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## A. Welcome

*Welcome to Feral Affairs Network, commonly known as FAN! We're thrilled to have you join us!*

*This handbook is designed to help you understand who we are, what we do, and how you fit into our mission. It's not just an introduction – it's a resource you can return to when you need guidance and information.*

*This is just the beginning. We will be adding content over time – and we welcome your suggestions. We are also developing handbooks for each specialty within FAN, including fostering, trapping, and events.*

*We also encourage you to invite friends, family, and neighbors to volunteer or donate. Together, we can make a bigger impact and improve the lives of community cats across Hampton Roads.*

***Welcome to Team FAN!***

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaida Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Vaida Moore**  
**Founder & President**

## B. Important Notices

### This Is Not a Contract

*The purpose of this Handbook is to provide volunteers with general information and guidelines. **This is not a legal contract**, and your volunteer status with Feral Affairs Network may be terminated or resigned from at any time.*

### Important Safety Requirements

Working with animals carries a risk of personal injury and property damage, whether you are fostering, feeding a colony, trapping, or transporting cats; you accept this risk and agree to follow all listed safety procedures to minimize this risk. You also agree to carry your own medical and property insurance to protect you against risk.

1. Never attempt to touch a conscious feral/stray cat. Do not stick fingers into traps or carriers containing cats. Both cats and kittens may bite.
2. Volunteers who are trained and authorized to handle cats must wear protective gloves at all times when handling stray or feral cats.
3. Ensure cats are secured in a carrier or cage at all times during transport. Don't allow any cat to roam free in a vehicle.
4. Ensure that you understand the operation of any equipment used during trapping and transport to avoid injury to yourself or animals.
5. Do not open traps or carriers during transport. A cat can easily escape into your car or outside and get lost or killed.
6. Transport cats directly to their destination. Never leave any animals in an enclosed vehicle alone.
7. Report all scratches, bites, and escapes to a member of FAN's Leadership Team first and immediately after they happen. If you should be bitten by a cat (or any animal caught in the trap), the bite should be examined by a doctor within 24 hours.
8. FAN cats are indoor-only and must be kept in a heated and cooled portion of your home at all times, except during transport.
9. If additional training or information is needed, seek it from a member of FAN's Leadership Team or their designated assignees.

## C. Getting Started

1. **Read this Handbook fully.**
2. **Contact your assigned mentor and the FAN Leadership Team member for your volunteer area.**

Details should be in your welcome email or onboarding call. Write them here for quick reference:

- Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_
- Leadership Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

If unsure, reach out to one of our FAN ambassadors:

- Karen Ida: 757-537-6478/cell
  - Joan Gray, 540-717-5303/cell
  - Louise Dawkins, 757-572-7474/cell
3. **Attend an orientation meeting** and connect with other volunteers through our online community and activities.
  4. **Try different roles:** sanctuary work, PetSmart events, transport, trapping, fostering, colony feeding – to meet fellow volunteers and better understand FAN's operations.
  5. **SignUp.com:** You should be added for event notifications and sign-ups. Check your email for upcoming events.
  6. **Facebook Messenger:** Most communication currently happens here. You should have friend requests from Karen Ida or Cleriece Whitehill. If not, send a friend request to *Cleriece Whitehill*.
  7. **Transition to New Tools:** Over the next few months, we'll begin using Neon One, SharePoint, and Microsoft Teams to improve communication and make volunteering easier. These will eventually replace Messenger and SignUp.
  8. **Keep a journal** of what you learn – your questions and experiences will help us improve documentation for new volunteers.

## D. About FAN

### Who We Are

FAN is a volunteer-led cat rescue organization dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of free-roaming cats – often called community or feral cats – primarily on the Southside of Hampton Roads in Southeastern Virginia. While we provide guidance and assistance to individuals with free-roaming cats throughout the region, the majority of our direct trapping occurs in Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Chesapeake.

Our mission is to reduce overpopulation and promote humane care by:

- **Sterilizing cats** to prevent unwanted litters
- **Rehoming friendly cats and kittens** into loving homes
- **Providing training and support** for colony caretakers
- **Educating the public and advocating** for community cat welfare

As a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, FAN relies almost entirely on donations to fund our work. We have no endowment and receive only a limited number of grants. Instead, we depend on the generosity of individuals in our community and the dedication of our volunteers to sustain our programs and make a lasting impact.

FAN holds the Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of nonprofit transparency recognition awarded by Candid (formerly GuideStar). It signals that a nonprofit publicly shares detailed goals, strategies, metrics, and board demographics—placing FAN among the most transparent organizations in the U.S.

