
Sec. 6-56. Feral cat colony management.

- (a) *[Permitted.]* Feral cat colonies may be permitted and feral cat colony caretakers so permitted may maintain and care for feral cats by providing food, water, shelter and other forms of sustenance, provided that the feral cat colonies are registered with a city approved partnered sponsor, as defined herein, and that the feral cat colony caretaker takes all appropriate and available steps to meet the terms and conditions of this section.
- (b) *Sponsorship of colony TNR programs.* Any animal welfare group that agrees to comply with the requirements of this section for sponsors may apply to act as a sponsor. Any animal welfare group intending to undertake the responsibilities of sponsor shall so advise the city in writing and provide its address and telephone number, and electronic mail address if applicable.

Sponsor requirements. It shall be the duty of the sponsor to:

- (1) Review and, in its discretion, approve of feral cat colony caretakers.
 - (2) Help to resolve any complaints over the conduct of a feral cat colony caretaker or of cats within a colony.
 - (3) Maintain records provided by feral cat colony caretakers on the size and location of the colonies as well as the vaccination, and spay and neuter records of cats in the sponsor's colonies.
 - (4) Provide, at a minimum, written educational training for all caretakers addressing uniform standards and procedures for colony maintenance.
 - (5) Report annually to the city on the following:
 - a. Number and location of colonies for which it acts as a sponsor in the city;
 - b. Total number of cats in each of its colonies;
 - c. Number of cats from its colonies vaccinated, and spayed and neutered pursuant to the TNR program and number of cats and kittens from its colonies placed in permanent homes.
 - (6) Provide any forms or other documentation necessary to allow feral cat colony caretakers to receive any public or private subsidies, medical care or other forms of assistance for their feral cat colonies which may be available to them;
 - (7) Provide to the city the location, by address, of feral cat colonies where feral cat colony caretakers have regularly failed to comply with this section or where the sponsor has been unable to resolve a nuisance behavior situation.
- (c) *Feral cat colony caretaker responsibilities.* In order to be an approved managed feral cat colony caretaker, said caretakers shall be responsible for the following:
- (1) Registering the colony with the sponsor.
 - (2) Taking all appropriate and available steps to vaccinate the colony population for rabies with an approved vaccine and to update the vaccinations as reasonably possible or warranted.
 - (3) Taking all appropriate and available steps to have the colony population spayed or neutered by a licensed veterinarian.
 - (4) Ear tipping the left ear of a colony cat that has been vaccinated and spayed or neutered so that colony cats can be readily identified.
 - (5) Providing the sponsor with descriptions of each cat in the colony and copies of documents demonstrating that the cats have been vaccinated, and spayed or neutered.

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- (6) Providing food, water and, if feasible, shelter for colony cats.
 - (7) Obtaining proper medical attention for any colony cat that appears to require it.
 - (8) Observing the colony at the frequency established by the sponsor, keeping a record of any illness or unusual behavior noticed in any colony cat.
 - (9) Obtaining the written approval of the owner of any property, or any authorized representative of the owner, to which the caretaker requires access to provide colony care.
 - (10) Taking all reasonable steps to:
 - a. Remove kittens from the colony after they have been weaned;
 - b. Place the kittens in homes or foster homes for the purpose of subsequent permanent placement; and
 - c. Capture and spay the mother cat.
 - (11) Report to the sponsor:
 - a. The location of the colony;
 - b. The number and gender of all cats in the colony;
 - c. The number of cats that died or otherwise ceased being a part of the colony;
 - d. The number of kittens born to colony cats and their disposition;
 - e. The number of cats placed in animal shelters or in permanent homes as companion cats;
 - f. The number of cats vaccinated; and
 - g. The number of cats spayed or neutered.
 - (12) Taking appropriate measures to assist in the elimination of nuisances when identified or declared.
- (d) *Withdrawal of feral cat colony caretaker or sponsor.* In the event that a feral cat colony caretaker is unable or unwilling to continue in that role, he or she shall notify his or her sponsor. In the event a sponsor is unable or unwilling to continue to perform its role, it shall so advise the city or its designated agent. The sponsor shall work with the city or its designated agent to obtain a replacement sponsor. If no new sponsor is found within 30 days, the sponsor shall immediately notify the city or its designated agent.
- (e) *Disposition of feral cat colony cats.*
- (1) An animal control officer who has trapped a cat whose left ear has been tipped indicating that it belongs to a feral cat colony, shall take reasonable steps to notify a sponsor of the description and sex of the cat, and if available, the address or location where the cat was trapped. The sponsor shall then take all appropriate and available steps to identify the feral cat colony caretaker of this cat or a feral cat colony caretaker who will take responsibility for managing this cat.
 - (2) If the feral cat colony caretaker is not able to immediately take custody of the cat, the officer shall transport the cat for impoundment. The feral cat colony caretaker shall be responsible for retrieving the cat from impoundment within three business days or advising the impoundment site if he or she does not intend to retrieve the cat.
- (f) *Enforcement.* The city in order to encourage the stabilization of the feral cat population in the city, shall have the following rights, which shall be exercised at its reasonable discretion:
- (1) The right to trap in a humane manner and remove any cats that: (1) have not been vaccinated against rabies or which are demonstrating signs of the disease, (2) are not spayed or neutered, or (3) otherwise for public health or public safety concerns.

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- a. If no issue of public health or safety exists, or if any issues of public health and safety can be addressed by the removal and relocation of the cat to another area, the city may direct a sponsor to arrange to have the cat spayed or neutered, ear tipped, and vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian. The sponsor may then arrange for the cat to be adopted or placed in a feral cat colony.
 - b. If a feral cat is demonstrating signs of having rabies, or has a severe illness or injury, or presents a hazard to public health or safety, or to its own person, that cat may be humanely destroyed.
- (2) The right to remove or to direct a sponsor to remove a feral cat that is creating a nuisance if the sponsor has failed to adequately resolve a nuisance within 30 days after being given written notice thereof. In the event that the city directs the sponsor to remove the cat, the sponsor shall have 30 days to do so. Failure of the sponsor to remove the cat within said time period (or such longer time as the city may specify) shall constitute grounds for the city to remove the cat.
 - (3) The right to remove a sponsor if a sponsor fails to perform its responsibilities as defined in this section, the city may notify the sponsor that it must comply with the requirements of this section within 30 days. If the sponsor fails to do so, the city may remove this sponsor from the list of city approved sponsors, and may reassign the feral cat colonies from this sponsor to another sponsor.
 - (4) The right to humanely remove all or part of a feral cat colony. If a feral cat colony caretaker regularly fails to comply with this section, the sponsor may notify the feral cat colony caretaker that he or she has 30 days to make all reasonable efforts to fulfill the responsibilities specified in this section. If the feral cat colony caretaker fails to comply within that time period, the sponsor may identify and obtain replacement feral cat colony caretakers for the feral cat colonies of the non-compliant feral cat colony caretaker. If no other feral cat colony caretaker can be found within 30 days, the sponsor shall notify the city's designee and the city may humanely remove all, or parts of, a feral cat colony.

(Ord. No. 2014-58, § 7, 8-11-14; Ord. No. 2023-64, § 2, 9-11-23)