

**TOWNSHIP OF SHREWSBURY  
O R D I N A N C E # 2024-02**

**ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE CONTROL OF FERAL CATS IN THE  
TOWNSHIP OF SHREWSBURY, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH AND STATE OF  
NEW JERSEY**

**WHEREAS** the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Shrewsbury are aware of problems in the Township caused by an increasing feral cat population; and

**WHEREAS** there are no facilities in the Township of Shrewsbury (“Township”) to address issues created by feral cats; and

**WHEREAS** programs for the managed care of feral cat colonies have proven to be effective in reducing the number of feral cats and is more humane than trapping and euthanizing; and

**WHEREAS** the Mayor and Township Committee deem it in the public interest to amend the Ordinances in order to permit implementation of a Community Cat Program in Shrewsbury Township for purposes of reducing the population of feral and free- roaming cats, benefitting the public health and improving the quality of life for residents, and insuring the humane treatment of community cats; and

**WHEREAS** this Ordinance was amended in 2017 for the managed care of feral cat colonies with reference to the necessity of registration of feral cat colonies, a prior Ordinance requiring the licensing and controlling of cats was rescinded on September 20, 2022, and the two actions need to be distinguished.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED**, by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Shrewsbury, County of Monmouth and

State of New Jersey that the existing Ordinances concerning the licensing and controlling of cats in Shrewsbury Township shall be amended and supplemented as follows:

Section 1. Definitions.

- A. Cat(s); means every cat, regardless of sex or age.
- B. Feral Cat(s) or Community Cat(s); means a cat, regardless of sex or age, that is unowned, free roaming and not interactive with humans.
- C. Feral Cat Colony; means a group of feral cats that have been trapped, neutered or spayed and released back into the area from which they were taken.

- D. Feral Cat Colony Caretaker; means a person who has registered the colony with the Township of Shrewsbury or any delegated animal control association, and who provides sustenance, water and care for a feral cat colony.
- E. Adult Cat(s); means any cat over the age of four (4) months.
- F. Nuisance Cat(s); means any cat that unreasonably annoys humans, endangers the life or health of other animals or persons, or substantially interferes with the rights of citizens, other than their owners, to enjoyment of life or property.
- G. Owner; means every person having the right of property and a cat(s), or who keeps or harbors a cat(s), or who has a cat(s) in his/her care or who acts as a custodian of a cat(s), or who permits a cat(s) to remain in or about the premises occupied by him/her.

## Section 2. Limitations on Keeping Cat(s).

- A. No owner of any cat(s) shall allow the animal to freely roam out of doors; unless it has been spayed or neutered. The owner of each spayed or neutered cat(s) shall keep a record for each cat(s) from a duly licensed veterinarian containing a description of the cat(s), the name of the owner and the date in which the spaying or neutering took place. Any cat(s) allowed to roam out of doors shall be required to wear a collar; designed to release the cat(s) should it become entangled or trapped by the collar, containing the owner's identification information and proof of current rabies vaccination. It shall be unlawful for any person to own, keep, hold, board or harbor more than five (5) adult cats that are allowed to freely roam out of doors. An adult cat is described as a cat over the age of four (4) months.
- B. The limitation on the number of cats owned, kept, held or harbored shall not apply to caretakers of feral cat colonies that have registered such colonies with the Township. Registration shall include the name and address of the caretaker(s), animal rescue group, if any, that they are affiliated with, and the location of the colony. A feral cat colony may be registered when the volunteer caretaker and Shrewsbury Township can assure that:
  - 1. Regular feeding of the colony will be maintained throughout the year;
  - 2. Adult cats and kittens over eight (8) weeks of age that can be captured, will be neutered or spayed and vaccinated against rabies. A three-year rabies vaccine will be administered whenever feasible;
  - 3. Every attempt will be made to remove kittens from the colony before they reach the age of eight (8) weeks for domestication and placement;
  - 4. Sick or injured cats will be removed from the colony for immediate veterinarian care or humane euthanasia;

5. Cats will be earmarked for recognition of members of a registered feral cat colony; and
  6. Records of sterilization, vaccination and animal identification can be provided to Shrewsbury Township or its delegated animal control agency, if any, upon request.
- C. The breeding of cats for financial gain shall be prohibited.
- D. ***It is acknowledged that the Township of Shrewsbury no longer has a licensing requirement for cats in general, and that registration of feral cat colonies is separate and distinct from any general requirement of licensing, which no longer exists in Shrewsbury Township, and only applies to feral cat colonies to satisfy the conditions of this Ordinance.***

### Section 3. Nuisance Cats.

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person to permit any cat(s) they own, keep, hold, board or harbor to:
1. Damage the property of anyone other than its owner;
  2. Enter the property of anyone other than its owner and kill or maim domestic animals or wildlife;
  3. Excessively make disturbing noises, including, but not limited to, continued and repeated caterwauling, howling, whining, or other utterances causing unreasonable annoyance, disturbance or discomfort to neighbors or others;
  4. Foul the air with odor and thereby cause unreasonable annoyance or discomfort to neighbors or others near to the premises where the cat(s) is kept or harbored;
  5. Cause unsanitary conditions in enclosures or surroundings where the cat(s) is kept or harbored; and
  6. Be offensive or dangerous to public health, safety and welfare by virtue of number and/or types of cat(s) contained.

### Section 4. Trapping of Nuisance Cat(s).

- A. The owner of property in which a feral nuisance cat(s) is present may request a live trap from any local animal control agency, which trap and remove the nuisance cat(s). The live trap must be inspected at a minimum of once every twelve (12) hours by the person who requested the trap, and animal control agency providing such trap, or the Township Animal Control Officer contacted immediately upon the trapping of the cat(s). At no time may a trapped animal remain in a live trap more than six (6) hours, and the trapped animal may not be left in an inhuman condition or position such as adverse weather conditions or where it cannot defend itself from other dangerous animals. The traps will not be placed when the Animal Control Officer of the Township will be unavailable to pick it up the next day; i.e. weekends, holidays and when the Township Animal Control Officer will be off duty.

Section 5. Trapping of Healthy Community Cats.

- A. Healthy community cats that have been trapped by animal services, in accordance with this Section and may be identified as either being “on the property of the owner” or where the owner can be identified and not strayed (off the property of the owner) shall be immediately returned to the location and owner at which they are found, released to the caregiver or adopted. Prior to being returned to the owner and its location at which it was found or released to a caregiver, healthy community cats may be sterilized, spayed or neutered, and ear tipped while under anesthesia by a licensed veterinarian and vaccinated for rabies.
- B. Notwithstanding the foregoing, whenever such a cat is visibly injured or diseased and appears to be suffering, and it reasonably appears that such cat cannot be expeditiously cured and returned to an owner, then animal services, acting in good faith and upon reasonable belief, may either transfer the cat to an accepting humane society or humanely euthanize the cat upon the advice of, and by a licensed veterinarian.

Section 6. Penalties.

Any person, firm, corporation, unincorporated association, group, committee or association violating any provision in this Ordinance shall, upon conviction, be subject to a fine not exceeding \$2,500.00, a term of imprisonment not exceeding 90 days or a period of community service not exceeding 90 days, or any combination thereof.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED AND ENACTED**, that this Ordinance shall take effective immediately upon final adoption and publication in the manner prescribed by law.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED AND ENACTED**, that all Ordinances or parts of Ordinances that are inconsistent herewith are repealed, but only to the extent of such inconsistency.

First Reading/Introduction: April 9, 2024

Second Reading/Public Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

Adoption: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
KATRINA THORNTON, Acting Municipal Clerk

APPROVE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lester Jennings, Mayor