### What We Do

FAN works to reduce the number of community cats living on the streets and to prevent stray kittens and cats from entering municipal shelters.

Unlike many local cat rescues, FAN's core focus is **Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)** – a proven, humane method of controlling feral cat populations by returning sterilized cats to their home colonies.

In addition to TNR, we run programs that support **fostering and adoption** for the friendly cats we encounter, including lost or abandoned strays.

We also strive to educate the public about responsible cat ownership, the importance of caregiving for free-roaming cats, and the importance of TNR to reduce overpopulation and improve community cat welfare.

While FAN has grown significantly in recent years, the demand for our help continues to outpace our resources, making fundraising critical to our mission.

Growth has come with challenges. As a volunteer-led organization, we haven't yet had the time to develop the comprehensive written policies and procedures that larger organizations maintain. As we work toward creating standardized processes, **we need your support to continue making a difference.**

## By the Numbers

Each year, FAN assists **more than 1,000 cats**, primarily in Norfolk, through direct trapping and by providing spay/neuter assistance to community members who manage feral colonies. We foster hundreds of cats and find loving forever homes for about 250 cats per year.

FAN spends nearly **\$25,000 every month** caring for cats. Here's how that breaks down:

- **75%** – Spay/neuter and other veterinary care
- **24.6%** – Food, supplies, and medicine
- **0.004%** – Insurance, bank fees, annual filings, and membership in the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies

Spay / neuter and vaccines costs between \$95 and \$200 per cat, not including any medical care that a cat may need. Cats in foster care will require even more expenses. While we collect adoption fees of \$150 to \$200 per cat or kitten, our total cost of care through adoption averages run as high as \$500 per cat.

Each month, the number of cats we can care for depends entirely on the donations we receive and the number of fosters and other active volunteers we have. Every additional gift directly translates into more cats spayed or neutered, more lives saved, and more cats getting the second chance they deserve.

We are working to expand sources of future funding, including grants and legacy bequests, but individual donations remain our largest source of funding. *We hope you will consider donating \$10 or \$20 a month and will encourage your friends and family to donate.*

## Annual Cat Statistics

Public access to key data is vital to the success of our FAN's TNR organization. Our numbers tell where we've been, where we are, and where we are going. Our numbers are posted monthly and annually on our website, in accordance with our guiding principle of Transparency:

<https://www.feralaffairs.org/annual-cat-statistics/>

## Mission

Our mission is to reduce the suffering and prevent euthanasia of community cats through Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) initiatives and foster/adoption program throughout Hampton Roads.

## Vision

To save and maintain healthy community cats throughout Hampton Roads and to create a strong caretaker network to support and care for them, ultimately reducing the region's population of feral cats, estimated at 100,000 or more.

## Food for Thought

FAN supports the [Food for Thought Campaign](#). We don't serve animal-derived products at our functions or events, including our fundraising efforts. If you are interested in learning more about living a vegan lifestyle, please visit [The Vegan Society](#).

## Guiding Principles

### ***Collaboration***

We believe that the best solutions emerge when people bring their unique strengths, ideas, and experiences to the table. By fostering a culture of open communications, mutual respect, and shared ownership, we strive to create an environment where innovation thrives and everyone has a voice.

This means that:

1. We work together with community partners, including local shelters, other rescues and caretakers, to achieve shared goals.
2. We invite input early and often because we understand that the best ideas are rarely solo efforts.
3. We respect each person's expertise and lived experience.
4. When a challenge arises, we work together to listen, adapt, and find a solution.
5. We share credit generously and celebrate collective wins, not just individual achievements.
6. We create space for honest dialogue, even when it's uncomfortable, because growth depends on trust.
7. We check in, follow up, and follow through, because collaboration requires dependability and accountability.
8. We learn from each other and share our own knowledge freely and generously both with other members of our team and with other members of the rescue community.

### ***Integrity***

We act with honesty, fairness, and consistency in everything we do, whether working with members of the public, medical and rescue partners, or each other. We honor our commitments, own our mistakes, and make decisions that reflect our values, not just our interests. By doing this, we build trust, foster respect, and create a culture where people feel safe, valued, and proud to contribute.

This means that:

1. We choose what's right over what's easy - for example, completing TNR of the entire colony.
2. We admit errors, learn from them, and take corrective action.
3. We apply rules and standards fairly and evenly.
4. We use resources efficiently and strive to get the most value out of every dollar spent.

### ***Transparency***

We believe that open communications and access to information empower our volunteers, strengthen accountability, and build confidence among all stakeholders. We strive to share information freely, making decisions visible, and fostering an environment where people feel informed, included, and empowered.

