 to 31 March 2027, including eligible costs incurred before applications open.
Evidence	A receipt showing the expense, date and amount paid and its connection to wildlife rehabilitation.	Receipts and evidence that the PPE is eligible, was required for H5 bird flu preparedness, and was purchased for use in or in connection with an eligible location.	Receipts and evidence that the cost was necessary for the identified flying-fox emergency and meets the Stream C criteria.

Eligibility	Stream A – operational expenses rebate	Stream B – H5 bird flu support	Stream C – flying-fox emergency relief
Duplicate funding	An expense cannot be claimed if it has been funded or reimbursed by a provider or another government program.	An expense claimed under Stream B cannot also be claimed under Stream A, Stream C or another funding source.	An expense claimed under Stream C cannot also be claimed under Stream A, Stream B or another funding source.
Application limit	Applicants can submit only one eligible application and receive only one rebate in this stream.	Applicants can submit an application under Stream B individually or in addition to a Stream A or Stream C application.	Applicants can submit an application under Stream C individually or in addition to a Stream A or Stream B application.

Stream A – eligible operational expenses

Eligible costs must be directly related to wildlife rescue, rehabilitation or care in New South Wales. Eligible items are below.

Table 2 Eligible items for operational expenses

Category	Eligible items
Feeding	• Food for animals in care • Food and water storage equipment • Food and water dishes • Teats • Bottles • Droppers • Syringes • Clippers for collecting browse • Sterilisation equipment • Fruit slicing machines
Transport	• Fuel • Transport cages • Towels • Blankets
Training costs	• Travel costs to attend training • Subscription fees for training • Venue hire • First aid certificate
Veterinary costs	• Out-of-pocket vet costs • Medicines or treatment of wildlife in care
Rescue	• Rescue basket • Catch bags • Traps • Cages • Nets • Identification guides • Resources • Signage for rescues in progress • Snake leg garters • Flashing car lights • Torches

Category	Eligible items
	• Echidna bins • Equipment for entanglement rescues • Secateurs • Heavy-duty Kevlar gloves • Barbed wire cutters • Small pliers • Plain wire • Field cameras
Housing	• Housing materials, for example, sugarcane mulch • Flooring/substrate for enclosures • Pouches • Heat mats, pads, discs and lamps • Thermometers and thermostats • Scales and measuring equipment • Nest boxes/animal hides/equipment • Safety latches and padlocks • Lighting and furniture for housing • Joey frames • Airing frames for flying foxes • Pop-up pens for birds • Rubber mats • Roofing • Incubators • Shade cloth • PVC pipes for browse
Hygiene, WHS	• Cleaning equipment and chemicals, including F10 and chlorhexidine • Paper towel and cloths • Spray bottles • Dustpans, brooms and hoses • First-aid kits and supplies • Plastic and ziplock bags and storage • Washing machine detergent • Tissues • Blueys or puppy pads • PPE, including gloves, masks, respirators, protective clothing, eye and face protection, shoe or boot covers, disposable coveralls or body suits, P2 or N95 respirators and high-visibility vests
Animal treatment	• Animal treatments and supplements for critical care (non-prescription), for example, Spark, lactate, Flamazine, probiotics

Category	Eligible items
Vaccinations	• Q fever • Rabies (vaccination and titre checks) • COVID-19 • Influenza • Tetanus • Japanese encephalitis
Other	• Carbon fibre extendable poles • Equipment maintenance costs • Cat nets • Ladders

Funding must not be used for costs that are not listed as eligible, do not have a receipt, breach licence conditions or have already been funded or reimbursed by a wildlife rehabilitation provider or another government program.

The rebate cannot be used for durable assets, strategic regional assets, veterinary hospitals, research, capital works, fines or penalties, general donations or unlicensed activities.

Eligible costs must be incurred on or after the rebate commencement date. Costs incurred before this date will not be accepted.

