

“I can’t afford it.”

If the price of \$0—\$20 isn’t within your budget, consider how much it will cost to feed the cats if they remain unsterilized. A single mating pair can grow to 12 cats in one season. A female kitten can become pregnant as early as 4 months. Multiply that by the number of females in your colony, and you will find the numbers add up very quickly.

Also consider the cost to the cats—in suffering, and cruelty from people who just “want the cats gone.”

Why should I TNR?

If you are feeding feral cats, you have compassion for the animals. Feeding the cats is a good start, but a compassionate caregiver must do more.

“Feed-and-breed” is neither cute nor kind. Every spring animal shelters are overwhelmed with kittens born to feral and stray cats outdoors.

Every day, in the city of Chicago alone, 100 animals, including kittens and puppies, are killed for lack of a home. Every kitten born into this world means another cat will die for lack of a home. That is the sad truth we see every day in our volunteer work. Be a part of the solution by running a “managed” feral cat colony, in which all members are fully vetted. The cats are depending on you.

Will PACT do it for me?

With an estimated 5 million feral cats in the greater Chicago area, there are too many cats for any organization to TNR each cat.

When the CORE Program was founded, we provided full TNR services. Soon, by word-of-mouth alone, our services were in such high demand that there was a 3-month waiting list. By the time we arrived, more kittens had been born. We could never get ahead of the problem to make a real difference. We realized we had to give the public the tools they needed to perform TNR.

Other Area Resources:

- PAWS Chicago: 773-521-SPAY (\$20 feral cat sterilization package)
- Animal Rights Mobilization, Chicago: 773-282-8918 (Call to see if you qualify for their free program)
- Anderson Animal Shelter, South Elgin: 847-697-2880 (low-cost feral cat sterilization)
- Chicagoland Stray Cat Coalition: 773 517-5199 (Chicago residents)

Visit our web site for comprehensive information about feral cats, trapping, and local resources.



PACT Humane Society

P.O. Box 841
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Voicemail: (630) 375-7017
CORE Voicemail: (630) 375-SPAY

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Feeding outside
cats?
Finding kittens?
Don’t know what
to do?

*Trap-Neuter-Return: the
only humane, non-lethal,
effective method of feral
cat population control.*



www.pacthumane.org

Voicemail: 630-375-SPAY

Feral Cats

Feral cats are the offspring of domestic cats, who very quickly adapt to life in the wild. Except in extremely rare circumstances, they cannot be tamed to live as indoor pets.

Some argue that all feral cats should be euthanized as a form of population control. But, consider the costs. It costs municipalities in our area an average of \$65 to administer the lethal injection to kill one feral cat — not including the animal control officer’s time, vehicles, facilities, etc. — yet it costs only \$20 to have a feral cat sterilized and vaccinated. Not only is trap-and-kill inhumane, it is ineffective. Trap-and-kill has been in practice for decades, and the problem has only gotten worse. When a cat is removed, a vacuum effect occurs, opening the door for a new cat to step in to take advantage of the food supply.

Practiced in Europe for more than 30 years and in the U.S. for the past 10 years, Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) has proven far more effective in controlling feral cat populations than trap-and-kill programs.

Populations of feral cats have been reduced by as much as 50% in many regions of the U.S. that practice TNR. Remaining ferals are healthy, and not contributing to the overpopulation crisis.



A feral cat seeks shelter in a car’s wheel well.

How do I know if a cat is feral?

It can be extremely difficult for even seasoned professionals to know by seeing the cat once or twice, but here are some guidelines:

Completely Feral

True ferals do not allow any human contact. They come out between dusk and dawn, unless they are literally starving. These cats generally do not vocalize (meow) or rub/mark objects in the presence of people. They rarely eat in the presence of even their caregivers, unless a comfortable distance away. If feral kittens are not socialized by the time they are 8-10 weeks old, there is often little hope for socializing them to be pets. Each generation becomes more feral.

Semi-Feral

Semi-feral cats may have been born in the wild, or born indoors but not given sufficient attention to become tame. Semi-ferals may allow very limited contact with the person who feeds and cares for them, but will quickly hide when others approach. Many feral cat rescuers & caregivers believe that semi-ferals are in the worst predicament because they may not be wild enough to survive on their own, but not tame enough to be adopted.

Reverted Feral

Once abandoned or lost outdoors, over time, a tame cat will revert to a feral state. These cats are the easiest to re-socialize, depending on how long they have been outdoors and what their experiences with people have been in that time.

What can you do?

The kindest gift a caregiver can give to a feral cat is TNR—Trap-Neuter-Return. TNR is the process by which feral cats are safely trapped using a humane box trap, taken to a veterinar-

ian for disease testing, spay/neuter, vaccinations, and ear-tipping (as a means to identify a fully-vetted feral cat). After recovering from surgery, the cats are returned to their original outdoor environment where they are provided lifelong care by volunteer caregivers.

Benefits of TNR

Most objectionable behavior, such as cat-erwauling, fighting, spraying, and litters of kittens are associated with fertility. Once the cats are no longer able to reproduce, the colony is stable and healthy, and the neighbors complain less, because the “problem behavior” stops. Additionally, spaying & neutering provides protection against cancer of the reproductive organs.

With an estimated 82,000 feral kittens dying each year in Chicago’s city limits alone, “feral kittens are the single largest population of dying or killed animals in Chicago”.

Gene Mueller, D.V.M.
President, The Anti-Cruelty Society, Chicago

CORE Program

- PACT has partnered with veterinarians in Chicago’s northwest and west suburbs who have agreed to perform low-cost feral cat sterilization packages between \$35 and \$50 per cat.
- We have humane box traps and other materials available for loan and will provide advice to guide you through the process.

No Excuses

With some organizations in Chicago offering feral cat sterilization packages from \$0 to \$20 per cat, there is no excuse not to TNR feral colonies.