



**The Humane solution to Community Cats**  
**[www.tnrriverside.org](http://www.tnrriverside.org)**

## **Working Cat Program**

### **How It Works**

TNR Riverside is pleased to announce the Working Cat Placement Program. We are looking for cat lovers who have a barn, warehouse, or other secure outdoor structure who are interested in adopting cats that are not suitable for life inside of a house or are unhappy living inside. Cat temperaments range from feral to friendly.

Working cats benefit their caretakers! Supporting a working cat is the safest way to control the rodent population on your property. There are no poisons for children and pets to get into and no need to set nasty traps. They will help keep rodents away from grain and food storage areas, and you'll enjoy watching the cats as well as have the satisfaction of giving them a much-needed home!

Cats that are placed into our Working Cat Program fall under two main categories:

- Cats whose litter box habits are not consistent enough to be inside only cats and/or who have lived or spent time outside per their previous owner
- Cats who were found as strays and who may be too independent to appreciate living in a house. The majority of our Working Cats are feral cats rescued from the shelter because they do not qualify for a traditional adoption program.
- Cats who are shy/fearful of people and prefer the company of other cats and animals

### **What Will You Provide?**

- A warm, secure, dry barn or building in which the cats can live out their lives.
- The commitment and ability to keep the cats confined to a crate or other fully enclosed structure for four-five weeks to acclimate them to their new environment before release, if they will have access to outside.
- A clean litter box that is scooped and/or cleaned daily while confined.
- A constant supply of dry food and fresh water. While confined and for a short while after release, you will provide a small amount of canned food daily. We want to show them that they have a reason to stay with you and canned food provides that good reason!
- Spending time daily making verbal contact with the cats so that they become familiar with you.

### **What will TNR Riverside provide?**

- All cats will appear to be in good health
- All cats will be spayed or neutered prior to placement
- All cats will be vaccinated against rabies and FVRCP
- All cats will be ear tipped
- TNR Riverside will have the cats available for pick up or transported to you and will provide detailed instructions on safely confining, releasing and maintaining the barn cats

### **How about two cats?**

Alley Cat Allies recommends that at least two cats always be moved together. They are most likely to be successful in acclimating to their new environment. The move will be less traumatic and adjustment to their new home easier if they have the security of one or more trusted companions.

### **Why do they have to be confined for the first 4-5 weeks?**

- Cats need to be confined initially in their new home in order to familiarize themselves with their new environment, so that they will remain on the premises. **If this important step is missed, most cats will take off, never to be seen again.**
- The cat doesn't know this is his new home. Be patient and give them the full 4-5 weeks of confinement so that they can get accustomed to the sights, sounds & smells of "home".
- Some people see confinement as cruel, but a short confinement period is a very necessary part for the cat to survive, and stay around, after the confinement period is over. Not confining the cats and having them run off could mean a far worse fate for the cats.
- You should know that during the first day or two, the cats may struggle to find a way out. Most cats settle down in the crate after a day or two when they realize that no harm will befall them.

### **How are the cats confined?**

The adopter should be equipped with an extra-large dog crate or with a large exercise pen covered with mesh wire (TNR Riverside may be able to provide these supplies free of charge). These items will be returned to TNR Riverside at the end of the four to five week confinement period. The adopter must provide the cats with: a litter box, which needs to be scooped or cleaned daily; dry food and fresh water at all times; and a portion of canned food every day. It is recommended that a portion of the cage/crate be covered with a sheet. This will allow the cats to feel more protected and hidden.

Working cat set up demo can be seen here <https://youtu.be/FguyY4nbxeY>

In winter, provide thick towels or straw for bedding. Additionally, the caregiver may wish to place bales of straw around the enclosure to help maintain warmth for the confined cats. During spells of freezing weather, the caretaker must be sure to give fresh water throughout the day as the cat's water may freeze. In summer, proper ventilation is vital to prevent overheating. Cats can and do become overheated.

**DO NOT RELEASE IF IT IS RAINING or the POTENTIAL FOR RAIN** - Cats find their home by scent and rain will wash it away. Waiting one more day will not hurt. Leave the cages up for an additional five days, so the cats can get back in if they want. After the release, we hope they think of that barn as home and decide to stay.

Cats are territorial creatures. They will usually maintain a home base once their scent has been established, a continuous food source is provided, and they feel safe.

In order to adopt a Working Cat, we ask that you:

- \* Consider adopting two cats as companions.
- \* Provide an enclosed barn or other heated outdoor structure.
- \* Plan on placing the cat in a large dog crate, inside an enclosed room, for 4-5 weeks. Food, water, litter box, and bedding in this crate.
- \* **Feed wet food EVERY DAY, even twice a day for breakfast and dinner. This will help them return home!**
- \* Food and water and a litter box should be maintained daily.

Interested in a Working Cat? Contact us [TNRriverside@yahoo.com](mailto:TNRriverside@yahoo.com)  
or visit our website [www.tnrriverside.org](http://www.tnrriverside.org)

