

Managing a Safe and Healthy Colony

Legal Responsibilities for Caretakers of Managed Colonies

Sec. 15-2.1-1-9. Feral cats.

(a) The county may establish a fund, provide services, or an approved assistance program to offset the costs of trapping, neutering, and vaccinating captured feral cats that can be returned to an appropriate, controlled, protected and registered colony site. Caregivers for such colonies, whether one or several animals, may be aided by the county or the approved assistance program in providing traps for the capture of the cat, transportation to a spay/neuter facility and offsetting costs, to the extent that funding is available.

(b) Each feral cat colony will be registered by the caregivers with the humane society, for the county, which will serve as a clearinghouse for information on current caregivers, education for new caregivers, and assistance for persons found in violation of this chapter.

(c) Approved assistance programs for feral cat colonies within the county will exist only with the approval of the home owner or neighborhood association in which the colonies are to exist.

(d) It shall be unlawful for a person to provide food, water or shelter to a colony of feral cats, unless;

(1) The colony is an approved managed colony, registered with the humane society.

(2) The food, water or shelter is provided in conjunction with the implementation of trap, neuter, and return methodology as set forth below.

(3) Ear tipping will be used on feral cats in order to be identified as a spayed or neutered and vaccinated member of a managed colony.

(4) Any person or caregiver determined to be in violation of subsections (5)a. through h. below shall be issued a written warning and be allowed a period of time to come into compliance or provide satisfactory evidence of working to achieve compliance. Failure to comply shall result in a violation of this chapter, which may result in the issuance of a citation.

(5) An approved feral cat colony caretaker, in order to obtain control of the feral cat population in the county may:

a. Humanely trap and sterilize (spay/neuter) and left ear-tip all cats that can be captured by a licensed veterinarian.

b. Vaccinate, as required by law, all cats that can be captured:

1. Against rabies, preferably with a three-year vaccine; and

2. Any other infectious disease as mandated by law.

3. Colony caretakers shall have a licensed veterinarian evaluate the health of all trapped feral cats. Seriously ill or injured cats with no reasonable prognosis for humane rehabilitation for survival outdoors will be humanely euthanized.

c. Release all non-feral cats to animal control or humane society for adoption or placement in accordance with the law.

d. Make every attempt to remove kittens from the colony before eight weeks of age for domestication and placement.

e. Make every attempt to remove sick or injured cats from the colony for immediate veterinary care or humane euthanasia.

f. Colony caretakers shall abide by the standard guidelines devised by this chapter, animal control or its designee, regarding the provisions of food, water, and shelter and veterinary care for the cats within the managed colony.

g. Ensure responsibility and arrangements for feeding the cat colony regularly throughout the year, including weekends, holidays and vacations of the feral cat caregiver.

h. A colony caretaker must maintain proof of sterilization, vaccination, tattoo or implant and medical records from a licensed veterinarian at all times. These records must be provided to the humane society or law enforcement upon request.

(e) Any law enforcement authority may impound feral cats in violation of the ordinance. Any feral cats impounded by law enforcement authority that bears an appropriate ear-tipping indicating it belongs to a managed colony may, at the discretion of law enforcement be returned to its managed colony unless illness or injury present an imminent danger to public health or safety.

(f) Violations, penalties and fines. Caregivers in violation of this section will lose caretaker privilege and will become subject to all sections of this chapter.

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