

Cat Tales of Prince William
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Intake Policy

I. Intake of Cats - General

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure for the intake of cats into our rescue, Cat Tales of Prince William, ensuring that each animal receives the necessary care and that the organization operates efficiently and ethically. Thorough record keeping pertaining to the tracking of all animals acquired by our rescue is essential for the overall control and evaluation of each cat entering the rescue. Intake of animals falls into three categories- owner surrenders, strays, and those acquired from shelter facilities. Policies and procedures for each are as follows:

Policies applicable to all intakes:

- a. Processing Data- All intake information, including medical history, medical and surgical records, behavioral assessments, and any relevant notes, will be documented in a centralized database for tracking and follow up. Intake data to include the date, description of the cat (including breed(s), color, sex, age and if the cat is spayed/neutered), contact information of the finder and location of the found cat. The final disposition of the cat is also recorded on the Intake Log, along with the individual's name to whom the animal was returned after providing proof of ownership or if not returned, the disposition of the cat (adopted, euthanized, continued medical evaluation, unadoptable/Trap/Neutered/Vaccinated/Returned- TNVR'd, or retained by rescue).
- b. Health Protocol- The health status of each cat is to be evaluated within a reasonable period of time by the veterinary office approved by the rescue, unless full documentation of current vaccinations and physical exams is provided as a result of an owner's surrender. All cats will be inoculated with a rabies vaccination in accordance with state law and administered a distemper vaccination, flea treatment, heartworm treatment, dewormed and spayed/neutered. Exceptions will only be made in the case of a rescue transfer in which the receiving organization will assume such responsibilities.
- c. Behavioral Protocol- A behavioral evaluation will be performed to determine signs of aggression, biting, fear issues, socialization with humans, other cats and dogs (if possible), and litter box training. Healthy, friendly cats without evidence of the need for medical and/or behavioral modification, will be fast-tracked for adoption. A specialized plan will be put in place for those with medical and/or behavioral issues until adoptability

standards have been met, or in the case of a feral cat, rescue transfer in which the receiving organization will assume such responsibilities, or cat is TNVR'd, or retained by the rescue.

- d. **Intake Determination-** The final decision regarding the intake of a cat is to be made by the President or Vice President of the rescue or another appointed individual as determined by the Board of Directors. Cat Tales of Prince William volunteers are not permitted to initiate intake unless otherwise agreed in advance. Should a volunteer agree to accept a cat, he/she will assume all responsibility in the event that Cat Tales of Prince William is unable to accept the cat into its program. Each cat is accepted on a case-by-case basis to include evaluation of the age, health, and temperament, available space within foster homes, the rescue's current financial situation and anticipated adoptability of the cat.
- e. **Euthanasia-** Cat Tales of Prince William makes every effort to rehabilitate all cats entering our rescue; however, this is not always a feasible option. Although euthanasia is the final act of kindness that we can show a critically ill, seriously injured, or dangerous animal, it is viewed as an alternative, only after very careful consideration, and always as a last resort by recommendation of the rescue's veterinarian. Upon making the determination to euthanize, the cat is handled with respect and sensitivity, and protected from stress, fear, discomfort, and pain.

II. Owner Surrender: We will accept owner surrenders on a case-by-case basis, prioritizing cats in urgent need of rehoming due to circumstances such as illness, financial hardship, or relocation. Owner surrenders are accepted as space permits after evaluation by the President, Vice President or another agreed upon individual deemed qualified by the Board of Directors.

a. **Owner Surrender Form.** Every individual surrendering a cat must sign a statement indicating ownership of the animal is being relinquished to Cat Tales of Prince William. In every case, rescue volunteers must ask the person to sign the form. Owned animals will not be accepted in the absence of a signed surrender form. The Surrender Form attests to the knowledge of the individual as to whether the animal has bitten a human or other animal within ten (10) days of surrender. Cat Tales of Prince William volunteers will make certain the individual consenting to the surrender understands that relinquishment is final and the animal will not be available to be returned at a future time unless otherwise agreed.

b. **Veterinary Records.** If the individual surrendering the animal has vaccination information, a copy of the records or at minimum, the contact information of the veterinarian providing medical care along with a signed release to obtain such records must be provided to be placed in the animal's file.

c. Cat Tales of Prince William reserves the right to charge an owner a surrender fee as deemed appropriate to offset veterinary expenses incurred by the rescue.

