

# CITY OF GUTHRIE, OKLAHOMA

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## ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE ADDING A NEW SECTION TO THE GUTHRIE MUNICIPAL CODE ESTABLISHING A TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN (TNR) PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITY CATS; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS, PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, GUIDELINES FOR CAREGIVERS, AND PROTECTIONS FOR EAR-TIPPED CATS; PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT; AND DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

### SECTION 1. PURPOSE

The City of Guthrie recognizes that Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is the most humane and effective method for managing and reducing the community cat population. This ordinance provides a legal framework for TNR and protects the rights of caregivers and ear-tipped cats.

### SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS

Community Cat – A free-roaming cat, with no identifiable owner, that may be feral or socialized and is cared for by one or more residents.

TNR Program – A process where community cats are humanely trapped, sterilized, vaccinated against rabies, ear-tipped, and returned to their original outdoor location.

Ear-Tip – The removal of the distal one-quarter of a cat's left ear while the cat is under anesthesia, indicating sterilization and rabies vaccination.

Caregiver – Any individual or organization, including a TNR program, that provides food, shelter, or medical care to community cats and seeks to manage them through TNR.

### SECTION 3. COMMUNITY CAT PROGRAM AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### A. Legal Activity

- Participation in a TNR program, including the trapping, sterilization, vaccination, ear-tipping, and return of community cats, is legal and encouraged within the City of Guthrie.

#### B. Caretaker Guidelines

- Community cat caregivers are permitted to provide food, water, and shelter to community cats.
  1. Caregivers must make reasonable efforts to:
    - a. Have cats sterilized and vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian.
    - b. Return cats to their original location unless it is demonstrably unsafe.

- c. Maintain a clean feeding area and minimize nuisance behavior.

#### C. Veterinary Requirement

- All cats participating in TNR must be spayed/neutered, rabies vaccinated, and ear-tipped.

### **SECTION 4. PROTECTIONS FOR EAR-TIPPED CATS**

#### A. Return Requirement

Ear-tipped cats shall be returned to their original location after recovery unless:

- Veterinary care is still required,
- The site is demonstrably unsafe, or
- A property owner provides written objection with evidence of ongoing nuisance or threat.

#### B. Complaint Process

- If a citizen formally objects to the return of an ear-tipped cat:
  1. Guthrie Animal Welfare or the TNR organization shall evaluate the complaint.
  2. If the site is deemed unsafe or inappropriate, the cat may be relocated following proper re-acclimation protocols.

### **SECTION 5. ENFORCEMENT AND LIMITATIONS**

- Ear-tipped cats are not considered strays and are exempt from the normal holding period at animal shelters.
- Animal Welfare Officers may not impound or remove ear-tipped cats solely for roaming unless injured or causing harm.
- Community cat caregivers shall not be deemed owners under the city's general animal control ordinances.

### **SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY**

If any part of this ordinance is held to be invalid or unconstitutional, it shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions.

### **SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon approval and publication as required by law.