



COMMUNITY CAT CAREGIVING GUIDELINES



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Responsible Community Cat Caregiving

Community cats are free-roaming cats found in our environment, which are often cared for by community cat caregivers. Irresponsible caregiving can lead to disamenities and negative sentiments towards community cats.

This handbook provides information on recommended practices for responsible community cat caregiving which aims to achieve the following principles:

- 1. Promote animal health and welfare, through the provision of food, water and medical attention**



- 2. Management of the community cat population through sterilisation**



- 3. Reduce inconveniences to the public and promote co-existence with community cats**



Benefits of Responsible Community Cat Caregiving

For residents:

- Less noise, spraying, and roaming from sterilised cats
- Cleaner surroundings with responsible feeding
- Fewer pests like rats, cockroaches, pigeons

For community cats:

- Better health with regular care
- Fewer kittens through sterilisation
- Safer living in familiar areas
- Lower risk of fighting, injury and disease



Feeding Community Cats

Provision of Food and Water

- Cats need food with high quality, animal-based protein. Taurine is a vital amino acid for eye, heart and immune health in a cat. Cats should not be placed on a vegetarian diet. Where possible, give cats food that is suitable and complete for their age.
- Clean water should always be available and changed daily to prevent mosquito breeding. Water bowls should be cleaned thoroughly to remove mosquito larvae attached to the surfaces.

Do not...

give cats human food such as rice or bread as it lacks the necessary nutrients and may cause stomach upset, or fish with bones which are a choking hazard.



Feeding Location and Schedule

✓ Do:

- Work with Animal Groups, Town Councils and grassroot leaders to find suitable spaces for feeding and placement of food and water receptacles.
- Have a regular feeding schedule for the community cats to reduce their reliance on irregular food sources.
- Discuss and agree on a feeding schedule to prevent overfeeding the cats if there are multiple cat caregivers in the neighbourhood. Obesity* in cats can result in health problems like diabetes, heart disease, degenerated joints, and reduced life expectancy.

*Refer to Annex A on page 8 to assess the body condition of community cats.

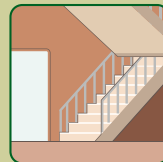
⊘ Do not:

- Feed cats in areas with high human traffic and places that sell or prepare food for human consumption. This makes it safer for the cats and avoids community conflicts.



High human traffic areas include:

- Lift lobbies and letter box areas
- Staircases
- Carparks (including multi-storey ones)
- Hawker centres and coffee shops
- Upper levels of HDB flats and condominiums, in front of residential premises
- In front of private estates, such as houses and industrial buildings



Sterilisation and Microchipping of Community Cats

Cats breed quickly – they can start breeding from as early as 4 months old and can produce up to two litters of 4-6 kittens every year. It is important to sterilise cats to prevent uncontrolled breeding and population growth, which leads to fewer resources per cat and more strain on caregivers.

- Sterilisation is a way of managing the community cat population. Cats can be sterilised from the age of 6 months. Sterilisation improves the health of the cat, as it lowers or eliminates the risk of certain cancers and diseases. Sterilisation also reduces undesirable behaviours such as caterwauling, or mating calls, which may inconvenience the community.
- Caregivers should work with Animal Groups, where necessary, to capture, sterilise and microchip community cats at vet clinics.



Sterilised cats may be identified by a tipped left ear.

Trap-Neuter-Rehome/Release-Manage (TNRM) Programme



Image credit: Cat Welfare Society

The TNRM Programme for community cats was launched on 1 September 2024, as a science-based approach to the management of the community cat population.

Under TNRM, community cats are captured, sterilised, microchipped, tipped on the left ear, rehomed where possible, or released back to the environment to live out their lives naturally.

A pair of fertile female and male cats, together with their offspring, are capable of producing **over 300 kittens in 4 years!**



Year 1



Year 2



Year 3



Year 4



TNRM replaces the Stray Cat Sterilisation Programme, which started in 2011.

Under TNRM, AVS provides funding support for the trapping, sterilisation, microchipping, pre- and post-surgical boarding of community cats.

Cat caregivers can approach any TNRM Partner for funding from AVS under TNRM.

