

## Keeping and Control of Cats Local Law - City responses July 2023

Question	Response
<p><b>What can the City do to restrict free roaming cats?</b></p>	<p>At this time, in most places in the City, there are no curfew or containment requirements for cats. Certain reserves in the City have been designated as cat prohibited areas. Cats in these locations may be impounded and their owners fined.</p> <p>The City also encourages cat owners to keep their cats indoors and provides information to residents that helps deter cats from entering their property.</p> <p>When a cat is impounded by the City, one of the following scenarios will take place:</p> <p>If the cat does not comply with certain provisions of the Cat Act 2011 or the Keeping and Control of Cats Local Law 1999, the City will hold the cat at our Cat Management Facility and contact the owner (where possible) to advise where collection can be made. Please note that fees and penalties will apply prior to the cat being released.</p> <p>If the cat does not comply with the Cat Act 2011 at all (including if it is not registered, microchipped, sterilised, or wearing a collar), it will be taken to the Cat Management Facility and may be rehomed if an owner is not identifiable.</p> <p>If the cat is registered, microchipped, sterilised, wearing a collar, and not within a cat prohibited area, the City will release the cat.</p> <p>To avoid the above scenarios, cat owners are encouraged to practice responsible cat ownership and take active measures to ensure their cat is registered and sufficiently contained on their own property wherever possible.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Is it legal for me to capture and euthanise a cat that has entered my home?</b></li> <li>2. <b>Who is responsible for damage caused to my property by a roaming cat?</b></li> </ol>	<p>You are only allowed to trap an unowned cat on your own private property. Cruelty to animals is illegal, so you can't set traps and leave them.</p> <p>Section 19 of the Animal Welfare Act 2022 makes animal cruelty an offence which carries a minimum penalty of \$2000 fine and a maximum penalty of a \$50,000 fine and imprisonment for 5 years.</p> <p>If an unowned cat (not wearing a collar or tag) wanders onto your property without permission more than once, it can be seized by the owner of the property or a Ranger and surrendered to a cat management facility.</p>
<p><b>Why doesn't the City capture a roaming cat and issue an infringement to the cat owner?</b></p>	<p>It is not illegal for cats to wander onto private property under current state legislation and City of Stirling local laws.</p> <p>If you are experiencing issues with cats coming onto your property, and you know the owner, let them know of your concerns. You can also apply deterrent measures to try to discourage the cat from entering your property.</p>

	Where these actions have been taken but haven't resolved the issue you can report the matter to the City via our online enquiries for by contacting us on (08) 9205 8555.
<b>How restrictive is a blanket cat containment law?</b>	Containment means ensuring a pet cat is restricted from roaming beyond your property. They can still have time outdoors in cat runs or in backyards that have appropriate fencing or netting that keep a cat from escaping.
<b>What constitutes a cat enclosed area?</b>	A cat enclosure is a suitably fenced or enclosed area and may include buildings or structures (other than fences) which effectively contain your cat. Confining your cat indoors will also meet this requirement.
<b>When will the City trap cats?</b>	Using trained and appropriately licensed professionals, the City traps cats in cat prohibited areas. In exceptional circumstances, the City will arrange trapping to be conducted in other public areas and on private properties to address unowned and abandoned cat issues.
<b>Can we report cat nuisance outside of cat prohibited areas?</b>	<p>Where residents regularly observe nuisance cat behaviour it is generally best to have a neighbourly chat with their owner (if known) and let them know what their cat is doing. It's often the case that the owner doesn't even know their cat is creating a problem and the matter can be resolved simply and amicably by talking about the issue.</p> <p>If this approach doesn't have the desired result, residents may wish to try natural deterrents. Scattering the following natural materials in your yard where the cat is entering, or roaming might deter the cat from returning. If you have pets of your own, it is important to consider whether this will impact them too and if these will be a suitable solution for your home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• citrus peels (Lemon, Lime, Orange, Mandarin, etc)</li> <li>• coffee grounds</li> <li>• oil of lavender</li> <li>• garlic</li> <li>• cinnamon</li> <li>• lemongrass</li> <li>• eucalyptus</li> <li>• citronella</li> <li>• vinegar (sprayed on specific areas).</li> </ul> <p>There is also a selection of humane commercial cat deterrent solutions available for purchase from online and in-store retailers which can be set up in your own yard.</p> <p>Where the above actions have been taken but haven't resolved the issue you can report the matter to the City via our online enquiries for by contacting us on (08) 9205 8555.</p>
<b>If dogs aren't allowed to roam, why are cats allowed to roam?</b>	<p>Cats are not managed by the same laws as dogs - they do not need to be confined to properties and they aren't required to be held by a leash.</p> <p>Dogs and cats are different creatures with distinct physiologies and behaviours. The risks associated with a larger, more aggressive animal (like a dog) are typically greater than those associated with a smaller,</p>

	<p>more apprehensive animal (like a cat) - particularly for human interaction and with traffic.</p>
<p><b>Is there a limit on how many cats a person can own and why?</b></p>	<p>A limit on the number of cats aims to keep pets safe and healthy, and reduce the impact cats have on our neighbourhood and natural areas.</p>
<p><b>Why aren't cat owners required to be register their cats and follow relevant signs?</b></p>	<p>The Cat Act 2011 (the Act) requires the identification, registration and sterilisation of domestic cats, and gives local governments the power to administer and enforce the legislation. The legislation enables better management of the unwanted impacts of cats on the community and the environment, as well as encourages responsible cat ownership.</p> <p>Microchipping and registration will also assist in the return of your cat if it becomes lost.</p> <p>All cats that have reached six months of age are required to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• microchipped</li> <li>• sterilised</li> <li>• registered with the relevant local government.</li> </ul> <p>Your cat will be required to wear a registration tag to ensure they can be easily identified and returned to you if they become lost.</p>
<p><b>Why aren't cat owners held accountable for their cat's behaviour?</b></p>	<p>All cat owners have a responsibility to their cat, their community, and the environment.</p> <p>The Cat Act 2011 requires the identification, registration and sterilisation of domestic cats, and gives local governments the power to administer and enforce the legislation.</p>
<p><b>Why don't all Councils have the same cat laws?</b></p>	<p>The City of Stirling has a number of cat prohibited areas in which cats are not permitted.</p> <p>Local laws are representative of the unique needs and preferences of their residents and will vary between different local governments.</p> <p>The cat local law review will help ensure the laws are relevant, effective, and up to date with current legislative requirements.</p>