



INTAKE

Cats are brought into OC Animal Care through various circumstances, including by members of the community, reports to field officers, etc.



ELIGIBILITY

- *At least 6 months of age
 - Healthy with a Purina Body Condition Score (BCS) of 4/9 or greater
 - Strays with no owner information
 - Not obviously pregnant
 - **Not nursing a litter
 - No obvious signs of serious injury
 - Not from any known hoarding areas
 - Not released and returned more than 3 times
 - Not declawed
 - No owner-surrendered cats**
- *Feral cats are eligible for release as early as 3 months of age*
***Nursing feral cats are kept with their litter until retention is met*



STERILIZE - VACCINATE - RETURN

- Cats are medically evaluated, sterilized, vaccinated, and ear-notched if eligibility is confirmed
- If the cat meets Return-to-Field criteria, it is released back to the area it was found thriving in
- The decision to return the cat to its neighborhood can be reversed at any time, including at the time of returning the cat to its location, should any new information arise that precludes the cat from the program.



OUTREACH

- In partnership with Stray Cat Alliance:
- Conduct community outreach including educational resources for possible caregivers and other concerned community members (e.g. best practices for colony feeding)
 - Access to additional resources addressing general questions regarding community cats



Did You Know?

In 2012, the save rate for cats at OC Animal Care was at 18.84%.

Since the implementation of the Community Cats Program (in addition to other life-saving initiatives), the save rate for cats jumped from 18.84% to 73.26% as of 2018.

That's MORE THAN TRIPLE the original save rate!

How Can I Help?

- Collar and tag your cat
- Spay and neuter your cat
- Microchip your cat and ensure information is updated
- Keep your cat indoors
- Practice responsible colony management
- Understand your city's ordinances on community cats

For more information regarding our Community Cats Program, please contact OC Animal Care at ocpetinfo.com



Fact Sheet: *Community Cats Program*

What is the OC Animal Care TNR/RTF program?

OC Animal Care’s Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program was first implemented in 2013. This program featured a partnership with cat-focused rescue partners that helped give cats deemed ‘feral’ an option to live out their lives in the communities in which they were already thriving. OC Animal Care’s Return to Field Program (RTF) now follows the industry best practice of broadening this option to non-feral healthy stray cats who are brought into the shelter by a community member. These cats are given a medical evaluation, altered, vaccinated, and evaluated for the criteria required for our program. If the cats meet our criteria they are released back to the same area where they were thriving to continue their lives.

Why has OC Animal Care implemented this program?

RTF programs are a national best practice which occur in communities across the country and are supported by Best Friends Animal Society, the ASPCA, HSUS and the UC Davis Koret School of Shelter Medicine. Industry studies have also shown that cats only have a 2% reclaim rate from the shelter, while cats given the opportunity to return to their neighborhood have a 60% chance of being reunited with their owner. By releasing healthy, thriving cats back into their neighborhood they are given the chance to find their way back to their family or colony. Additionally, prolonging the stay of a cat in a shelter environment often leads to elevated levels of stress, illness and, ultimately, euthanasia.

Does OC Animal Care trap or release these cats?

OC Animal Care partners with cat-focused rescue groups that assist by releasing cats back into the community. Our most recently formed partnership with Stray Cat Alliance has allowed OCAC to expand the program to include non-feral cats, further improving our life-saving efforts. OC Animal Care does not have a proactive trapping program for stray healthy cats.

What criteria does OC Animal Care use to decide if a cat is eligible for the RTF Program and who makes that decision?

Each cat is individually evaluated using an established list of criteria. The decision to return the cat to its neighborhood can be reversed at any time, including at the time of returning the cat to its location, should any new information arise that would preclude the cat from the program. Exceptions to these guidelines are made on a case by case basis and ultimately depend on the health and safety of the cat. Staff from all departments who handle the cats, in conjunction with our established program partners, take part in the assessment process. When shelter intake is low for cats (typically in the winter months) cats eligible for this program are given extended opportunities to find adoption or rescue placements prior to being returned to their neighborhoods. See the other side of this page for the main guidelines used to determine if a cat is eligible for the RTF Program.

OC ANIMAL CARE
CAT RELEASE DATA