More information on TNRM
Cats can be found here:



go.gov.sg/cat-tnrm

Responsible Use of Shared Spaces



Keeping the environment clean for everyone is a shared responsibility.

✓ Do:

- Clean up all remaining food and feeding points before leaving the feeding location, or after the cats are done eating, whichever comes first. This would also prevent pests in the area.
- Use biodegradable disposables or stainless steel plates and bowls for food. If a lightweight bowl or plate is used, ensure that it does not get easily displaced by wind.

⊘ Do not:

- Put food on the ground



Managing Sick/ Injured Community Cats

Community cats face a higher risk of injury, illness and death from being in the environment due to vehicular accidents, conflict with other animals, and infectious diseases.

- If you observe any sick or injured community cats, take them to vet clinics to get medical care and treatment. If you cannot transport the cat to the vet, or need financial assistance, seek help from other cat caregivers in your neighbourhood. You can also contact any Animal Group for assistance.
- If you suspect a cat is a victim of animal cruelty and abuse, including abandonment, call AVS to report the case. Please provide enough information (e.g. photos or CCTV footage) for AVS to assess and attend to the case promptly. AVS prioritises critical cases and emergencies (such as life-threatening situations) that require immediate attention.

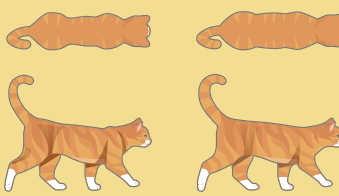
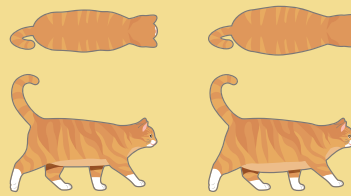
Where possible, the rehoming or adoption of community cats is encouraged to provide them with a safer indoor environment.

Refer to Annex B on page 9 for all contact resources.



Annex A:

Body Condition Score

 1 3	 5	 7 9
Under Ideal	Ideal	Over Ideal
1 Ribs are very easily seen on short-haired cats. No fat pads present. Lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones can be easily seen and felt. Severe abdominal tuck. 2 Ribs easily seen on short-haired cats. Lumbar vertebrae obvious. Pronounced abdominal tuck. No fat pads present. 3 Ribs easily felt with minimal fat covering. Lumbar vertebrae obvious. Obvious waist behind ribs. Minimal abdominal fat pads. 4 Ribs felt with minimal fat covering. Lumbar vertebrae obvious. Noticeable waist behind ribs. Minimal abdominal fat pads. Slight abdominal tuck.	5 Well-proportioned. Ribs felt with slight fat covering. Waist seen behind ribs, but not pronounced. Minimal abdominal fat pads.	6 Ribs felt with slight excess fat covering. Waist and abdominal fat pads are present but not obvious. Abdominal tuck absent.* *A body condition score of 6/9 may be acceptable in some cats, especially older cats. 7 Ribs not easily felt through moderate fat covering. Waist not easily seen. Slight rounding of abdomen may be present. Moderate abdominal fat pads. 8 Ribs not felt due to excess fat covering. Waist absent. Obvious rounding of abdomen with prominent abdominal fat pads. Fat deposits are present over the lower back area. 9 Ribs are not felt under heavy fat cover. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area, face and limbs. Distension of abdomen with no waist. Extensive abdominal fat deposits.

Annex B:

Contact Resources

Animal & Veterinary Service (AVS)

AVS is the main contact point for animal and veterinary matters in Singapore and the First Responder for all animal-related feedback.

Animal Response Centre

☎ **1800-476-1600 (24-hour helpline)**

Online feedback form



<https://go.gov.sg/animalfeedback>

TNRM Partners

Cat Welfare Society (CWS)	✉ info@catwelfare.org
Causes for Animals (CAS)	✉ info@causesforanimal.com
Luni Singapore	✉ info@luni-singapore.com
Noah's Ark CARES	✉ noahsarkcares@gmail.com
Purely Adoptions	☎ +65 9001 8848 ✉ hello@purelyadoptions.com
Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)	☎ +65 6287 5355 ✉ enquiries@sPCA.org.sg



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