

City of Port Orange TNR Program Policy Guide

The City of Port Orange has determined that efforts must be made to control the City's feral cat population. In order to better account for and safeguard taxpayer dollars, The City's animal control unit will oversee a Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program aimed at reducing the feral cat population through collaboration with volunteers and other stakeholders. What follows is the program guidelines spelling out the roles and responsibilities of each of the stakeholders in the program.

Initial Implementation

In order to set a new baseline for the number of cats and colonies in the program, all colonies and caretakers must submit an application with the City's Animal Control Unit (ACU) (regardless of whether you had previously registered with CCFAW). The ACU will make their best effort to contact everyone previously registered in the program managed by CCFAW in order to inform them of these new program guidelines.

For existing caretakers to continue to operate their colonies, they must complete an application and submit to the ACU within 3 months of the effective date of this program.

The application (for existing colonies and new colonies) shall include the following information:

- Number of cats;
- Description of each cat;
- Participant Name;
- Telephone number;
- Colony/participant Address;
- Release/hold harmless form;
- Right of entry form; and
- Email address (not mandatory).

Upon application, an Animal Control Officer (ACO) will visit the prospective colony to ensure:

- The number of cats listed on the application does not exceed the number of cats observed;
- Food and water containers are clean and appropriate in size for the number of cats;
- Secure containers available for storage of food supply;
- Location of colony complies with program guidelines; and
- The site complies with all ordinance and program requirements.

Mandatory Training

All colony caregivers (including existing caregivers) must successfully complete a 4-hour Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program class within 6 months of application approval. The class will be provided by the ACU and will cover:

- The responsibilities of caregivers in the Port Orange TNR program;
- Feral/stray cat health and care;
- Feeding responsibly;

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- Responsibilities of the ACU;
- Resources for caregivers; and
- Other pertinent information.

If a caregiver fails to successfully complete this course within 6 months of submitting an application, they will automatically be removed from the caregiver program and any colony cats on their property will be subject to removal.

Eligibility of TNR Participants

No person who has ever been convicted of animal cruelty or who is the subject of a civil injunction prohibiting the ownership of animals shall be allowed to participate in the program.

Colonies will be allowed on:

- Owner occupied properties (including residential, commercial and industrial properties).
- Rented residential properties with permission of property owner and homeowner's association, if applicable.

Colonies will not be allowed:

- Strip Malls
- Apartment Complexes
- Condominium Complexes
- City Property

Relocation of Colonies

The City recognizes that many colonies that were registered in the program before June 2020 may now be in a location in which it is prohibited to operate under the new program. The ACU will work with those colony caregivers, property owners and volunteers to relocate those cats in the following way and in order of importance.

- (1) The ACU will ask volunteers, colony caregivers and owners of the property to help find homes for as many cats as possible.
- (2) The ACU will ask volunteers, colony caregivers and owners to help move cats to approved colony locations in other areas if there is space in the program.
- (3) As a last resort, and/or if the owner of the property demands the cats be removed and options 1 and or 2 are not available, cats will be trapped and taken to HHS.

Maximum Number of Colonies

The maximum number of colonies allowed in Port Orange shall be 250. After that time the city may increase or decrease the maximum number of registered colonies at any given time.

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Maximum Number of Cats Per Colony

The number of cats in each colony at the time of application (and confirmed by an ACO visit) shall be the maximum number of cats allowed in that colony with the following limit:

Maximum # of cats in colonies on residential properties: 10

Maximum # of cats in colonies on commercial/industrial properties: 25

Colonies in existence prior to the adoption of this program, and approved by the ACD, may be grandfathered into the program with the preexisting number of cats. Once the number of cats in the colony decreases to 10 or 25 cats (depending on location), the colony size will no longer be grandfathered and will be subject to the new maximum number allowed. It is the intention of the program for all colony sizes to decline over time to zero if the program works as intended.

The maximum number of cats per colony will be reduced as the number of cats declines over time. The maximum will never increase

If the City discovers that the number of cats at any location has increased since the most recent inspection and/or colony census, the city reserves the right to trap all cats above the most recent count. On a case-by-case basis, the city will determine whether each cat shall be taken to the Humane Society or released in a different colony if space exists within the program at that time.

