



Name	REG01 Disposal of Surrendered and Unclaimed Impounded Dogs
Policy Type	Council
Responsible Officer	Regulatory Services Program Leader
Approval Date	19/01/2026
Review Date	18/01/2030

### 1. Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for the disposal of surrendered and unclaimed impounded dogs.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to surrendered and unclaimed impounded dogs and is implemented by Regulatory Services staff.

### 3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Re-homing organisation	An incorporated body that provides services relating to animal welfare.
Prescribed period	Pursuant to By-law 37(1) dogs must be impounded for a minimum of 72 hours prior to disposal.

### 4. Policy Statement

- 4.1. Council is committed to minimising euthanasia rates and reducing the number of impounded dogs within the Litchfield municipality.
- 4.2. Where possible, Council will return a seized registered dog directly to its owner rather than impounding the dog. All non-registered and unidentified dogs that are seized by Council will be taken to the Council pound facility and every effort will be made to identify the owner of the dog.
- 4.3. Surrendered and unclaimed dogs may be disposed of by Council after being impounded for the prescribed period, either by transfer of the dog to a re-homing organisation or by euthanasia.
- 4.4. Transfer of dogs to a re-homing organisation
  - 4.4.1. Re-homing organisations must enter into an agreement with Council and comply with the conditions of the agreement. All dogs that are transferred to a re-homing organisation will be:
    - microchipped (or a microchip provided) by Council prior to handover if the dog is not already microchipped;

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- de-sexed and vaccinated at the re-homing organisation's expense prior to adoption; and
- provided with free registration to the end of the current annual registration period if adopted by a Litchfield resident.

### 4.5. Euthanasia

4.5.1. Circumstances where euthanasia may be considered acceptable include, but are not limited to the following:

- Dogs that are surrendered to Council for the purposes of euthanasia;
- Dogs that are vicious, dangerous, feral, unmanageable or likely to cause harm due to their behaviour or temperament;
- Dogs that are seized by or surrendered to Council that are suffering from disease or injury to such an extent that humane destruction is the only option, may be destroyed prior to the prescribed period laps upon authorisation by the Chief Executive Officer or delegate; or
- Dogs that are unable to be taken by any re-homing organisation after being impounded for the prescribed period.

4.5.2. In cases where euthanasia is required, it will be carried out by a registered veterinarian.

## **5. Associated Documents**

Surrender form

Pound transfer form

Regulatory Services Standard Operating Procedure - Surrendered/unclaimed impounded dog procedure

Euthanasia authorisation form

Transfer of impounded and unclaimed dog's agreement

## **6. References and Legislation**

Litchfield Council (Dog Management) By-law 37 - 2017

## **7. Review History**

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>Description of changes (Inc Decision No. if applicable)</b>
18/10/2017	This policy rescinds REGPOLICY/DID/2011/V001 Destruction of Impounded Dogs
19/10/2021	Addition of the requirement of rehoming organisations to enter into an agreement with Council and comply with the conditions of the agreement.
19/01/2026	Minor amendments to formatting and document titles.