This means that:

1. We share information openly and clearly.
2. We encourage questions, feedback, and discussion at all levels.
3. We explain the reason behind policies, changes, and priorities.
4. We share updates, data, and plans in ways that are easy to find and understand.
5. We are upfront about challenges, mistakes, risks, or setbacks - and we plan to address them.
6. We provide medical records to adopters.
7. We publish data on the number of cats helped and our overall save rate.

## E. Leadership Team

- **Vaida Moore - Founder & President**  
(757) 779-9777  
[vaida@feralaffairs.org](mailto:vaida@feralaffairs.org)

In addition to overall responsibility within the organization, Vaida is heavily involved in trapping, overseeing vaccine clinics, and quality control.

- **Sheila Hall - Vice President, Treasurer, Director of Adoptions**  
(404) 931-4395  
[sheila@fancats.org](mailto:sheila@fancats.org)

Sheila oversees FAN's foster and adoption program and coordinates the majority of medical care for cats in FAN's custody.

- **Michelle Keith - Director of TNR Operations**  
(757) 831-6279  
[michellek@feralaffairs.org](mailto:michellek@feralaffairs.org)

In addition to providing insights to help caretakers successfully trap cats, Michelle:

- Coordinates spay/neuter appointments for TNR
- Keeps Airtable records updated and accurate
- Registers microchips
- Adds events to SignUp.com
- Tracks FAN's monthly intake and outcome statistics for yearly reporting to the state.

- **Cleriece Whitehill - Secretary, Director of Community Outreach**  
(757) 377-6189  
[cleriece@fancats.org](mailto:cleriece@fancats.org)

In addition to serving as FAN's corporate secretary, Cleriece:

- Operates FAN's Sanctuary and feral recovery center
- Works with community members who need assistance trapping cats on their own properties providing education, loaning equipment, and making them aware of affordable spay and neuter options.

Cleriece is available to do presentations about FAN to community groups such as civic leagues and other organizations.

- **Chandler Scarborough - Director of Development**  
(757) 337-4949/cell  
[chandler@fancats.org](mailto:chandler@fancats.org)

Chandler is involved with a variety of areas, including:

- Fundraising, donor relations, and grant applications
- Planning and technology
- Volunteer coordination and training
- 

In addition to the areas listed above, each member of the Leadership Team is also an active foster, colony caretaker, and more.

## F. Our Brand

In December 2024, we introduced an additional brand, FAN Cats, to support our adoption program as well as our fundraising and sponsorship efforts. FAN Cats builds on the strong recognition of the FAN name while offering a warmer, more approachable identity that resonates with adopters, donors, and sponsors.



## G. About TNR

**Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)** is a humane method of managing community cat populations by trapping cats, spaying or neutering them, vaccinating, and then returning them to their original location. This approach prevents reproduction, improves cat health, and reduces overpopulation.

TNR is the foundation of FAN’s work. Unlike shelters or many rescues, FAN focuses on free-roaming cats—both stray and feral.

Feral cats originate from abandoned or lost domestic cats. When unaltered, they reproduce rapidly, worsening overpopulation. Through TNR, cats are trapped, spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and returned to their outdoor homes. This humane approach improves their health, stops nuisance behaviors like fighting and spraying, and prevents future litters—reducing suffering over time.

TNR is the ethical and cost-effective alternative to euthanasia for feral cats that shelters cannot accept. It’s a win-win:

- Reduces undesirable behaviors in neighborhoods
- Helps maintain wildlife balance
- Gradually decreases outdoor cat populations

## H. FAN’s Veterinary Technicians

FAN is fortunate to have several veterinary technicians who volunteer their time to help care for FAN cats. All care provided by them must first be approved by a member of FAN’s Leadership Team. FAN’s veterinary technicians are not licensed to provide services to the public; their work is strictly limited to FAN cats under FAN’s supervision. Volunteers should **never refer members of the public directly to a FAN veterinary technician**, as doing so can lead to confusion and delayed care for cats.

## I. Leaving FAN

You may resign from your volunteer role at any time. Advance notice is not required but is appreciated to help us cover your responsibilities.

If you leave for any reason, we encourage you to share feedback with a member of the Leadership Team. Your insights help us improve. While these discussions are optional, they are valuable for identifying areas of growth.

## J. Community Cats: Stray, Feral, Under Socialized

**Community Cat:** An umbrella term for free-roaming cats, including both strays and ferals, living in a shared outdoor environment.

**Stray Cat:** A domestic cat that has been lost or abandoned. Strays are usually socialized to humans and may seek human food, shelter, or attention from people.

