

(SAFER)
STRAY AND FERAL EMINENT RESCUE PROGRAM
POLICY OF OPERATION

1. Description

This document outlines the acceptable policy of operation for the **STRAY & FERAL EMINENT RESCUE PROGRAM** initiated by **PAWS AND CLAWS SOCIETY**. This document is to be used in conjunction with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the foundation to determine acceptable organization behavior. The Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the foundation have priority regarding any conflicts in policy between these documents. The current Board of Directors is the governing body of this document. The Board of Directors will serve as Administrators for the SAFER Program. This Policy of Operation was approved by the Board of Directors at its regularly scheduled meeting on January 8, 2005.

2. Board of Directors

Diana Kane, President	Joseph F. Smith, Vice President
Kathleen Mitnacht, Secretary	Jean Smith, Treasurer

3. Program Administration

Program Administrator	Board of Directors
Program Director	Jean Smith

4. Terminology

SAFER or S.A.F.E.R.	Stray and Feral Eminent Rescue or Stray & Feral Eminent Rescue
FOSTER PARENT	A caregiver for cats and kittens rescued by a participating member of SAFER.
TEMPORARY FOSTER	A foster parent that is under a foster agreement to provide care for a limited number and specific group of animals that they own while waiting to find homes.
THIRD PARTY FOSTER	A caregiver that regularly requires the services of a rescue group to find homes for abandoned or stray animals. They are held under new foster agreements for each animal or group of animals until homes can be found.
PUBLIC ANIMALS	All animals under a temporary foster agreement and supported in part by individuals that are not members of SAFER.
ADOPTION COUNSELOR	An active SAFER member that is qualified to screen adoption applications, counsel prospective adopters, and complete the adoption process to place animals in permanent homes.
EVENT SUPERVISOR	An active SAFER member that is qualified to supervise any adoption event.

5. PROGRAM MISSION, RESPONSIBILITIES, PURPOSE, AND VALUES

Mission:

Stray and Feral Eminent Rescue Program is a PAWS AND CLAWS SOCIETY initiative developed and implemented under the auspices of the STAATS FOUNDATION in accord with their plan for a NO-KILL COMMUNITY in Southern New Jersey. The SAFER network of local rescue groups and individuals is committed to improving the quality of life for homeless and unwanted felines by providing and finding homes, assisting and educating the community, and controlling overpopulation. The SAFER network advocates compassion towards felines, community support and the belief that felines are life-long companions.

Responsibilities:

- Spay and neuter felines to prevent reproduction in excess of the number that can enjoy loving homes.
- Humanely rescue abandoned and unwanted felines.
- Provide routine medical care to rescued felines
- Locate foster homes for rescued felines, and provide financial help to those homes when necessary and possible.
- Adopt rescued felines into selected caring, responsible, permanent homes.
- Implement and support a trap, neuter, release program component for unadoptable ferals.
- Euthanize only to prevent suffering when there is no hope.
- Educate the community on the importance of spaying and neutering felines in preventing feline overpopulation and homelessness.
- Recruit veterinarians that recognize the corporation's nonprofit status and will provide necessary medical services for rescued felines at reduced rates.
- Receive contributions and grants, and dispense such funds exclusively for all activities listed in this article.
- Recruit volunteers to further the goals of the SAFER program.

Purpose:

- To humanely improve the quality of life for felines
- To help establish a no-kill community in Southern New Jersey

Business:

- Control feline overpopulation
- Foster felines
- Find homes for unwanted felines
- Assist the community
- Educate the public

6. Organizational Limits

6.1 SAFER has an organizational limit on the number of animals it can support at any given time. This limit is based on financial resources, foster homes available, adoption space, number of adoption events, and number of volunteers available. A major variant is the current medical care required or future medical expenditures allocated. The combined number of animals under foster care should not exceed this limit unless authorized by a majority vote of Program Administrators. This limit will be evaluated and set at each general meeting of the Program Administrators.

7. Foster Program

7.1 SAFER requires that all foster animals be provided with a loving home, nutritional food, clean water, clean litter boxes, and an indoors only environment. The Program Administrators may make exceptions to the indoors only policy on a case by case basis.

