

Trapping of Cats

Revised Version 2 - October 2015

Before carrying out a trapping program a person must read and understand the relevant provisions in Section 19 of the Animal Welfare Act 2002 Act as listed below.

Animal Welfare Act 2002

Section 19. Cruelty to animals

(1) *A person must not be cruel to an animal.*

Penalty: Minimum — \$2 000.

Maximum — \$50 000 and imprisonment for 5 years.

- (2) *Without limiting subsection (1) a person, whether or not the person is a person in charge of the animal, is cruel to an animal if the person —*
- (a) tortures, mutilates, maliciously beats or wounds, abuses, torments, or otherwise ill-treats, the animal;*
 - (b) uses a prescribed inhumane device on the animal;*
 - (c) intentionally or recklessly poisons the animal;*
 - (d) does any prescribed act to, or in relation to, the animal; or*
 - (e) in any other way causes the animal unnecessary harm.*
- (3) *Without limiting subsection (1) a person in charge of an animal is cruel to an animal if the animal —*
- (a) is transported in a way that causes, or is likely to cause, it unnecessary harm;*
 - (b) is confined, restrained or caught in a manner that —*
 - (i) is prescribed; or*
 - (ii) causes, or is likely to cause, it unnecessary harm;*
 - (c) is worked, driven, ridden or otherwise used —*
 - (i) when it is not fit to be so used or has been over used; or*
 - (ii) in a manner that causes, or is likely to cause, it unnecessary harm;*
 - (d) is not provided with proper and sufficient food or water;*
 - (e) is not provided with such shelter, shade or other protection from the elements as is reasonably necessary to ensure its welfare, safety and health;*
 - (f) is abandoned, whether at the place where it is normally kept or elsewhere;*
 - (g) is subjected to a prescribed surgical or similar operation, practice or activity;*
 - (h) suffers harm which could be alleviated by the taking of reasonable steps;*
 - (i) suffers harm as a result of a prescribed act being carried out on, or in relation to, it; or*
 - (j) is, in any other way, caused unnecessary harm.*

If you are found to be guilty of cruelty to an animal you may face prosecution and fines. It is recommended that untrained people use trained pest control operators to trap cats or Local Government Officers.

Reasons for Trapping

Cats in urban areas include those which live within a household, as well as community cats who are not owned by a single person, but are fed by a number of people in a particular area.

With the introduction of the Cat Act 2011 there is a requirement for all cats to be microchipped, registered with Local Government and sterilised unless they belong to a registered breeder.

Under no circumstances must the animal be harmed or attempts made to kill the animal, as this may result in a breach of the Animal Welfare Act 2002.

Other Forms of Capture

Trapping must be used as a last resort, as it is very stressful experience for a cat.

Personal handling to place a cat in a cat carrier may be able to be used for some domestic cats who are well socialised.

All Attempts Must be Made to Locate Cat Owner First

If a particular cat is causing problems on your property, all attempts must be made to find the owner and explain the issues to see if they can be resolved before deciding to trap. It is essential to ensure that stray cats are indeed homeless and not just visiting from a nearby household.

It is recommended that before requesting the City trap a cat that:-

- You check with neighbours in the general area as to whether the cat is theirs or they know of the cat's owner. If possible, take a photo of the cat to show the neighbours;
- You contact the nearby local veterinary clinics to place a found report and to check their lost reports; and
- If possible, advertise on e-media with a description of the cat and a contact number e.g. Facebook, Gumtree etc.

Trapping

Only cage pedal traps are recommended for trapping of cats. Hook traps are more likely to cause unnecessary harm to the animal which would contravene the Animal Welfare Act 2002.

Always check that traps are functional and working correctly before setting. The trap may be pegged to the ground so that it cannot be easily moved. The pegs must be placed correctly so that an animal cannot become entangled in them.

The trap must be long enough to ensure the whole length of the animal including an extended tail is inside the trap before the cat steps on the plate to avoid damage to the tail.

Additional equipment which may be required:

- Food lures using high reward cat food;
- A trap cover or large towel or blanket to cover each trap, which is large enough to fully cover the trap and is water proof if rain is forecast; and
- Torch for checking traps at night or early morning.

Placement of Traps

- Place food at the very back of the trap;
- A suitable site must be chosen for the trap which provides permanent shade and shelter from the weather;
- Do not set traps during the day when temperatures are expected to be above 30 degrees or when extreme weather conditions such as storms or cyclones are expected; and
- Cover the back half of the cage with a blanket or towel as coverage often increases the cats' sense of security making them more likely to enter the trap check the trap is working correctly and then reset it.

Management of Traps

- Traps must be set at night wherever possible;
- Traps must be checked within 2 hours of sunrise or earlier if the temperature reaches 30 degrees; and
- Traps to be closed by 9.00am and not reset until after 4.00pm.

Management of Trapped Cat

If a cat is lactating it must be released immediately.

Once a cat has been caught the trap should be fully covered with the blanket and immediately transported to the nearest local government, veterinary practice or animal shelter, or your local government may agree to pick up the cat.

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Cat Trapping Request Form

Fee \$5.00 and Bond of \$20.00

APPLICANT INFORMATION			
Full Name			
Address			
Suburb		Postcode	
Home Ph:		Mobile Ph:	
Email:			
Do you know who the owner of the cat is?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Have you checked with your neighbours if they know who the owner is?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Please read the below Conditions of Use governing the setting of a cat trap on the abovementioned property

CONDITIONS OF USE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All attempts must be made to locate the cat owner (as per the information sheet provided with this form); 2. Traps are not to be moved, unless by authorised Shire staff; 3. Traps will not be set on weekends and Public Holidays and any traps already set will be picked up on the business day before a weekend or Public Holiday; 4. Traps will not be set when extreme weather conditions are forecast (i.e. temperatures over 30°C, storms etc); 5. Traps will only be set in shaded outdoor areas and the final determination of where or if a trap will be set is at the sole discretion of authorised Shire staff; 6. Applicants must supply a blanket to cover the cage. The blanket will be used to cover the back part of the trap once set and should then be used to cover the cage fully once a cat has been caught. The blanket must be dampened if the cat is trapped on a high temperature day; 7. Once a cat has been trapped, the applicant must immediately contact the Shire advising the service that a cat has been caught, leaving their contact details (full name, address and contact phone number/s). Authorised Shire staff will pick up the cat and trap when one is next on duty; 8. Applicants must check the traps within 2 hours of sunrise or earlier if the temperature reaches 30°C or higher. 9. Traps are to be closed after 9.00am and can be reset after 4.00pm 10. This trap is being set to capture a nuisance cat only. If you need assistance with other forms of wildlife please contact the Department of Parks and Wildlife for nuisance wildlife removal. 11. The welfare of the trapped cat is your responsibility until the Shire takes possession of the cat.

Please note that failure to comply with the above conditions will result in the trap being removed. You may also be liable under the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* for any harm caused to the cat.

This form must be read, signed and dated before a trap will be set.

APPLICANT DECLARATION & SIGNATURE			
In signing this form I declare that I have read, understood and agree to abide by the Conditions of Use.			
Applicant Signature:		Date:	
Authorised Officer Signature		Date:	