

**TOWNSHIP OF PLAINS  
LUZERNE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

**ORDINANCE NO. 1 2025**

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**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PLAINS, LUZERNE COUNTY,  
PENNSYLVANIA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONTROLLING; FEEDING; TRAPPING,  
NEUTERING AND RELEASING (TNR) STRAY FERAL CATS; AND INSTITUTING  
VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE HEALTH  
SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PLAINS RESIDENTS AND  
LANDOWNERS**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Plains Board of Commissioners adopts this Ordinance for the purpose of promoting the public health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Township of Plains (hereinafter referred to as the “Township”) and their properties by regulating and restricting activities of cats and owners of cats within the Township; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Board may appropriate monies to foster, encourage and assist the operation of humane societies; animal control centers and non-profit groups whose purpose is to control the feral cat population by trapping, neutering and releasing (NR) stray cats;

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED OR ENACTED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Plains, County of Luzerne and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as follows:

**SECTION I. TITLE**

This Ordinance shall be known as the “Township of Plains Cat Control Ordinance” and shall apply to all cats located within the borders of the Township.

**SECTION II. DEFINITIONS**

The following words, phrases and definitions shall have the clear meaning as set forth herein and as intended by the Township for the purposes of this Ordinance.

Abandoned: Defined as any cat unwanted by its owner and left without food, water or shelter, unattended and free to roam throughout the Township or property of someone other than its owner.

Cat (Felis Catus): Defined as usually kept as a household pet but also includes abandoned, stray or feral cats.

Caregiver: Defined as any person who feeds, gives water and/or provides shelter to a stray or feral cat.

Community Cat: Defined as a cat who is either abandoned, stray or feral.

Community Cat Caregiver: Defined as a person who, in a good faith effort, conducts trap-neuter-release to Community Cats. This care can include food, shelter and/or medical care. However, Community Cat Caregiver are not the owner, harbinger or keeper of a Community Cat.

Feral Cat: Defined as a decendent of a domestic cat that is now considered untamed, not domesticated or suitable for ownership as a pet and is free roaming, usually as a colony of such cats.

Stray Cat: Defined as a cat that was once kept as a household pet but is now abandoned, lost or was born to a cat that was kept as a household pet that is now abandoned or lost. A Stray Cat is not a Feral Cat.

Eartipping: Defined as the marking of a cat's ear through a surgical procedure performed by or supervised by a qualified professional to identify a Community Cat as being sterilized and vaccinated.

Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR): Defined as a non-lethal approach to the Feral Cat population where Feral Cats are humanely trapped, sterilized, vaccinated, eartipped and then returned to the location where they were originally trapped.

### **SECTION III. RESPONSIBILITY OF OWNERS**

- A. Owners of domesticated Cats shall provide appropriate food, water and shelter, as well as a place for their Cat(s) to be kept clean and sanitary so as not to create a health or safety hazard or nuisance. Owners must keep and properly maintain a clean litter box on their property at all times.
- B. It shall be a violation of this Ordinance for an owner to allow a Cat(s) to run free outside the boundaries of the property of its owners unless the Cat(s) has been neutered or spayed and vaccinated for rabies as required by Pennsylvania Law and tipped to signify this has been done. Further, the owner shall be responsible to retain records of proof these procedures and must be provided to the Township upon its request.
- C. An owner of a Cat(s) who allows the Cat(s) to run free shall be responsible for the costs of any damage to other properties as well as the cost of clean-up of the other properties.
- D. This Section does not apply to Feral or Stray Cats.

### **SECTION IV. REGISTRATION/RESPONSIBILITY OF CAREGIVERS AND THE TRAP NEUTER (TNR) PROGRAM**

- A. Any person who wishes to be a Caregiver to Community Cats must register with the Township by providing the following information in written form:
  - 1. the interested Caregiver's address and contact number;
  - 2. the location of the property upon which the Community Cats will be cared for by the Caregiver. If the property owner is different than the Caregiver, the name and address of the property owner shall be provided by the Caregiver.

- B. Any Animal Welfare Organization or individual who wishes to participate or serve in a TNR Program must also register with the Township by providing, in writing, the name and address of the organization and the contact number.
- C. Any organization or individual registering for a TNR Program must comply with all Ordinances and any applicable Federal or State laws. This shall include that any Cat that is spayed, neutered or vaccinated for rabies under this Program shall take place under the supervision of a Veterinarian licensed within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- D. Upon completion of neutering, vaccinating and eartipping of any Feral or Stray Cat, it shall be released at the located where it was trapped.
- E. Records of Cats in the TNR Program shall be reported to the Township on an annual basis after registering with the Township. This includes the general location, number of Cats in the colony and the names of Caregivers working with the colony.

#### **SECTION V. RESTRICTIONS ON CAREGIVERS OF COMMUNITY CATS**

- A. Any Caregivers of Community Cats, whether they participate in a TNR Program or not, must abide by all restrictions, guidelines and provisions of this Ordinance whether they have registered or not.
- B. Caregivers may provide fresh food and water to any Community Cats only on the Caregiver's property. Said food and water must be removed and disposed of each day before sunset of the day the food and water were provided. Food and water may not be left out the next day any earlier than sunrise.
- C. All feeding areas on Caregiver's property must be maintained by the Caregiver to avoid garbage, debris, refuse and feces. Said areas must be maintained to avoid odors and the attraction of wild animals or insects.
- D. Caregivers must supply a covered litter box for Community Cats that must be cleaned daily to avoid odor and health dangers for the Caregiver or the Cats.
- E. Any Caregiver for Community Cats must monitor those Cats as to illness, injuries, pregnancy or other unusual conditions. If a Cat is found in such condition, the Caregiver must notify a Township registered TNR provider and the Township or local veterinarian.
- F. Any Caregiver or person not a part of any TNR Program who captures or traps a Community Cat on their property must place the Community Cat for adoption with a local shelter, rescue group or adopter of cats not a dealer of cats.

**SECTION VI. ENFORCEMENT.**

- A. The provisions of this Ordinance may be enforced by Code Enforcement, the Township’s Police Department or the Township’s Fire Department or any other person so authorized by the Township.
- B. Any Township official so authorized may enter and inspect private property to enforce the provisions of this Ordinance and issue citations for any violations of this Ordinance.

**SECTION VII. PENALTIES**

A person who violates any provision of this Ordinance commits a Summary Offense and shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of not less than Fifty (\$50.00) Dollars and not exceeding Five Hundred (\$500.00) Dollars, plus costs. In default of said fine and costs, a term of imprisonment not to exceed Thirty (30) Days.

**SECTION VIII. SEVERABILITY**

The provisions of this Ordinance are severable. If any Section, subsection, sentence, clause or portion of this Ordinance, for any reason is held to be illegal, invalid or unconstitutional by any Court, such portion shall be deemed to be separate and independent from the remaining parts of this Ordinance and any such holdings by a Court shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance as if the Ordinance would have been adopted if the illegal, invalid or unconstitutional provision had not been included herein.

**SECTION IX. REPEALER**

All Ordinances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of their inconsistencies.

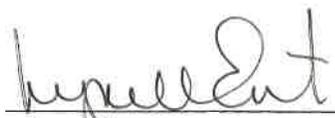
**SECTION X. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Ordinance shall become effective immediately following its adoption.

**ADOPTED AND ENACTED** this 10<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2025, at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Plains, Luzerne County Pennsylvania.

ATTEST:

TOWNSHIP OF PLAINS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lynell Ent, Secretary

By   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Sax, Chairman  
Township of Plains Board of Commissioners

(SEAL)