7.2 The Program Administrators will review all cases of animal neglect by foster parents. If it is determined that the foster parent was negligent, the Board can decide to remove all foster animals from the foster parent and ban the foster parent from further fostering duties for SAFER.

7.3 SAFER has an organizational limit on the number of animals it can support at any given time. In addition, a foster home will have a limit on the number of foster animals they may care for in any specific period of time. Program Administrators will determine the limit for each foster home on a case by case basis. Once either limit is reached, the foster parent is not to take in any additional animals of any kind. The Program Administrators will review all cases where a foster parent has or wishes to exceed this limit and grant a one-time limit exemption per case. Failure to comply with this limiting policy can result in the termination of fostering privileges.

7.4 Foster parents are not required to provide follow-up calls on successful adoptions, but may if they wish. An active SAFER member volunteer will otherwise provide this service.

7.5 Should a foster home receive or contain a cat with a life threatening infectious disease, that cat must be immediately quarantined from any other foster animals. Provisions should be made to find new foster homes for any remaining non-infected animals or ensure satisfactory quarantine procedures to guarantee the remaining animals will not become infected. Fostering of new animals must be discontinued until the chance of infecting those animals no longer exists. The Program Administrators will determine if the quarantine procedures are satisfactory and when the foster parent can resume fostering duties.

7.6 Fosters must be active in bringing cats to adoption events to qualify for food, medical and supplies provided or donated to SAFER. An active foster is expected to bring animals to no less than 25% of the planned adoption events. The Program Administrators will review foster activity on a periodic basis to determine eligibility.

7.7 All new foster animals of unknown history must be kept in a quarantined environment for two (2) weeks or as determined by a veterinarian to allow any health issues to surface. An experienced foster care provider with medical authorization privileges will typically provide this quarantine. Once the health is determined to be satisfactory, the foster feline can be moved to another foster home and/or be placed for adoption, providing the conditions for adoption have been met.

7.8 It is the policy of SAFER that the Program Director authorize the rescue of all felines for the SAFER Program. This policy will ensure that the organizational limit is not exceeded. SAFER will not be responsible for the care of any unauthorized foster animals.

7.9 If the foster parent has cats of their own, then it is recommended that the SAFER foster felines be kept in a separate area from those cats. If this is not possible, then the SAFER fosters must pass quarantine before being introduced to the owners cats. The vaccinations for the foster parent's own cats must be up to date and include FVRCP and rabies. Their cats must also have been tested negative for FeLV and FIV.

8 Stray Intake Policy

8.1 All stray or owner surrendered animals will have a feline release form completed by the owner or Samaritan relinquishing the animal.

8.2 Owner surrendered animals are available for adoption immediately after a release form is signed.

8.3 The holding period as set forth by New Jersey Statute will be followed for stray animals. Currently, a 3-day hold period during which the animal is not available for adoption and can only be reclaimed by the original owner. If the owner claims the animal during the three days no fees will be collected. After the three-day hold, the animal is available for adoption based on the stated adoption policy and fees.

8.4 To facilitate the return of an adult animal to the owner the following will be performed:

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- 8.4.1 Examine animal for identification
- 8.4.2 Scan the animal for a microchip
- 8.4.3 Notify the local animal control agency of animal's description and location where found.
- 8.4.4 Post description of animal on current lost pet web site
- 8.4.5 Place found pet ad in local newspaper
- 8.5 Reasonable proof of ownership will be required from any purported owner before releasing the animal during the three-day hold period. Reasonable proof can be pictures, veterinary records, or other validation. The release of animals is the sole discretion of the Program Director.
- 8.6 Owners looking for a lost pet can be directed to the SAFER web site for available/adoptable animals. Should an owner wish to search SAFER adopted archives for a placed animal, they will need to provide a recent image of the animal, date and location lost, and any other unique defining characteristics. They will be informed that should a match be found the animal cannot be returned to them. This provision is only to provide peace of mind for the owner only.
- 8.7 Intake of animals is at the discretion of the Program Administrator, Director or other assigned officer. All felines must pass an evaluation to determine adoptability and behavior. Adoption events are very stressful for most felines and those felines accepted in SAFER for placement must be able to handle adoption events within reason.
- 8.8 Adoptable felines unable to handle the stress of adoption events will be showcased on the internet or advertised in print media. Flyers and posters will be placed in strategic locations.