Increase in colony size may be grounds for removal from the program and the city reserves the right to remove all cats from the colony for re-introduction elsewhere or transport to HHS.

Feeding

It is the colony caregiver's responsibility to set out only enough food as required by the City's Animal Code for the number of cats in their colony. The feeding of colony cats shall take place during daylight hours only. All cat food shall be stored in a manner to prevent access by animals other than the cat(s) for which the food is intended. No cat food shall be discarded outdoors. All cat food shall be securely stored indoors to avoid attracting pests, rodents, or wildlife. Outdoor feeding shall be limited to an appropriate amount of food for daily consumption of the cat(s) intended to be fed. Alley Cat Allies and the ASPCA provide guidance for the appropriate amount of food for colony cats, which can be found on page 29 of the linked document below.

https://4fi8v2446i0sw2rpq2a3fg51-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Guide_TNR_ColonyCare_ACA-ASPCA-NYCMayorAlliance.pdf

Excessive amounts of food provided by caregivers outside this guidance (either too little or too much) could be grounds for removal from the program.

Colony Applications after Initial Implementation

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Feeding and/or providing shelter for stray/feral/community cats is prohibited unless that person is an approved colony caregiver. Colony caregivers may only feed and/or provide shelter to stray/feral/community cats at the location for which they are approved to conduct said activity.

If an individual finds unowned cats on their property, the first thing they should do is contact an animal rescue group to get assistance in determining if the cat might be a candidate for adoption. If the animal is a candidate for adoption, the owner is encouraged to work with a rescue organization before contacting the city for participation in TNR. While TNR is an option, we recognize that pet adoption will provide a more full, rich and healthy life for the animal than life as a TNR colony cat.

If the cat is not a candidate for adoption and the owner would like to participate in the Port Orange TNR program, they must first contact the ACU to determine if there any open spots in the program.

If there are no open spots in the program, the owner does not want to participate in the TNR program and/or would like the animal removed, they can call the city to have the animal removed as a nuisance animal.

If there is an open spot in the TNR program, the individual must submit an application with the ACU for review and approval prior to feeding and/or providing shelter for the cats.

Trapping/Spay/Neuter/Vaccination

Each colony caregiver shall actively bait traps for the feral cats. The ACO may provide a trap/traps unless the registrant has their own. The ACO will also provide trapping instructions to the colony caregiver, who will be responsible for trapping feral cats and notifying the ACO when a feral cat has been successfully trapped. The ACO will make an appointment with a spay/neuter clinic, pick up the cats, transport them to and from the clinic and back to the registrant's property.

The colony caregiver will be responsible for each trap lent to them by the city. If the trap is damaged, lost, or stolen while in their possession, they will be charged the total replacement cost for the trap.

Bi-Annual Census

Colony caregivers are responsible for contacting the ACU in January and June each year to provide an update on their colony. Information provided must include the number of cats remaining in the colony and the disposition of any cats no longer in the colony, if known.

ACO Visitation

An ACO may visit the colony and the property at any time to ensure compliance with this program. However, the ACO will make their best effort to notify the property owner/caregiver at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.

Removal from the TNR Program

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It is the responsibility of the caregiver to notify the city when there are no more cats in the colony, regardless of whether that occurs between two bi-annual census counts. Once the colony is vacant, the caregiver will be withdrawn from the program and shall immediately remove all colony related items, such as shelter and food.

If the caregiver is found in violation of any program rules, codes, laws or other regulations, that person may be removed from the program and, upon removal, any remaining cats shall be trapped and removed from the colony. In addition, that caregiver shall be responsible for all spay/neuter/vaccination and/or boarding costs incurred by the City for cats removed from that colony.

If a registered caregiver fails to complete the 4-hour course within 6 months of application approval, he/she shall be removed from the program and any remaining cats will be trapped and removed from the colony. In addition, that caregiver shall be responsible for all spay/neuter/vaccination and/or boarding costs incurred by the City for cats removed from that colony.