

	Koala Rehabilitation Policy		
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Approved by	Approved by Board		
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Introduction

All Koala rescuers, handlers, and rehabilitators must comply with the all minimum standards outlined in the OEH Koala Code of Practice 2018 (Koala COP).

This policy sets out the authorisation procedure for prospective WIRES koala carers.

Members must follow these guidelines to become authorised to house and care for koalas either in the short or long-term.

The WIRES general license enables appropriately trained members to rescue and care for koalas providing they have been assessed as having the required experience, care standards, and housing facilities and they abide by instructions given by the Large Mammal Management Team (LMMT) and the State Koala Coordinator.

The LMMT and the State Koala Coordinator have developed the criteria against which individual members will be assessed.

Nomination of a Koala Rehabilitator

A member can nominate themselves or be nominated by their Branch Management Committee.

The completed nomination report form should be sent via email to the LMMT and State Koala Coordinator for review. The report should detail compliance with the criteria outlined in this policy. The Koala Rehabilitator Nomination Form, which should be used for every nomination, is available in the WIRES Member site under Admin, Policies and Procedures.

Authorisation of a Koala Rehabilitator will occur in two stages. A carer must first be accepted and show competence in the rehabilitation of independent juvenile or adult koalas. Once that is achieved, a second nomination can be submitted to include the rehabilitation of koala joeys.

If the nomination is approved the member, branch Koala Coordinator, and Branch Management Committee will be notified.

Koala carers authorized as at 20.02.2021 are not required to comply with provisions i, iii and iv as listed in the Qualifications of a prospective Koala Rehabilitator in the WIRES Koala Rehabilitation Policy.

Qualifications of a prospective Koala Rehabilitator (Independent Juvenile or Adult)

The minimum qualifications required for a prospective koala rehabilitator are as follows:

- i) Must be a proven (documented) successful rehabilitator of mammals, other than koalas for a minimum of two years. This should include care of a minimum of 10 animals in a range of developmental stages, and care through a range of rehabilitation stages.
- ii) Must keep proven (documented) up-to-date care records for all rescues and rehabilitation, including husbandry plans, and actively report to the appropriate coordinator.
- iii) Should be able to demonstrate a long-standing interest in koalas and koala care by completing a 12-month mentorship with an authorised koala rehabilitator. This mentorship should, at a minimum, cover rescue experience, foliage collection and handling.
 - a. The applicant should include a letter of support from their mentor on this. Must be able to identify koala tree species (both primary and secondary) appropriate to your area and demonstrate leaf collection technique that does not harm the tree.
 - b. A letter from an experienced koala carer in the applicant's own, or a neighbouring, branch might be appropriate here.
- iv) Must have completed the WIRES Koala Rehabilitation Course within the last 3 years.
 - a. Prior to attending the Koala Rehabilitation Course must have completed an online or workbook course on the Koala COP.
- v) Should have completed the Koala Rescue Course within the last 3 years (when available).

Qualifications of a prospective Koala Rehabilitator (Joey)

The minimum qualifications required for any prospective koala joey rehabilitator are as follows:

- i) Must meet the qualifications for the rehabilitation of Independent Juvenile and Adult Koalas.
- ii) Must be a documented successful rehabilitator of independent juvenile and/or adult koalas, for a minimum of twelve months.

Responsibilities of the Koala Rehabilitator

The responsibilities of a koala rehabilitator include:

- i) Must have ready access to and the support of an experienced koala veterinarian.
- ii) Must be prepared to have their rehabilitation activities closely monitored by the LMMT and the State Koala Coordinator, including on site reviews of facilities annually or at a minimum every 3 years.
- iii) Must follow all instructions from the State Koala Coordinator and acknowledge and accept that placement of koalas in care will be determined by the State Koala Coordinator and LMMT in consultation with the branch Koala Coordinator.
- iv) Must have access to sufficient, suitable land area for housing facilities based on the preferred area of care (e.g. hospital, intermediate, or pre-release).

- v) Must erect and maintain appropriate housing facilities and acquire the relevant specialist equipment as per the Koala COP.
- vi) Must have access to an appropriate and reliable supply of leaf suitable for koala consumption and demonstrate appropriate selection and collection.
- vii) Must report all koalas that are rescued or come in to care to the branch Koala Coordinator at the time of rescue, or immediately following. If there is no active branch coordinator, all koalas must be reported to the State Koala Coordinator.
- viii) Must not permit transfer of a koala to any other WIRES carer, or from WIRES to any other wildlife rehabilitation organisation, either local or interstate, without seeking authorisation from the branch Koala Coordinator and the State Koala Coordinator. If there is no active branch coordinator, all koala transfers must be directly approved the State Koala Coordinator.
- ix) Must report the fate of each koala to the State Koala Coordinator as soon as it has been determined.

Koala Rehabilitator – Maintenance of authority

These responsibilities include:

1. Must understand and accept that WIRES Head Office has the authority to act should any responsibilities in this policy not be adhered to.
2. Must arrange for all videos and images of koalas rescued or in care to be approved by the State Koala Coordinator and WIRES Media Manager before being placed on social media or supplied to any media outlet.
3. Must be prepared to undergo annual inspections of their facilities whenever requested by the LMMT or anyone nominated by the LMMT (this may include WIRES head office and NPWS).
4. Must attend an authorised/accredited/approved WIRES Koala Rehabilitation Refresher Course every three years.
5. Every three years, must supply new photographs, of their koala facilities, complete with measurements, to the State Koala Coordinator.
6. If the Koala Rehabilitator cannot attend a refresher course within the third year of their authority, having provided a reason acceptable to the LMMT, they must attend the next available Koala Rehabilitation Course. If they do not, their authorisation will lapse
7. A rehabilitator whose authorisation has lapsed is not eligible for refresher courses, and must submit a new application.