9 Feral Cat and Trapping Policy

- 9.1 SAFER advocates Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) to help reduce the feral feline population and control future growth.
- 9.2 SAFER will provide traps to the community as volunteer and financial resources permit. This Lend a Trap service will operate under the following guidelines:
 - 9.2.1 Humane cat traps will be made available to the community with no rental charge, but a \$60 cash deposit will be collected and refunded when the trap is returned in useable condition.
 - 9.2.2 Trapped feral felines will be returned to the original trapping location after an appropriate recovery period, providing no other medical or habitat conditions inhibit their release.
 - 9.2.3 Food and water must be made available to the feral cat(s) after release.
 - 9.2.4 The left ear will be tipped prior to release to indicate that the feral cat has been altered.
 - 9.2.5 All felines will be trapped and cared for in a humane manner in accordance with posted policies of Alley Cat Allies and SPCA organizations.
 - 9.2.6 All felines should be evaluated for adoptability prior to release. Generally kittens less than ten (10) weeks old will be rescued and domesticated for adoption.
 - 9.2.7 Traps will not be loaned to anyone expressing the intention to trap and euthanize, unless it is medically necessary due to illness or disease of the feline.
- 9.3 SAFER will provide feral spay & neuter services to the community as financial resources permit and no other similar program is available. This Feral Spay/Neuter Service to the community must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - 9.3.1 Trapped feral felines will be returned to the original trapping location after an appropriate recovery period, providing no other medical conditions inhibit their release.
 - 9.3.2 The left ear will be tipped prior to release to indicate that the feral cat has been altered.
 - 9.3.3 The cats must be feral, non-domestic and cannot be easily handled, and brought in for surgery in a humane cat trap.

10 Adoption Policy and Qualifications

10.1 SAFER will offer a lifetime return warranty on all animals adopted through the program. If the adoption does not work out, or if the new owner’s circumstances change such that they can no longer care for the animal, SAFER adoption contract requires that the animal be returned to insure that the animal will not be given away to an unsuitable home, be abandoned, or taken to an animal shelter where it may be euthanized.

10.2 If an animal becomes ill during the first two weeks after adoption, except by accident or neglect, the Program Administrator may approve veterinary care. The Program Director may make authorization for care not exceeding \$100.00 prior to the Administrator’s approval. SAFER will not be responsible for costs incurred for medical care obtained without prior approval from the Program Administrator or the Program Director.

10.3 A SAFER representative will interview all potential adopters to ensure the well being of felines being adopted. Vet references will be checked. **SAME DAY ADOPTIONS ARE NOT PERMITTED.**

10.4 All adoptions will have a completed, signed, and dated adoption agreement that provides for the following provisions of an approved adoption.

10.4.1 The cat must remain indoors only.

10.4.2 The cat must not wear a flea collar.

10.4.3 The cat must be provided with a loving home, nutritious food, and medical care as required to maintain good health.

10.4.4 The cat must never be physically abused or otherwise harmed.

10.4.5 The cat must be immediately returned to SAFER in the event that the adopter is unable to keep the cat or properly care for it. Donations will be refunded if returned within the established trial period. The normal trial period will be two weeks.

10.4.6 The cat will not be placed under any circumstances by adopter with any humane society, animal shelter, other organization, individual person or persons under penalty of law.

10.4.7 SAFER must be notified immediately if the cat becomes lost.

10.4.8 SAFER must be notified immediately in the event the cat is euthanized due to a terminal illness.

10.5 All adopted animals must leave in an animal carrier approved by a SAFER representative.

10.6 A two week refund period will apply to all adoptions. If during this time the feline is returned, a full refund of the non-medical portion of the adoption fee will be refunded.

10.7 The pre-adoption of felines not ready to be released is authorized but discouraged, and the pre-adopter will be considered as a Foster. In these cases no contract will be completed and no fees or deposits will be collected. No guarantees will be made that the adoption will be completed due to unexpected illness or other issues beyond SAFER control. Once the feline is ready to be released to the new owners they will be contacted to complete the adoption agreement.

