To RTF or Not RTF?

(See policy for cats < 4 months of age)

Best Friends | SAVE THEM ALL

Is the Cat a Stray?

Process Check: Did we get all the information we need to allow us to consider all positive outcomes on the intake form?

→ **NO** →

Owner Surrender

Process Check: Are we sure the cat is truly owned by this person and not an outdoor community cat for which the person cares? It is not uncommon for residents to "surrender" community cats for whom they care when they begin to feel overwhelmed by the kittens. Often, once they are educated on TNR and offered resources, they will agree to continue to care for the cats rather than request intake.

Abandoned by Owner

Process Check: Was the cat abandoned inside? Was the cat abandoned at a location with which he is unfamiliar? Sometimes cats can be labeled as "abandoned" when new people occupy a property and see a cat hanging out on the property. They may assume the cat was abandoned when in fact he might be a community cat who is cared for by other residents.

→ **Eligible for Adoption, Transfer, Foster, possibly Working Cat/Barn home**

Working cat/barn programs are best suited for feral, fractious, shy cats that can't be RTF'd or adopted. This population has very few alternative options and barn homes tend to be scarce.

YES ↓

Is the Cat Healthy?

→ **NO** → **Could the health issue be addressed and the cat successfully recover?**

→ **NO** → **Eligible for Adoption, Transfer, Foster, Hospice Foster, euthanasia if veterinarian deems irremediably suffering**

YES ↓

YES ↓ (from health recover)

Has the cat been successfully living outdoors?

If the cat is of healthy body weight and no intake notes prove otherwise, we can assume the stray cat has been successfully living outdoors.

→ **NO** → **Eligible for Adoption, Transfer, Foster, Barn/Working Cat Program**

← **YES** ← **Would returning the cat to her outdoor home post-recovery pose high risk to the cat's future health and safety?**

Process Check: If we are concerned there is a real risk to returning this cat to her outdoor home, have we clearly documented what that risk is? Many times, potential future health issues like URI and abscesses are remedied by TNR.

YES ↓

Eligible for RTF, Adoption, Transfer, Foster

← **NO** ← (from high risk question)

↓

Is the cat friendly and social in the shelter environment (ensuring appropriate acclimation efforts are undertaken)?

→ **NO** → **RTF**

YES ↓

Taking into account current trends (seasonal, recent hoarding bust, etc.) and our current shelter population, is there a high likelihood of an adoption/transfer outcome for this cat without putting another life at risk?

Process Check: If you are partnering with others on a community-wide basis, you may want to ask yourself this same question, taking the larger community system into account. For example, if you choose to RTF a healthy, friendly cat back to his outdoor home, that may allow you to transfer in a cat at high risk of euthanasia from one of your community partners.

→ **NO** → **RTF**

YES ↓

Adoption, Foster, Transfer