



Operating Practice: Spay/Neuter Clinic for Feral Cats
Location: Toronto Animal Services (TAS) East Spay/Neuter Clinic

1. TAS East Spay Neuter ("S/N") Clinic will only accept feral cats for sterilization if a colony caretaker is identified for the colony and taking ownership of the cats as part of the colony, a cat is from a feral cat colony registered with the Toronto Feral Cat Project, and the colony is located within the boundaries of the City of Toronto.
2. Only feral cats will be accepted into the clinic. If the cats are social and able to be handled easily we will not normally perform spay/neuter services and the cat will be released to the Caretaker unaltered. (Some exceptions – if the cat is socialized to people and well established as part of the feral cat colony and the caretaker is unable to rehome it from the colony at that time, TAS will consider sterilizing it to ensure no future kittens are born into the colony)
3. The colony caretaker must attend one of the Toronto Feral Cat Project Trap Neuter Release (TNR) Workshops prior to TAS Feral Cat S/N Clinic accepting cats from a particular colony.
4. TAS East S/N Clinic will give priority to accepting cats from specific colonies where the majority of cats from that colony are trapped at the same time and can be brought to the clinic over the fewest number of days. The goal is to sterilize 3 entire colonies by the end of three surgical days. This method has been demonstrated to have the best measurable success. The positive impact should be to first stabilize the colony so that it does not increase in numbers and secondly see a reduction in size to eventually no colony though attrition. We also believe that this will improve the quality of life for feral cats as well as reducing the number of cats placed in and euthanized in our shelters.
5. All feral cats will be ear tipped as part of their sterilization procedure; this allows ease of identification once released. One centimeter is removed from the left ear tip in order to visibly identify an altered free-roaming cat to avoid future transport, stress and anesthesia. Kittens are ear tipped proportionally less than one centimeter.
6. Cats must arrive at the clinic in approved traps (2 door Tomahawk traps or approved equivalent) at 8:30am on the day of their scheduled appointment.
7. Two pounds or 900 g is the minimum weight for surgery. Kittens weighing less than 2 pounds will be returned without being sedated or altered.
8. All cats are scanned for microchips. If a microchip is found, the spay/neuter procedure will not be performed. We will attempt to contact the chip registrant and inform him/her how the cat was transported to the clinic and how best to retrieve the cat. If we are unable to locate the chip registrant, the cat will be returned to the caretaker unaltered.
9. All feral cats will be picked up from the TAS East S/N clinic in their traps by their colony caretakers at 5:30pm on the same day as their surgery. Cats that are not picked up after surgery as directed will be considered abandoned and handled in accordance with TAS policies and procedures. (Limited exceptions: Any alternative arrangements must be agreed to by the TAS Veterinarian on duty that day.)
10. Euthanasia of feral cats presented to the clinic for sterilization will be considered in some circumstances. If the examining veterinarian believes a cat is suffering, determines that a cat is in very poor health, or believes that it is inhumane to return the cat to a free-roaming lifestyle, the cat will be considered surrendered to TAS and the cat may be euthanized under the direction of the Veterinarian and without contacting the colony caretaker first.
11. We reserve the right to refuse future services to any person who engages in any inappropriate treatment of staff, property or cats.
12. All practices are in place to insure the greatest safety for the cats while they are in the care of TAS.