

Addendum 2: TNR and the Law

While TNR programs are increasing in number and becoming more widely accepted, there are still few laws or regulations that specifically govern it; however, more and more cities are adopting TNR policies. So before you begin trapping, you might want to look into local laws.

You may be required to obtain a permit or register with a local rescue group, or gather statistics about and maintain health records of the cats in your colony. Also make yourself aware of any local laws concerning the feeding and sheltering of free-roaming animals, rules defining animal ownership, and vaccination requirements (especially in regard to rabies.) Some areas have enacted feeding bans in a misguided attempt to manage feral cat populations through starvation, while others have chosen to define any-

one providing food or shelter to a feral cat as her “owner.”

By knowing the laws in your area, you can be confident in understanding your rights and responsibilities as a cat caretaker. And if you encounter roadblocks to TNR in your community, get creative. A passionate person with fresh ideas has immense power to make positive change, especially at the local level. Use our sample letter to send to local city council members and the sample petition to gather names of your community residents in support of cats and TNR programs, to convince city council and other local government groups to take the humane approach to managing feral cats. And if you are experiencing particular difficulties, please contact us, so we may be of assistance.