

Animal Welfare (Keeping and Breeding of Rabbits in the ACT) Mandatory Code of Practice 2024

Disallowable instrument DI2024–231

made under the

Animal Welfare Act 1992, Section 23 (Mandatory code of practice)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Summary

The *Animal Welfare (Keeping and Breeding of Rabbits in the ACT) Mandatory Code of Practice 2024* (the Code) outlines minimum standards of the keeping and breeding of rabbits.

The Code was prepared to address a gap in the *Animal Welfare Act 1992* and its associated legislative instruments relating to rabbits.

The Code is made under section 23 of the *Animal Welfare Act 1992*, which allows the Minister to approve a Code of Practice, part or all of which has mandatory force. Failure to comply with the mandatory standards in the Code is an offence. It is also an offence to fail to follow a direction to comply with this Code.

This Code of Practice includes mandatory standards and guidelines that are considered essential for meeting the requirements specified under the *Animal Welfare Act 1992*.

Where there are references in both the standards and guidelines, this has been intentionally done as the guidelines provide additional supporting information (that is not mandatory) in addition to the standard, which is mandatory. Most standards have a corresponding guideline which expands and provides more detail and guidance on ways to meet the standard.

Scope

This Code provides minimum standards for rabbit owners as to the appropriate means of caring for pet rabbits. The objective of this Code is that rabbits kept in the ACT are provided with care that maximises their long-term health and well-being; and are protected from pain, distress, danger, illness and injury.

Although the basic principles of good animal welfare as outlined in this Code are universally relevant, this Code does not apply to animals other than rabbits.

Development of the Code

Consultation was undertaken with the Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, Domestic Animal Services, the Australian Veterinary Association, Canberra Rabbit Club, Capital Country Cavy Club, Ferret Society of Canberra, Inner South Veterinary Clinic and The Unusual Pet Vets.