



Policy name: Feeding of Non-Domesticated Animals on University Property

Policy statement: The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and safety of University of Illinois Springfield students, faculty, staff, childcare clients and campus visitors. The policy prohibits the feeding of non-domesticated animals, including feral cats, on University property; tampering with University property including animal traps; and releasing unauthorized animals onto University property.

Policy:

I. Application

This policy is applicable to all University of Illinois Springfield faculty, students, staff and visitors.

II. Background

Non-domesticated animals (including feral cats) are not socialized animals and carry risks when coming into contact with the public, particularly when they exist in concentrated areas. They can carry diseases due to lack of vaccination or maintaining current vaccinations that can pass from non-domesticated animals to humans. Studies have shown that high densities of non-domesticated animals (including feral cats) increase the risk of rabies and the prevalence of fleas, ticks and lice.

A “feral cat” is defined in the Illinois Animal Control Act as a cat born in the wild or that is the offspring of an owned or feral cat and is not socialized; a formerly owned cat that has been abandoned and is no longer socialized; or one that lives on a farm. (510 ILCS 5/2.11b)

Peer-reviewed research (see citations) indicates that sustaining and attracting non-domesticated animals through supplemental feedings creates a greater risk for disease transmission to humans and promotes illegal dumping of animals. Concentrated populations of wild animals may also interfere with the use of service animals, pose a risk to individuals with allergies, and exacerbate fear of animals. All non-domesticated animals, including feral cats, can jeopardize the personal safety of children and adults if they feel threatened or cornered. Feral cats in particular also can jeopardize the natural ecosystem (small birds, reptiles and mammals) due to their predatory nature, especially when they exist in a concentrated area supported by supplemental feedings by humans. Furthermore, a cat’s natural instinct to hunt is not decreased when they have access to food provided by humans.

Supplemental feeding of cats not only sustains the existing population and encourages its growth, but also attracts other and/or additional species of non-domesticated animals such as

raccoons, skunks, opossum and mink, which carry the same public health and safety risks.

To combat public safety and health concerns, UIS Facilities and Services occasionally places traps on campus to humanely capture non-domesticated animals. If a non-domesticated animal (including a feral cat) is caught, UIS contacts local agencies to coordinate and facilitate its relocation to a more appropriate habitat. All animals are handled according to applicable laws and ordinances.

III. Policy Statement

No person, including faculty, students, staff or visitors, may feed non-domesticated animals, including feral cats, on University of Illinois Springfield property. No person may tamper with University property, including animal traps. In addition, no person may release unauthorized animals onto University property.

Any person found to have engaged in feeding non-domesticated animals, tampering with animal traps, and/or bringing or releasing non-domesticated animals onto University property will be referred to law enforcement. In addition, any person affiliated with the University who engages in such behavior will be referred for appropriate employment and/or student disciplinary action (Human Resources for employees and Student Affairs for students.)

Any person encountering non-domesticated animals (including feral cats) is encouraged NOT to touch or interact with the animal to avoid the potential for injury or disease transmission. Any person bitten or scratched by a non-domesticated animal should visit an emergency room immediately for medical assistance.

Date approved by Chancellor's Cabinet: September 6, 2018

Date approved by Chancellor: September 13, 2018

Chancellor signature: 

Effective date: September 13, 2018 ✓

Sources:

National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians: <https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/NASPHV-1996-Free-roaming-unowned-feral-cats.pdf>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Agriculture, American Bird Conservancy, et al.: <http://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Roebling-et-al.-2013-Rabies-prevention-and-management-of-cats-in-TNVR-programs.pdf>

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (PDF available of IDNR's Policy and Procedural Manual, Chapter 5, Subchapter G, Section 5G-5, "Feral and Free-ranging Domestic Cats")

The Wildlife Society: <https://issuu.com/the-wildlife-professional/docs/feralcats>

Natural Areas Journal (2003): <https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Castillo-and-Clarke-2003-TNR-ineffective-in-controlling-cat-colonies.pdf>

Helpful Links:

Sangamon County Animal Control: <https://scdph.org/animal-control-report-an-animal-bite/>

Sangamon County Animals Ordinance:

https://library.municode.com/il/sangamon_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT6AN