

Did you find a kitty?

A handy guide for how (and how not) to help strays

ASSESS: AGE, HEALTH, TEMPERAMENT

Age: adult = 6+ months; kitten = 6 weeks-6 months; neonatal kitten = under 6 weeks

Health: healthy = no visible signs of significant illness or injury; good weight + coat

Temperament: tame = can be picked up/touched by any human; feral = cannot be easily touched

ADULT - HEALTHY - TAME

An adult, healthy, tame cat is likely to be an indoor/outdoor pet or a lost kitty. Let it be!

Your job: helping kitty find its people

Next steps:

- Take a picture and post on social media "Lost and Found Pets" pages (e.g. "Lost and Found Pets of Clermont County") - WITH location found.
- Put fliers around your neighborhood.
- Report a found cat to your local shelter.
- Get the kitty checked for a microchip.
- Do NOT take the kitty to a shelter or your house *unless* the cat is in a commercial or unsafe location.

ADULT - SICK/HURT - TAME

A sick or hurt cat needs to see a vet, stat!

Your job: getting kitty quick vet care

Next steps:

- Call your vet; or call the vet closest to you and ask if they can help you help a sick/hurt stray. Be able to explain the concerning illness/injury to them.
- If the vet's office isn't in a position to help, call your local shelter to see if they have resources.
- If you cannot find help with a vet or shelter, try to contain the cat in a small area in your home until you can get help. Avoid leaving a sick or injured cat alone and outside when it needs help.

KITTEN - HEALTHY/SICK - TAME

Kittens are vulnerable - get them inside!

Your job: getting kitty to a shelter or new home

Next steps:

- Call your local shelter for intake.
- If shelter is full, post a cute pic on social media and find them a home!

NEONATAL KITTENS - WHERE'S MOM?

The most important thing to figure out with bottle babies (unweaned kittens who still need to nurse on mom): is mom still around?

Your job: assessing if mom is around to care for kittens

Next steps:

- If kittens are fat; clean; quiet (not screaming for food!) - mom IS around. Leave them alone. Once they are old enough to eat on their own (5-6 weeks), get them to a shelter/home (if tame) or TNR them (if feral - kittens must be 8 weeks for surgery).
- If kittens are sickly; crying for food and mom hasn't come back in several hours; or you find a single kitten alone, contact your local shelter to take them in. If they cannot take them immediately, get Kitten Milk Replacer (KMR) at your local pet supply store and bottle feed them until you can find them help.
- **It is CRITICAL not to take in bottle-feeding kittens if mom is around - humans are not a good replacement for mom! Only step in if you're SURE they are in need and have no mom, as their chance of survival decreases without mom.**

ADULT - HEALTHY - FERAL

A feral cat is like any wild animal - not suitable to live in a home/shelter. But help reduce the feral cat population!

Your job: Trap/Neuter/Return

Next steps:

- Figure out if the kitty is fixed - a left eartip will tell you this! If yes - leave it alone!
- If kitty does not appear to be fixed, get a humane live trap (your local shelter should lend them out!).
- Find a spay/neuter clinic that does TNR (including the League) - these are often FREE!
- Get the kitty fixed, then release it back outside the next day to live its merry life!

ADULT/KITTEN - SICK - FERAL

A feral hurt/sick kitty also needs medical attention - but it's a little more complicated when you can't catch them!

Your job: catching kitty to get quick vet care

Next steps:

- Set a humane live trap to catch the kitty ASAP.
- Contact your local vet or shelter to see if they can help - be able to describe the kitty's illness or injury.
- Understand that feral cats can't easily be held for recovery for illness/injury - so care might look different for them. A vet can assess whether it's significant enough to require care, and whether that care can be done without a lengthy indoor recovery.

KITTEN - HEALTHY - NOT TAME

Kittens over 8 weeks old are very difficult to socialize to humans. Shelters do not have the resources for this.

Your job: TNR kittens who are 8+ weeks

Next steps:

- Call your local shelter for TNR services (see above).