



ANIMAL INTAKE POLICY

Tiny Cat Animal Rescue (“TCAR”) is a nonprofit organization recognized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. TCAR provides Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR), rescue, foster, adoption, and community support services in Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Maryland. TCAR is a foster-based, all-volunteer organization and does not operate a physical shelter facility or have paid employees.

Intake Pathways & Procedures

Cats may enter TCAR’s care through the following pathways: **(1)** Stray/At-Large Cats; **(2)** Owner Surrenders; **(3)** Transfers from Other Organizations; and **(4)** TNVR Program Cats.

1. Stray/At-Large Cats

Stray/At-Large Cats include unowned kittens and socialized cats who are taken into foster care and placed for adoption as part of TCAR’s Rescue, Rehabilitate, Rehome Program. This may include cats or kittens for whom community members request assistance due to illness, injury, abandonment, unsafe living conditions, or young age as well as cats found by private rescuers without an avenue to place the cat in a foster or forever home.

2. Owner Surrenders

Temporary and permanent owner surrenders are reviewed by the Executive Director and/or Director of Operations and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Priority is given to owners who demonstrate that they have exhausted reasonable alternatives, including rehoming within their personal networks, working with local shelters or rescue organizations, and utilizing available support resources.

Permanent surrenders are those in which ownership is fully relinquished. The cat becomes the responsibility of TCAR for placement.

Temporary surrenders are accepted only in limited circumstances and when TCAR has the capacity to assist. These may include short-term crises such as emergency hospitalization, temporary housing displacement, or other time-limited hardships where reunification is the intended outcome.

Temporary intake may also be used in narrowly defined circumstances to prevent permanent surrender or harm, including:

- Facilitating spay or neuter surgery when access barriers would otherwise result in abandonment or relinquishment; and
- Providing short-term placement for nursing mother cats needed to care for orphaned or permanently surrendered kittens.

Temporary surrenders are not guaranteed and are subject to defined timeframes and available foster placement.

When possible, TCAR also seeks to provide guidance or resources that may allow owners to retain their pets safely and humanely.

3. *Transfers from Other Organizations*

TCAR may accept cats from other rescue organizations or agencies when those organizations are unable to provide placement and TCAR has available capacity.

4. *TNVR Program Cats (“TNVR Cats”)*

TNVR Cats are feral community cats that TCAR traps, sterilizes, vaccinates, and returns to an outdoor colony as part of TCAR’s TNVR program. TNVR Cats requiring medical care, recuperation, or behavioral decompression may remain in care temporarily before being returned to their original location.

Cats that are initially trapped as TNVR Cats who are determined to be adoptable are deemed Stray/At-Large Cats and enter TCAR’s Rescue, Rehabilitate, Rehome Program as described below.

General Intake Policies

Determination of Ownership

All cats undergo an initial assessment that includes evaluation for signs of ownership, including microchip scan, collars or tags, evidence of grooming or indoor care, prior sterilization or ear-tipping indicating participation in a TNVR program.

Stray cats are reported to Animal Control or local shelters as required by applicable jurisdictional regulations.

All stray animals are held for the legally required stray-hold period based on the jurisdiction in which they were found.

TCAR makes reasonable efforts to reunite suspected pets with their owners, which may include searching and posting on lost-pet databases, outreach through social media and community groups, and local inquiries in the area where the cat was found.

Temperament Evaluation

All potential intakes receive an initial physical and behavioral assessment. Cats displaying signs of illness, injury, or significant stress may remain in care for medical treatment or further evaluation.

If a cat is deemed to be feral, the cat enters TCAR's TNVR Program as a TNVR Cat and receives spay or neuter surgery, rabies and FVRCP vaccinations, and treatment for acute medical conditions and injuries. Once suitable for return, cats are released to their original location after recovery.

If the cat is determined to be a candidate for adoption, the cat is a Stray/At-Large intake and is taken into foster care and receives deworming and flea treatment/prevention, age-appropriate vaccinations (FVRCP and Rabies), spay or neuter surgery, microchipping, and treatment for acute medical conditions (e.g., respiratory infections, parasites, injuries).

FeLV/FIV Testing

Cats are tested for FeLV/FIV when clinically indicated or when they will be placed in homes with other cats or kittens. Cats with ongoing medical needs, including FeLV-positive cats, receive appropriate care and stabilization prior to placement.

Quarantine / Disease Control

TCAR follows veterinary guidance regarding quarantine and isolation of cats with suspected contagious illness.

Animal Records

All animal intakes and custody records are maintained in TCAR's animal management system (ShelterLuv). Records include intake source, date, location, medical history, custody status, and outcome.

All owner surrenders and organizational transfers require execution of an appropriate written agreement documenting transfer of custody and responsibility.

Final Intake Determination

All intake decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Factors considered include:

- Current foster capacity
- Health and welfare of cats already in care
- Availability of volunteers
- Financial resources
- Age, health, and temperament of the cat

Because TCAR is a foster-based organization with finite medical and financial resources, emergency and critical-care intakes are necessarily limited. Acceptance of any animal requiring urgent or extensive medical intervention depends on the availability of appropriate foster placement, veterinary access, and funding at the time of request.

TCAR does not accept animals beyond its ability to provide appropriate care. The organization is committed to maintaining high standards of welfare for all cats in its custody and to operating in a financially responsible manner. Intake decisions are made to ensure that every animal in TCAR's care can receive the medical treatment, housing, and support it requires without compromising the well-being of others or the long-term stability of the organization.

Final authority for intake decisions rests with the Executive Director and/or Director of Operations.

TCAR is a no-kill rescue. Animals in TCAR's care are never euthanized for space, time, or convenience. Euthanasia is considered only when, in the judgment of a licensed veterinarian and the Executive Director and/or Director of Operations, it is the most humane means of relieving unmanageable pain or suffering when medical intervention cannot restore an acceptable quality of life.

Closure for Intake

TCAR may temporarily suspend intake when foster capacity or financial resources are insufficient to maintain required standards of care.

Adoptions

No cat is adopted until it is medically stable and appropriate for placement.

Geographic Scope

The majority of TCAR's intakes are from Northern Virginia; the Richmond, Virginia, area; Washington, D.C.; and Prince George's County, Maryland.

Age and Breed Restrictions

Cats of any age or breed may be accepted.