



## Animal Care Services

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San Antonio, TX 78227  
210.207.4PET [www.saacs.net](http://www.saacs.net)



### **CITY SUPPORTS TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN FOR COMMUNITY CATS**

The City of San Antonio Animal Care Services Department supports and embraces Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), a program for community cats. We currently support this program by providing free spay/neuter services for community cats in targeted zip codes. For the other zip codes in San Antonio and the surrounding areas, The San Antonio Feral Cat Coalition (SAFCC) provides subsidized low-cost surgeries, resources and volunteer assistance. SAFCC is a local non-profit, all volunteer organization. Find out more at their website [www.sanantonioperalcats.org](http://www.sanantonioperalcats.org). You can also contact them by calling their helpline at 210-877-9067 or by sending an email to [info@sanantonioperalcats.org](mailto:info@sanantonioperalcats.org).

TNR has assisted many communities across the United States in dealing with their cat overpopulation challenges. In accordance with Chapter 5 of the City of San Antonio Municipal Ordinance, spayed or neutered outdoor cats are legal. As part of this program, any feral or community cats brought into the shelter as strays will be spayed or neutered, vaccinated, ear tipped and returned to the area that they were taken from, provided they are healthy and appropriate for surgery (weight and age).

As part of this nationally accepted program, cats are returned back to their original territory fully vaccinated and sterilized. They have no more kittens, their population stabilizes, declining over time. Bad behaviors associated with mating, such as yowling, spraying and fighting, decreases. The cats live out their lives and over time, the colony reduces in numbers as the cats naturally die off while no new kittens are born into the colony.

The typical trap-and-kill methods used in the past were cruel, inhumane and ineffective at solving the cat overpopulation issue. It just doesn't work. Worse, trapping and killing actually perpetuates the problem due to the "vacuum effect". This "vacuum effect", which happens when cats are trapped and removed from the colony, allows other cats to move in and take advantage of the newly available resources and to breed as early as 4 months. Attempting to relocate cats also creates a vacuum effect. Think about this--if just 3 kittens survive in a litter, those kittens and their descendants can produce over 11,000 cats in 5 years! TNR solves the problem at its root by making sure the cats are healthy and *cannot* reproduce.

Below are a few frequently asked questions:

*What if the cat is sick or injured?*

All cats brought into the City's shelter receive a medical examination. Sick/injured cats will not be returned to their colony.

*Who is going to care for the cat, once it returns?*

Cats coming into the program that are a healthy weight most likely have someone in the neighborhood feeding and helping care for them. If you want to learn how to care for community cats, visit the website at [felines.bestfriends.org](http://felines.bestfriends.org)

*What if I don't want the cat back in my neighborhood?*

The law allows for outdoor cats. It does not require that a cat have an owner or a care taker. As such, the cat will be returned to where it was impounded or trapped. ACS and the program coordinator can assist you with humane, legal deterrents to keep cats off your property.