III. Strays: Stray cats will be accepted if they are sick, injured, or appear to be domesticated. Healthy stray cats should ideally be returned to their original location after evaluation unless other arrangements can be made.

Strays - Cats may be admitted to safeguard them from the dangers of wandering unconfined, providing that adequate space is available within a foster home for the designated stray hold period. If space is not available, the cat is to be transferred to Prince William Animal Control (or the county jurisdiction where the cat is found) in a timely manner. The following procedures must be adhered to at all times:

- a. Secure Animal. Immediately secure the animal in a crate or humane trap to ensure its safety.
- b. Check for Identification. Immediately inspect for any identification, such as license, ID tag, or Rabies tag. If owner contact information is present, make immediate contact. Remove the collar, if applicable and check for identification information on its underside. The cat must be taken to a veterinary office for a microchip scan as soon as feasible or animal control for microchip scanning and holding purposes if Cat Tales of Prince William is unable to retain for the legal stray hold period.
- c. Contact animal control to file a found cat report and provide all requested information within one hour of securing the cat. The only exception is in cases in which identification is present on the cat and prompt contact can be made with its owner for the cat's return.
- d. Document Information. Document all information as specified in item I. Intake of Cats – General, Sections a and b.
- e. Initial Observations and Evaluation. An initial observation and evaluation is performed to assess the body condition, general health and temperament. Medical attention is to be sought immediately in the case of injury/trauma and/or suspected discomfort to alleviate symptoms.

IV. Shelter Intakes - Cats may be acquired from various shelter locations with those in danger of being euthanized for space purposes being the highest priority. As much information as possible will be obtained to determine the feasibility of intake. Medical records, if available, must be obtained as well as copies of all agreement(s) pertaining to the release of the cat from the shelter to be placed in the cat's file.

V. Order of Priority - Our policy is to assist cats in the following order of priority:

- Cats previously adopted from Cat Tales of Prince William that cannot be retained with the adopter in accordance with the adoption contract
- Medical emergency of a stray
- Cats in danger of being euthanized at a shelter facility due to space limitations
- Owned animals not in immediate danger

VI. Application Process:

- Potential intakes must fill out an application form detailing the cat's background, health status, and any behavioral issues.
- Staff will review applications within 48 hours and may contact the applicant for further information or clarification.

VII. Initial Assessment:

- Upon intake, each cat will undergo a thorough health and behavioral assessment by a qualified veterinarian or trained staff member.
- This assessment will include vaccination status, spay/neuter status, and any immediate medical needs.

VIII. Quarantine Procedure:

- New intakes will be placed in a quarantine area for a minimum of 14 days to monitor for contagious diseases and to ensure a smooth transition into the rescue environment.

IX. Adoption Preparation:

- Once a cat is deemed healthy and behaviorally stable, it will be prepared for adoption through necessary vaccination, spaying/neutering, and behavioral training as needed.
- Thorough vetting of potential adopter, education, and home inspection.

X. Communication:

- Regular updates will be provided to the community regarding available cats for adoption, as well as success stories of previously adopted cats.

XI. Community Responsibility:

- Cat Tales of Prince William will actively promote responsible pet ownership through education and the importance of spaying/neutering, vaccination, and microchipping.

Review and Revision:

- The Intake Policy and procedures will be reviewed annually and revised as needed to adapt to changing circumstances in animal welfare and community needs as determined by the Cat Tales of Prince William Board of Directors.

By implementing this intake policy, Cat Tales of Prince William rescue will ensure a structured, compassionate approach to helping cats in need while fostering a responsible and supportive community for pet owners.