How to help... if you find a cat outside

Most cats are best left where they are

Cats wandering outside are usually not far from their homes and are unlikely to be lost. Research shows that cats are over 13 times more likely to be reunited with their owners if left in place rather than taken to a shelter. A cat that looks healthy with good body condition and coat is very rarely lost. We might not know where that cat lives, but good body condition tells us the cat likely knows where home is. A cat that is not injured, ill or in imminent danger is unlikely to need assistance.

Here’s how you can help

- If the cat looks healthy, please leave it where it is/put it back where you found it.
- Post a picture and description of the cat on NextDoor, Craigslist, Pawboost, Lost Cats of IL, helpinglostpets.com, and surrounding neighborhood Facebook groups.
- Post "Cat Sighting" flyers in your neighborhood with your contact information and the date/time/location of sighting.

CACC is the city’s only municipal open-admission animal shelter. It protects the public and promotes humane care of animals.

Most cats/kittens found outside should be left alone. If they are injured, ill, or in immediate danger:

- Call 311 or visit 311.CHICAGO.GOV
- Bring them to CACC: 2741 S. Western Ave. (12-7 P.M.)
Community cats

While not all free-roaming cats have what we think of as a traditional home, if they are healthy and in good body condition, they likely have a place they call home. These cats, often called community cats, are not in need of our assistance.

If you see a cat with a tipped ear (see photo), it is an indication that the cat has been spayed or neutered and vaccinated. If a cat is creating a nuisance and is not ear tipped, Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is the best way to help.

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)

TNR is considered best practice and is good public policy. It ensures no new kittens are born, stabilizes cat populations, provides vaccines, and improves cats’ lives. It also stops the behaviors and stresses associated with mating such as yowling, spraying, and fighting.

Healthy cats can usually be returned to their location of origin the day after surgery. Plans for sick or injured cats should be discussed with the clinic. See below for names of low-cost spay/neuter clinics and organizations that support TNR in Chicago and thank you for helping cats!


TNR and spay/neuter resources

**PAWS Chicago** Focus: South side; Clinic: 773-521-7729; Outreach: feralneighborhoodcats@pawschicago.org; 773-475-9410

**Tree House** Focus: North side; 773-262-4000; tnr@treehouseanimals.org

**Whiskers and Tails** Focus: Northwest side; info@whiskersandt尾巴foundation.org

**TripleRPets** Focus: Southwest side/south suburbs; info@triplerpets.org; 708-738-1438

**Anti-Cruelty Society** Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Clinic; anticruelty.org; 312-644-8338

**Feral Feline Project** Focus: North/northwest suburbs; feralfelineproject@gmail.com; 847-800-0095

**CatVando** Focus: Near west suburbs; catvando.org

**LOST & FOUND PET RESOURCES**

Helpinglostpets.com
Pawboost.com
Lost312.com
Neighborhood Social Media Sites

**REHOMING RESOURCES**

Adoptapet.com
Petfinder.com
GetYourPet.com
Petbond.com

Chicago Community Cats
CACC Kitten on Deck