

COMMUNITY CAT PROGRAM



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ARE CATS THAT CAME FROM OWNER SURRENDERS OR THAT WERE NOT ADOPTED AFTER A PERIOD OF TIME ON THE ADOPTION FLOOR RELEASED OUTSIDE AS COMMUNITY CATS?

No, cats that come in as owner surrenders are not released as Community Cats. These cats are placed in the cat adoption room where League City Animal Care staff work to get them adopted. If a cat is not thriving in the adoption room, exhibits high stress indicators, or otherwise is not a good fit for a “traditional” adoption model, it may be sent to foster care or it may be a candidate for the Working Cat program. Working Cats can flourish while helping to control pest populations in places such as warehouses, barns, factories, plant nurseries, churches, police stations, free-standing commercial buildings, or any other property suited for independent-minded cats. Placing these cats with caring owners as Working Cats can provide the cats with a “job” and a better quality of life. This life-saving program allows us to find more homes for cats and is a crucial part of League City Animal Care’s no-kill commitment. Learn more about the Working Cat program at www.leaguecity.com/workingcats.

ARE SICK, ELDERLY, OR VERY YOUNG CATS RELEASED BACK AS COMMUNITY CATS?

No, only cats who are deemed to be “thriving” as Community Cats are returned back to their home outdoors. Cats who are sick or very thin are not candidates for return because they are not thriving outdoors. Geriatric cats or kittens under four months of age are also not candidates for return. Each animal is reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine if it will be returned to its outdoor home. Other factors that would prevent a cat from being a Community Cat candidate include—but are not limited to—declawed cats, obese cats, or cats that have any physical impairment or medical condition that may prevent them from thriving in the wild.

All cats that are returned home as part of the Community Cat program receive a microchip that identifies them. In the event that a cat is picked up a second time, League City Animal Care is able to compare its previous body condition to its current one in order to confirm whether it is continuing to thrive in its outdoor home or if it needs intervention. Any cat whose condition has declined would not be a candidate to return home again.

ARE CATS SELECTED AS COMMUNITY CATS RELEASED INTO UNFAMILIAR LOCATIONS OR NEIGHBORHOODS?

No, Community Cats that were thriving in their outdoor homes are returned as close as possible to the location where they were found. This helps ensure that they are able to find their established food source, shelter, etc. that allowed them to thrive there previously.

WHY AREN'T ALL CATS, ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT SEEM FRIENDLY, CONSIDERED FOR ADOPTION FIRST?

Research indicates that the overwhelming majority of outdoor cats that are in good condition outdoors have someone (often more than one “someone”) who cares for them. The bonds that these caregivers share with their cats shouldn’t be dismissed just because they allow them to spend some or all of their time outdoors. Returning all thriving cats to their home environment, when possible, protects them from the stress and illness that cats are prone to in a shelter environment. Additionally, it allows the shelter and community to focus more resources to provide positive outcomes for the cats most in need and most at risk: owner surrenders, neonatal kittens, and cats who are sick, injured, or victims of cruelty.

WHAT IF MY INDOOR CAT GOT LOST? HOW WILL I KNOW WHERE TO FIND HIM?

Microchips remain one of the best ways to ensure a lost pet will find its way home. All incoming pets to League City Animal Care are first scanned for a microchip and efforts are made to reunite the pet with their owner before any other option is considered. All lost pet parents are encouraged to file a lost pet report with Petco Love Lost (<https://petcolove.org/lost/>). This tool will notify pet parents of any potential matches found in their area.

As an added precaution, League City Animal Care holds all found cats for a minimum of three full days before considering returning them to their home location as part of the Community Cat Program. Studies have shown that cats are 13 times more likely to be reunited with their families through means other than a shelter, and returning unclaimed cats to their home location greatly improves the odds of reunification for a cat that is truly lost.