



**Spay/Neuter Clinic
TNR Policies and Guidelines**

Introduction

Since opening the York County SPCA Spay/Neuter Clinic in 2013, we have been determined to be an easily available, affordable resource for Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) in our county and surrounding communities. Over the past 10 years, over 40,000 community cats have been spayed or neutered through our clinic. TNR surgeries comprised only about 30% of our daily procedures during the first 5 years of operation, while now they make up 70% of the surgeries we perform. We are extremely proud of the part we play in our community when it comes to feline population control and helping to ensure the welfare of free-roaming cats. Managing and caring for the community cat population in our area is a collaborative effort among veterinary and animal care professionals, cat trappers, transporters, colony caretakers, animal welfare advocates, municipal leaders, donors, volunteers, and so many others. As demand for TNR services continues to grow, we have had to make modifications to our TNR policies to ensure that our patients' safety and staff's physical and mental wellbeing are preserved. We want to continue to provide this valuable service for many years to come, without compromising our safety and patient care standards, and in a sustainable way for our dedicated staff and volunteers. For this reason, beginning January 2024, the following policies regarding our TNR program will be broadly implemented, and strictly enforced.

The York County SPCA Spay/Neuter Clinic is unique in our area in that we allow clients to bring cats to our facility without an appointment via our TNR walk-in program. We allow for walk-ins because we understand that when TNR-ing cats, there are no guarantees on when or if you'll be able to trap a cat. Additionally, if a cat shows up on your property, and you are able to trap it, we don't want you to have to wait several months for an appointment; we want to spay or neuter that cat right away. However, this walk-in allowance has been frequently abused, putting undue stress on our staff and volunteers. The TNR walk-in program should not be used as the primary planning method of getting an entire colony TNR'ed. We offer appointments for TNR which should be used when you are planning on trapping more than one cat at a time. Trapping multiple cats yourself and then signing them in under other people's names to adhere to the "one cat per person" rule is an inappropriate use of this program. This causes chaos and confusion during patient check-in and pick up, and takes advantage of the staff and volunteers who are here to ensure that each cat gets the care that it deserves.

We thank members of our community for their continued dedication to spay/neuter and the care and welfare of free-roaming cats, as well as cooperation with these necessary policies going forward.

Guidelines

- **The Trap-Neuter-Return program is only for free-roaming community cats.** This program is heavily subsidized so that we can keep the cost low and ensure that finances are a minimal barrier to getting community cats spayed and neutered. This program is not to be used for owned cats of any kind. If the staff is made aware that a client is falsely claiming that an owned cat is a community cat to come through the TNR program, the client will be turned away and clinic services may be suspended to the client on a temporary or permanent basis. Appointments for *owned* cats can be made on our website, at www.ycspca.org.
- **All TNR cats must arrive in a separate, appropriately sized humane trap.**
 - Traps that are too small are not humane and will not be accepted. The cat must be able to stand up in the trap, and easily turn itself around.
 - Cats in traps that are very oversized do not allow our staff to safely sedate the cat, and will not be accepted.
 - A trap with more than one cat in it will not be accepted.
 - Humane traps are available to rent through the shelter front desk for a refundable cash deposit. We recommend using the trap for its intended purpose, i.e. to truly *trap* a community cat, not to manually transfer the cat into the trap. If you must transfer a cat from a carrier to a trap, you must take it off of SPCA property for transfer; we are not liable for injury.
- **Members of the public wishing to drop off a cat for TNR must arrive Monday through Thursday between 8:00-8:30AM.**
 - Our staff will not begin helping TNR clients until 8:00AM, as we must first admit all owned dogs and cats.
 - The staff must also start surgery for the day by 9:00AM, so we cannot accommodate late arrivals; they will be asked to return the following day that walk-ins are accepted.
- **Clients must remain inside their vehicles during check-in.** Clients leaving their vehicles and moving through the parking lot causes chaos and confusion for our staff trying to admit all of the patients in a timely and efficient manner.
 - If you are not in your vehicle when a staff member approaches it to check you in, your vehicle will be skipped.
 - After being checked in by a veterinary technician, the client may exit their vehicle and bring their TNR cat to the front door of the clinic.
 - *Under no circumstances are clients admitted into the clinic facility.*
- **Payment for surgery and any additional services requested is due at the time of drop off.**
 - Cats will not be taken into the building if payment is not received.

- If you are using a code from another organization to pay for TNR services, that code must be presented at the time of drop off.
- **Clients must be 18 years of age or older to sign an anesthesia and surgery consent form for a patient.**
- **Transport forms are required from any person who has trapped a cat for another property owner/cat caretaker.** The transport form must be signed by the property owner/cat caretaker, authorizing the transporter to bring the cat to the clinic and giving them permission to sign the anesthesia and surgery consent form in their stead.
- **A client code of conduct has been instituted and is part of every clinic consent form.** Adherence to the client code of conduct is required, and any violation of it may lead to temporary or permanent suspension of clinic services.
- **We allow for one cat per person per day through our TNR walk-in program.**
 - This feature of the TNR program has been heavily abused in the past, with one person trapping several cats, and then bringing along several unrelated people to sign the cats into the building under their names. This is not acceptable due to the undue burden it places on our staff.
 - Abuse of this program has led to days where the clinic staff cannot safely house and perform surgery on all of the cats admitted on a given day.
 - From here on out, no more than two people with two cats in a vehicle may sign cats in as walk-ins. If you are trapping multiple cats, we require you to email clinic@ycspca.org to schedule appointments so that we may better control the number of cats in the clinic per day.
- **TNR appointments are a limited commodity.** Though there is no repercussion for not being able to fill all of the TNR appointments that have been requested, we ask that you not request more appointments that you will be reasonably able to fill. This allows us to ensure that any client requesting TNR appointments has access to them in a reasonable time frame.
 - If a client repeatedly no shows for whole blocks of appointments, they may be declined appointments in the future.
 - A client may not bring more cats than they have appointments for, and are not eligible to utilize the "one cat per person" walk-in service on days that they have appointments.
- **Pick up time for TNR appointments is 3:30-4:00PM. Pick up time for TNR walk-ins is 8:00-8:30AM the following morning.** Failure to pick up TNR cats at the appropriate pick up time will result in a \$25 late fee per cat.
- **Payment for any medically necessary treatment is due at the time of pick-up.** Part of our intake questionnaire asks if the client approves any medically necessary treatment that the cat might need up to a certain dollar amount. If the client answers yes to this question, and

treatment is administered, this payment is due at the time of pick up.

- **Discharge paperwork will be emailed to the address under which a cat has been signed in.**
No exceptions.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the policies above, please email clinic@ycspca.org for further information.