10.8 All felines will be micro-chipped before adoption.

10.9 Adoption fees. Felines 10 months and older will be charged an adult adoption fee of \$50. Felines under ten (10) months of age will be charged a kitten adoption fee of \$75; \$100 to adopt 2 kittens.

10.10 The adoption fee will be presented as \$10 adoption fee and the balance as a small donation toward the cost of standard medical services provided to the adopter and their feline family member. Provide the retail cost of these standard medical services to show that the adopter is benefiting from a SAFER adoption.

10.11 Summary of standard medical services provided with adoptions:

Spay/Neuter	FeLV/FIV test
Rabies Vaccination (if >5 months of age)	Flea Prevention (topical)
FVRCP Vaccination	Microchip
Worming	Ear Mite Treatment

11 Adoption Events

- 11.1 An active member of SAFER will supervise all adoption events. This member must be trained in adoption procedures and organizational policy.
- 11.2 All animals presented for adoption must be in a clean and healthy condition. If a health or cleanliness condition exists, including fleas and ear mites, they must have or be under treatment before the adoption event. The event supervisor has final approval on all health and cleanliness issues.
- 11.3 All animals presented at an adoption event must be under a form of topical flea control.
- 11.4 All animals presented at an adoption event must be tested for FeLV/FIV and have a negative result. If older than 5 months of age, they must also be vaccinated for rabies in addition to their FVRCP vaccination. SAFER will fund the testing, vaccinations, worming, ear mite eradication, flea control, and spay/neuter surgery for all animals it sponsors.
- 11.5 Adoption event staff scheduling will be determined at each monthly general meeting.
- 11.6 The event supervisor has final authority for cage space prior to and during the event.
- 11.7 A banner announcing the adoption event will be displayed for public view when possible.
- 11.8 A donation container, SAFER business cards, and SAFER brochures must be made available to the public.
- 11.9 Under no circumstances will the unsupervised handling of any animal for adoption be allowed by a SAFER representative. All children must have their parents present while handling adoption animals.
- 11.10 All adoption animals must remain indoors at all times. In the case of an outdoor event, the animal must be taken indoors, remain in an enclosed area, or be on a harness for handling. SAFER animals will not be presented at an outdoor event unless the temperature and climate is well within health need standards. Water will always be made available to all animals.
- 11.11 All cages of unknown sanitary condition must be cleaned and disinfected prior to the display of any felines. The disinfectant must be a 1:30 bleach solution or other viral disinfectant for feline diseases (NolvaSan).

12 General Medical and Health Policy

- 12.1 SAFER will provide medical services, spaying/neutering, worming, and vaccines (FVRCP and rabies) for all animals in the adoption program through approved SAFER veterinarians. All foster animals must be current on vaccinations, including rabies if over 5 months of age and topical flea control.
- 12.2 All fostered animals will be tested for FeLV/FIV and have a negative result to be adoptable.
- 12.3 It will not be the current policy of SAFER to support animals positive with FeLV or FIV or any other life threatening infectious disease. SAFER will provide euthanasia for any animal in our care that is suffering. Kittens under 3 months of age testing positive using an in-house test will be given a second test by lab, after an appropriate waiting period if necessary, to verify result.
- 12.4 SAFER will provide reasonable medical services for all animals in our care, but will not approve heroic measures to save an animal. The Program Administrator will review and determine reasonable medical care for each presenting case.
- 12.5 All kittens under 4 months of age will have a 2 week holding period before being placed for adoption. During this period, medical procedures may be completed and vaccinations given. Cats or kittens over this age will have a minimum 5 day holding period before being adopted. This is a quarantine period to determine any medical issues not apparent at intake.
- 12.6 Vaccinations will be given at 9, 12, and 15 weeks (or other veterinarian approved protocol) of age depending on the age when Safer received the feline. Kittens under 15 weeks of age will have had a vaccination a minimum of 10 days prior to being adopted.
- 12.7 The recovery period for all spay surgeries will be 5 days and 3 days for neuter surgeries, after which the feline may be adopted.