Stream B – H5 bird flu support

Stream B provides $250,000 for eligible H5 bird flu preparedness. It is not available statewide. Applicants must meet the stream-specific criteria and be located in a specified local government area with an identified event (see Appendix 1). Eligible costs incurred from 1 July 2026 to 31 March 2027 may be claimed. Eligible items are set out in Table 3. Applications outside areas with identified events will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Table 3 Eligible personal protective equipment

Category	Eligible PPE
Respiratory protection	Fit-for-purpose P2 or N95 respirators.
Protective clothing	Disposable coveralls or body suits.
Hand protection	Disposable gloves.
Eye and face protection	Safety glasses, goggles or face shields.
Foot protection	Disposable boot or shoe covers.

Stream C – flying-fox emergency relief

Stream C provides $100,000 statewide for eligible flying-fox emergency relief. Applicants must be active licensed flying-fox carers and meet the stream-specific criteria. Eligible costs incurred from 16 September 2026 to 31 March 2027 may be claimed. Eligible items are set out in Table 4.

Table 4 Eligible items for flying-fox emergency relief

Category	Eligible items
Fruit, feed and food preparation	Fruit, milk formula, high-protein supplements, juices and other essential food supplies; daily fruit preparation costs; and preparation or delivery of chopped fruit to pre-release facilities.
Fuel, transport and accommodation	Fuel and transport costs, and reasonable accommodation costs for volunteers travelling to remote flying-fox camps or emergency response locations.
Animal care consumables	Essential medications and animal care consumables required for the flying-fox emergency response.
Pre-release facilities and operating expenses	Infrastructure and operating expenses directly associated with intensive rehabilitation and pre-release facilities, including additional electricity and water costs arising from the emergency response.
Other regional priorities	Other priority items identified through regional engagement and approved by the department as directly related to the identified event.

Eligible applicants

The same applicant criteria apply to all 3 streams. Applicants must be eligible individual wildlife rehabilitators or volunteers authorised under a current biodiversity conservation licence for wildlife rehabilitation. Applicants must also meet the location, event, expense and evidence requirements of each selected stream. Applicants are eligible to apply if they:

- are an eligible individual wildlife rehabilitator or volunteer authorised under a current biodiversity conservation licence for wildlife rehabilitation
- meet the applicant, location and event requirements for the selected stream
- have incurred an expense listed as eligible for that stream during the relevant expenditure period
- show that the expense relates to eligible wildlife rehabilitation or emergency response activities
- can provide receipts and any additional evidence required for the selected stream
- declare that the same expense has not been requested, funded or reimbursed under another stream, by the rehabilitation provider or through another government program
- provide complete, true and accurate information.

Licensed wildlife rehabilitation providers and organisations may support eligible individual wildlife rehabilitators and volunteers to prepare and submit applications under any stream.

Applicants are not eligible if they:

- do not meet the applicant, location or event requirements for the selected stream
- claim costs that are not listed as eligible for the selected stream
- claim expenses outside the relevant stream's eligible expenditure period
- claim the same expense under more than one stream or another funding source
- do not provide the required receipts or supporting evidence
- provide incomplete, false or misleading information.

Application process

Applicants must apply through the NSW Government Grant Management System and select the relevant stream in the application form. Common information is requested once, with additional questions and evidence shown for the selected stream.

Information requested in the application includes:

- applicant and licensed provider details
- the stream or streams being applied for
- confirmation that the applicant meets the eligibility requirements for each selected stream
- a description of each expense and the amount claimed
- receipts showing the expense, date and amount paid
- for Stream A, evidence linking the expense to wildlife rescue, rehabilitation or care
- for Streams B and C, evidence linking the expense to the identified event and eligible local government area
- declarations that the information is true and correct and disclosing any conflict of interest
- confirmation that no cost has been requested, funded or reimbursed under another stream or funding source.

An applicant may submit only one application under Stream A in this operational grants round. A Stream A applicant may also apply under Stream B, Stream C or both if eligible. Where a cost is eligible under Stream B or Stream C, funding from the relevant targeted stream will be applied first. The same cost must not be requested or claimed under more than one stream or from another funding source.

