I FOUND A CAT — WHAT SHOULD I DO?

A few careful steps can help you reunite a lost pet or support a community cat.

THE ESSENTIALS

A cat outdoors is not necessarily lost or abandoned. Before moving a healthy cat, observe from a distance and ask nearby residents whether the cat has a home or caregiver. No collar does not mean no owner.

ANIMALS FOUND IN SEAL BEACH

The City of Seal Beach has a contract with WAGS to provide intake for any animal found in Seal Beach. Residents of Seal Beach should contact WAGS at (714) 887-6156.

CHECK THE CAT AND THE SITUATION

If the cat is injured. If a cat has a visible serious injury, difficulty breathing, cannot stand or appears to be in immediate danger, contact a veterinarian or local animal control for advice.

Is the cat friendly or fearful? A friendly cat may be a pet or a social community cat. A fearful cat may be a feral or a frightened lost pet. Behavior alone cannot tell you whether a cat has a home.

Look for an ear tip. A clean, flat tip removed from one ear generally indicates the cat was spayed or neutered through Trap Neuter Return (TNR).

IF THE CAT MAY HAVE A HOME

Check identification. If you can, check for a collar and tag. Ask a veterinary clinic or shelter to scan for a microchip.

Report and share. Post a photo, date and general location on Nextdoor, Lost My Kitty, PawBoost and local lost pet groups. Ask anyone claiming the cat for photos or other proof of ownership.

IF THE CAT LIVES IN THE COMMUNITY

Community cats live outdoors and may have regular caregivers. If a cat appears healthy and established in the area, do not relocate them. If a cat is untipped, check if your city offers free or low-cost TNR (trap, spay or neuter, and return to original location).

CONTACT SBACC BEFORE BRINGING A CAT

Depending on available space, SBACC may be able to take in a sick, injured or vulnerable cat. Call (562) 430-4993 before bringing a cat to the shelter. Calling does not guarantee intake. SBACC does not accept feral cats or cats who cannot be safely handled. We also cannot guarantee intake for cats showing signs of a contagious disease such as ringworm or mange (missing patches of fur, scabs or scaly skin). For urgent medical needs, contact a veterinarian.

CATS DUMPED AT SBACC WILL NOT BE IMPOUNDED AND ANIMAL CONTROL WILL BE CONTACTED.

Seal Beach Animal Care Center | sbacc.org
(562) 430-4993 | 1700 Adolfo Lopez Drive, Seal Beach, CA 90740
SBACC is a 501(c)3. Tax identification number 33-0192138

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Helen Sanders CatPAWS: https://helensanderscatpaws.com/help-i-found-a-cat/. Found cat guidance and local TNR resources.
Alley Cat Allies: https://www.alleycat.org/community-cat-care/what-to-do-if-you-find-a-cat-outdoors/. National guidance on community cats, outdoor cats and TNR.
Long Beach Community Cat Clinic: https://lbccatclinic.org/ccp. Local TNR services, trap rental and community cat guidance.

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