

Question: 44: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if dog pounds are closing nationwide; and if so, the steps being taken to ensure the safety of these animals during the Covid-19 crisis.

- Paul Murphy.

REPLY

Minister for Rural and Community Development (Michael Ring)

Under the Control of Dogs Acts, local authorities have responsibility for operating and managing dog control and licensing services in their administrative areas, including the management of dog pounds or shelters and my Department has no direct involvement in this process.

That said, enquiries have been made and the local authority sector has indicated that the service is being maintained in a safe manner, ensuring the health and welfare of all dogs under its care. Most dog pounds are closed to the public and are dealing with emergencies only. Many pounds have rehomed dogs to the charities with which they deal. Dogs which remain in the pounds continue to be looked after by pound staff, with oversight from the local authority veterinary service.

More generally, the enforcement of welfare standards regarding all animals, including the welfare of dogs in pounds or shelters, is a matter for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine under the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013.