

# How to start a rescue organisation

A checklist brought to you by



## The business stuff

(Governance and compliance type things that “future you” will thank you for!)

**Be across your state and federal Animal Welfare governing laws**

*Did you know that every state in Australia has different information and requirements which will impact your rescuing and rehoming efforts?*

Review the [rehoming legislation](#) in your state

Review [microchipping requirements](#)

**Get advice and decide what type of organisation you will be**

*This is very difficult to change later on so find out the benefits and barriers to becoming a registered charity, Social Enterprise, Not for Profit, Incorporated Association, No legal structure or Other.*

**If you've decided to be a charity;**

[Register as a charity](#) with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC)

**Establish a committee to oversee the governance of your organisation**

**Register for an [Australian Business Number \(ABN\)](#)**

*This is needed if you are going to conduct any 'business' legitimately as a rescue group - this includes being able to receive donations, receive payments of any kind, access tax and charity concessions, apply for grants, employ people, pay for services as a business etc*

**Create an initial business plan**

*This document becomes your helpful guide to decision making. Define why you're starting a rescue. What is the scope of the problem in your community, and how can you best address it? What are others doing? How can you work together? Why will the work you do be different? Choose a business name, something unique and memorable. How will you fund your rescue group so that your work can continue and have a long-lasting impact?*



**Define your health and wellbeing guidelines**

*This guide can help outline how you'll ensure the physical, mental and emotional well-being of animals in your care, along with how you'll commit to keeping your volunteers and employees safe, both physically and mentally.*

**Research for Animal Health and Wellbeing**

*Begin researching the different ways that your rescue group will prevent and control the spread of infectious diseases to help keep the pets in your care safe. Having an intake and capacity plan will help guide how you'll approach this before your intake quantity grows.*

**Take out [public liability insurance](#)**

*It's a vital investment. You'll be seriously glad to have insurance cover for peace of mind if anything goes awry.*

**Create a privacy policy to cover how you will take privacy importantly for the people you help, your enquirers, adopters, volunteers, foster carers (if fact, anyone you interact with)**

*The privacy act is designed to protect individuals. Creating this policy will detail how you'll take care of the personal information that you'll be collecting and storing.*

**Get familiar with [Fairwork](#)**

*If you are planning on having volunteers or employing people now or even in future, check out [this guide](#) to be across the different types of legal arrangements.*

**Reserve a spot for your rescue's online presence**

*Do this sooner - it's easier than needing to change a business name later (e.g. if your desired rescue group name is already being used). Purchase a domain name (even if you don't have a website to link to yet), and create a free email that you can use to start (we recommend Google Mail - it's free!). For now, reserve an Instagram account, Facebook account, TikTok account and Twitter handle (these are all free and you can sign up but set them up properly later).*

**Get started with pet listing and volunteer management tooling.**

*Now that you've completed the above and can be verified as a legitimate rescue group, you're eligible for a membership and profile page on [PetRescue!](#) Be amongst a community who are working towards creating a future where every pet is safe, respected, and loved. Simply head to [PetRescue.com.au](#) to create your **free** account on PetRescue to start accessing an impressive gamut of pet adoption tools, support and resources created especially for the needs of rescue groups.*