Assessment process

Applications will be checked against the requirements below:

- whether the applicant, location and event are eligible for the selected stream
- whether each expense is listed as eligible for that stream and falls within its eligible expenditure period
- whether the required receipt and stream-specific evidence have been provided
- whether the application is complete and accurate
- whether the claim is an appropriate use of public funds
- whether the claim duplicates another stream or funding source
- whether any compliance, probity or conflict of interest issues need to be managed.

The assessment process includes checking eligibility, reviewing the application and receipt, managing any conflicts of interest, and recording recommendations for approval.

Applications will be assessed under the approved process. Payments will be approved under the department's financial and grant delegations.

Applicants will be told the outcome within 30 business days of applying.

If demand is higher than the funding available for any of the streams, applications may close early. Applications will be assessed in the order they are received, if they meet eligibility and receipt requirements.

If additional information or clarification is required, applicants will be contacted and will have 10 business days to supply the additional information or clarification. If no response is received, the application may be deemed ineligible and the applicant may have to reapply.

Conflicts of interest

Conflict of interest processes apply during set-up, assessment and delivery of all 3 streams.

All officers involved in assessment, recommendations, approvals or administration must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. Officers with a conflict must not take part in relevant decisions where required.

Applicants must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest as part of the application process.

Conflict of interest declarations and management actions must be recorded and kept with the grant records.

Key dates

Milestone	Stream A	Stream B	Stream C
Applications open	November 2026	November 2026	November 2026
Eligible expenditure period	16 October 2026 to 31 March 2027.	1 July 2026 to 31 March 2027. Eligible costs may be backdated.	16 September 2026 to 31 March 2027. Eligible costs may be backdated.
Applications close	31 March 2027, unless funding runs out earlier.	31 March 2027, unless funding runs out earlier.	31 March 2027, unless funding runs out earlier.
Outcome notification	Within 30 business days of application.	Within 30 business days of application.	Within 30 business days of application.
Payment	Within 15 business days of successful outcome notification.	Within 15 business days of successful outcome notification.	Within 15 business days of successful outcome notification.

Publishing

Information about the program will be published on the NSW Grants and Funding Finder where required by the NSW Grants Administration Guide. Details of successful applicants will not be published to protect privacy. Results will be reported in aggregate by stream.

Contacts for further information

Wildlife Rehabilitation Grants
Biodiversity and Heritage Regulator
NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Email: wildlife.rehabgrants@dcceew.nsw.gov.au

Appendix 1: H5 bird flu local government areas with identified wildlife events

- Bayside
- Bega Valley
- Canterbury–Bankstown
- Central Coast
- Coffs Harbour
- Eurobodalla
- Goulburn Mulwaree
- Kiama
- Ku-ring-gai
- Lake Macquarie
- Mid-Coast
- Nambucca Valley
- Newcastle
- Northern Beaches
- Parramatta
- Penrith
- Port Macquarie–Hastings
- Port Stephens
- Randwick
- Shellharbour
- Shoalhaven
- Sutherland Shire
- Wentworth
- Wollongong

Appendix 2: local government areas with at least one flying-fox camp

- Ballina
- Bayside
- Bega Valley
- Bellingen
- Blacktown
- Blue Mountains
- Byron
- Camden
- Campbelltown
- Canterbury–Bankstown
- Central Coast
- Cessnock
- Clarence Valley
- Coffs Harbour
- Cumberland
- Dungog
- Eurobodalla
- Fairfield
- Georges River
- Hawkesbury
- Hornsby
- Hunters Hill
- Inner West
- Kempsey
- Kiama
- Ku-ring-gai
- Kyogle
- Lake Macquarie
- Lismore
- Liverpool
- Maitland
- Mid-Coast
- Muswellbrook

- Nambucca Valley
- Newcastle
- Northern Beaches
- Parramatta
- Penrith
- Port Macquarie–Hastings
- Port Stephens
- Randwick
- Richmond Valley
- Ryde
- Shellharbour
- Shoalhaven
- Singleton
- Sutherland Shire
- The Hills
- Tweed
- Upper Hunter
- Wingecarribee
- Wollondilly
- Wollongong