

SYDNEY DOGS & CATS HOME

 PO BOX 4105, KOGARAH BAY NSW 2217
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 SYDNEYDOGSANDCATSHOME.ORG
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 ABN: 16 943 464 587
 CFN: 16738

MEDIA RELEASE

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Covid Puppy with 'Tail' of Triumph Searching for Forever Home this Christmas

Zodiac the Staffy-x is a 'Covid puppy' who had a less-than-ideal start to life. Born during the midst of the Covid-19 outbreak in Sydney, he was found 11 months later lost in a park dangerously malnourished with the majority of his tail missing, following a messy and violent removal.

It's not clear what happened to Zodiac in the first 11 months of his life, or to have his tail ripped away, but when council rangers came to help him, he was terrified of people.

Council rangers brought Zodiac into Sydney Dogs & Cats Home (SDCH), where he could receive emergency surgery.

SDCH Head Vet Dr Laura Taylor said it was essential Zodiac had his tail amputated to prevent infection and promote healing.

"We amputated the injured part of the tail and sutured the skin back together to give him the best chance of recovery and rehoming," she said.

"Whatever trauma resulted in his injury, he was in agony, with exposed bones and nerves in his tail. He was also visibly underweight. It was really lucky that he came to us when he did, or I worry about what might have happened to him."

The surgery transformed Zodiac not just physically, but behaviourally. What was a scared and timid puppy soon transformed into a confident, loyal and loving young man.

SDCH Animal Attendant Fatima Assano said Zodiac's behavioural progress was astounding.

"I could see the difference daily," she said.

"In the first day, we didn't even try to touch him because he was showing to be in so much pain, and then when I saw him getting out of his surgery... His little tail was wagging already, and he was close to the staff and cuddling."

While Zodiac's surgery was a great success, his tail wasn't the only relic of his past. It soon became clear he'd missed out on important formative training - a recent trend in 'Covid puppies', due to the unavailability of face-to-face training. Zodiac hadn't learnt basic skills that were essential for day-to-day life in a home.

WOOF. MEOW.



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SDCH staff spent hours every day rehabilitating Zodiac, teaching him how to walk on a lead, play with toys, interact with other dogs, meet new people, toilet outside, and perform cues such as sitting, lying down, and waiting.

After three months of rest, recovery and training, Zodiac is now looking for his forever home. He's been available for several weeks without any suitable applications. Still, it's hoped that before Christmas, he can experience what it's like to be part of a dedicated family who will love and protect him, and where he never has to feel confused and afraid again.

Zodiac has a few ongoing training and health needs that mean he's had trouble finding his perfect match. He would make a very loving companion for the right family with such an affectionate personality and a zest for life.

If you think you might be that special someone who can give Zodiac the life he deserves, you can apply to adopt him at <https://sydneydogsandcatshome.org/animal/zodiac/>.

In honour of Zodiac and his 'tail' of triumph, Sydney Dogs & Cats Home is aiming to raise \$110,230 before Christmas, continuing to transform the lives of Sydney's lost, abandoned and neglected dogs and cats in the year ahead.

All donations received ensure pets like Zodiac have the greatest chance at rehabilitation and recovery. You can even donate on behalf of a family member or friend as a Christmas gift.

If you would like to help pets like Zodiac, donate to Sydney Dogs & Cats Home Christmas Appeal at <https://bit.ly/3oKyXdk>.

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QUOTES

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Image Caption: Zodiac getting ready to spend Christmas in his forever home
Image Credit: Daniella Cortis, SDCH Volunteer



Image Caption: Zodiac getting ready to spend Christmas in his forever home
Image Credit: Tavia De Ruvo, SDCH Animal Care Team Leader

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ABOUT US

Sydney Dogs & Cats Home is Sydney's only charity pound and community facility and is owned and operated by The Sydney Dogs & Cats Home Incorporated.

The Home has been taking care of Sydney's lost, abandoned and neglected pets since 1946. We open our doors to up to thousands of pets each year, servicing multiple council areas across Sydney, including:

- [Bayside](#)
- [Fairfield](#)
- [Georges River](#)
- [Inner West](#)
- [North Sydney](#)
- [Randwick](#)
- [Waverley](#)
- [Woollahra](#)

We aim to provide shelter, food and veterinary care to lost, homeless and abandoned animals, primarily dogs and cats, in association with the local councils of Sydney. We act under the [NSW Companion Animals Act 1998](#) and the associated [Companion Animals Regulations and Codes of Practice](#) and care for pets until a time when such animals can either be reunited with their owners or found a new, suitable home.

We support the [Getting to Zero](#) movement, which means we strive to rehome every healthy and treatable animal that comes through our doors, and we never place a time limit on any animal awaiting adoption.

We also deliver a range of successful mental health-focused [community programs](#), creating a lifeline to both the animals we care for and those in the community who need it most.

We are a member of [Companion Animal Network Australia](#) (ACAN), which comprises six member agencies, each aiming to make the world a better place for pets. Through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives, we celebrate the human-animal bond and promote responsible pet ownership. We use our national voice to campaign for the humane treatment of all companion animals, and we rally support for programmes that deliver high welfare standards.

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