

Ten Lives Cat Rescue – Trap/Neuter/Return Policy

Effective Date: 1st October 2024

Approved By: Ten Lives Cat Rescue Board of Directors

Reviewed By: Meg Murphy

Next Review Date: October 2025

1. Purpose

To outline the principles and procedures for Ten Lives Cat Rescue's Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programme. The programme aims to humanely reduce the population of outdoor and feral cats while ensuring their well-being and improving community relations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers, staff, and partners involved in TNR activities coordinated by Ten Lives Cat Rescue.

3. Programme Goals

1. Population Control

- Reduce the number of unowned, free-roaming cats by preventing future litters through spaying and neutering.

2. Improved Quality of Life

- Enhance the health and well-being of outdoor cats by providing access to sterilisation and basic medical care.

3. Community Support

- Foster positive relationships between outdoor cats and the surrounding community by stabilising colony sizes and minimising behaviours associated with unaltered cats (such as fighting, spraying, and yowling).

4. Humane Treatment

- Promote the humane treatment of outdoor and feral cats while preventing unnecessary euthanasia.
-

4. Eligibility for TNR

1. Outdoor Cats

- Cats living in outdoor colonies, especially those that are unowned and not suitable for adoption, are eligible for TNR. This includes both feral cats and community cats that are fed by caregivers.

2. Feral and Semi-Feral Cats

- Cats that are not socialized to humans, or are only partially socialized, are considered feral or semi-feral and are prioritized for TNR.

3. Exclusions

- Cats that are believed to be owned or recently lost pets, as indicated by friendly behaviour, a collar, or a microchip, are not candidates for TNR unless attempts to locate an owner have been unsuccessful.
-

5. TNR Procedure

1. Trapping

- Traps must be humane and designed specifically for the safe capture of cats.
- Volunteers and caregivers are responsible for setting traps, monitoring them regularly, and ensuring the safety of the cats during the trapping process.
- Trapping should occur at scheduled times to ensure that veterinary appointments are arranged in advance.

2. Spay/Neuter and Veterinary Care

- Once trapped, cats will be held overnight in a secure, quiet area before being transported to a veterinary clinic for spaying or neutering.
- Cats will receive also the following veterinary care:
 - Ear tipping (the universal sign that a cat has been sterilized and returned to its colony).
 - Basic health check, including treatment for parasites if needed.

3. Recovery

- Cats will be monitored during a short recovery period following surgery to ensure they are stable and healthy.
- Cats will be housed in a safe, quiet environment during recovery, with access to food and water.

4. Return

- After recovery, cats will be returned to their original colony location where they were trapped.
 - Caregivers will be responsible for monitoring the cats post-return to ensure they are thriving.
-

6. Colony Management

1. Colony Caregivers

- A designated caregiver must be in place to provide regular food, water, and monitoring for each managed colony.
- Caregivers are responsible for reporting any new or unaltered cats in the colony to Ten Lives Cat Rescue for future TNR efforts.

2. New Cats in the Colony

- New cats appearing in the colony should be trapped and sterilised as quickly as possible to prevent breeding.
- Caregivers must notify Ten Lives Cat Rescue if they notice an influx of new, unaltered cats.

3. Monitoring and Support

- Ten Lives Cat Rescue will work with colony caregivers to ensure ongoing management and support. This includes assistance with trapping new cats, providing food when necessary, and ensuring the cats remain healthy and stable.
-

7. Community Engagement and Education

1. Public Outreach

- Ten Lives Cat Rescue will educate the public about the benefits of TNR and the importance of humane cat population control.
- Outreach efforts will include providing information on TNR services, debunking myths about outdoor cats, and encouraging responsible caregiving for community cats.

2. Conflict Resolution

- In cases of conflict between outdoor cats and community members, Ten Lives Cat Rescue will work with all parties to mediate and find humane solutions that align with TNR principles.
 - Measures may include relocation, increased colony management, or education about outdoor cat behaviour.
-

8. Record Keeping and Reporting

1. Documentation

- Accurate records of all TNR activities must be maintained, including the number of cats trapped, spayed/neutered, and returned.
- Each cat's veterinary care and status must be documented for future reference.

2. Reporting

- Regular reports will be made to track the progress of TNR efforts, including reductions in colony size, health improvements, and any new cats entering colonies.
-

9. Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually, or as needed, by the Board of Directors. Any amendments must be approved by the board and will take effect immediately.