**Feral Cat:** A cat born and raised without human contact or socialization. Feral cats are typically fearful of people and live outdoors. Completely unsocialized to humans, often avoids contact, and cannot adapt easily to indoor life.

**Under-Socialized:** Has had limited human interaction—may be shy or fearful but can sometimes be adapted to life around humans with enough time, patience, and care.

## K. Commonly Used Terms and Acronyms

**Catnip Cat Café** - a privately owned business in Norfolk that partners with FAN to showcase adoptable cats and kittens

**CHS** - a low-cost spay/neuter clinic operated by the Chesapeake Humane Society

**Dog & Cat** - Dog and Cat Hospital in the Ghent section of Norfolk; frequently used for urgent medical care - especially for feral and fractious cats

**Hope Springs** - Hope Springs Veterinary Hospital at Sajo Farm, where FAN has standing appointments every Tuesday and Thursday, except holidays.

**FTS** - Fixin' to Save - a low-cost spay/neuter clinic located operated by the Gloucester-Matthews Humane Society

**Kittenpalooza** - aka Kitten Weekend, a monthly adoption event at Catnip Cate Café for kittens

**NACC** - Norfolk Animal Care Center, a shelter operated by the city of Norfolk

**NMCT** - No More Chasin' Tails - a low-cost spay/neuter clinic located in Newport News

**NSPCA** - A private, nonprofit shelter located in Norfolk

**VBACAC** - Virginia Beach Animal Care and Adoption Center, a shelter operated by the city of Virginia Beach

**VBSPCA** - private, nonprofit shelter located in Virginia Beach

**TNR** - Trap-Neuter-Return, the sterilization of community cats

**The Garage** - Also referred to as the Recovery Center and the Sanctuary, “the garage” is a central drop-off and pick up location for FAN supplies and feral cats en route to spay/neuter appointments; a sanctuary for older, less adoptable cats in FAN’s care; and holding space for feral cats recovering from spay/neuter surgery prior to their return to their colony.

## L. Quick Facts

### Fundraising Disclaimer

FAN is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We are registered with the state of Virginia to solicit donations. All donations are tax deductible and applied first to any specific project you designate. Funds received in excess of Additional funds raised from earmarked donations, if any, help us save more cats and kittens.

### Official Name & DBA

Feral Affairs Network, also operating as FAN Cats

### Addresses

- **Physical:** 9506-B 13th Bay St, Norfolk 23518
- **Mailing:** c/o Cleriece Whitehill, 222 W. 21st St, Suite F-Box 301, Norfolk, VA 23517

*Checks payable to “Feral Affairs Network” and sent to mailing address.*

### Phone Number

757-529-2929 [BETA] FAN Foster Helpline

### Email

[feralaffairsnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:feralaffairsnetwork@gmail.com)

[leadership@feralaffairs.org](mailto:leadership@feralaffairs.org)

### Website

[www.feralaffairs.org](http://www.feralaffairs.org)

### Social

- Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/FeralAffairsNetwork>
- Instagram:  
<https://www.instagram.com/feralaffairs>
- Nextdoor:  
<https://nextdoor.com/pages/feral-affairs-network-norfolk-va/>

### Donations

- PayPal, Debit or Credit Card:  
<https://bit.ly/paypalFAN>
- Venmo:  
<https://venmo.com/u/feralaffairsnetwork>
- Candid/GuideStar:  
<https://www.guidestar.org/profile/81-4251598>

### Federal Tax ID & Credit Reporting

- Employer Identification Number (EIN): 81-4251598
- Dun & Bradstreet D-U-N-S® Number (DUNS): 052170014
- Founding date & IRS determination date: October 25, 2016

### Frequently Asked Questions

Learn about adoption, TNR, spay/neuter clinics, and cat health:

<https://feralaffairs.org/faq>

As we migrate to SharePoint, we will be developing a new Knowledge Base to organize volunteer questions.

Or send an email to: [volunteer-questions@fancats.org](mailto:volunteer-questions@fancats.org)

## M. Conduct & FAN's Policy

### Conduct Policies

Volunteers are asked to please conduct themselves in a polite, patient, and professional manner, in person, and online. We work to include diversity, in all ways, and acceptance of others. Your behavior, and your posts, reflect back onto FAN. Please work with other volunteers, rescue groups, and individuals, in the same manner.

## N. Acknowledgement

1. *I have read the entire volunteer handbook and understand my responsibilities related to it.*
2. *I have had the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any unclear aspects of the handbook.*
3. *I agree to abide by FAN's principles.*
4. *I agree to report any violations of the handbook and to cooperate in any investigations of violations of the handbook.*

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Signature

Volunteer's Name

Date