

Surf Coast Shire Council has a 24-hour cat curfew. This means that residents must always keep their cats within their property boundary. They are free to be in your front or back yard, or in a cat enclosure.

Our Ranger Services team work with residents to deal with complaints about cats on a case-by case basis. If you're having issues with a local cat, we encourage you to speak with its owner first, before contacting our Ranger Services Team on 5261 0600 to organise a humane cat trap.

What problems can cats cause if they wander?

Council receives many complaints about cats wandering onto neighbouring properties, parks, and reserves. Cats can cause a nuisance with noise but can also exhibit behaviours that would normally occur in the wild, such as killing wildlife, defecating, fighting with other pets and crying loudly. Dogs are also required to be always kept in an owner's property (with the exception of being on-leash in public places, or off-leash in designated areas).

Can my cat still go outside?

Yes, but it must remain on your property. Containing cats to a property can be difficult, so you may need to consider a cat enclosure or other methods to stop it from wandering. Speaking to your local vet or pet store can be a good first step.

Do I still have to pay my cat's pet registration?

Yes. Pet registration and the associated fees are a State Government requirement. Registration makes it much easier for us to help reunite owners and pets if they get lost or wander away, as well as being an essential part of responsible pet ownership.

I want to trap a wandering cat that's causing a nuisance – can I use my own trap, or do I need a Council one?

Before considering trapping a cat, we recommend you talk to the cat's owner to discuss the issue wherever possible. This can be an easy way to solve the problem. If this isn't possible or doesn't resolve the issue, cat cages are available for use free of charge for a two-week period.

Please contact customer service on **5261 0600** to arrange delivery. Note: the borrower is responsible for the cost of replacement if the cage is lost or stolen whilst in their possession.

As soon as possible after capture (to avoid unnecessary stress and suffering) Contact the Surf Coast Shire on 5261 0600 during office hours (8.30am to 5.00pm Monday-Friday) to arrange collection.

Water **MUST** be provided (the back plate may be lifted slightly, and a water bowl put in). Cages should be covered with a blanket to help calm the cat.

What happens if my cat is trapped?

Our Ranger Services Team will try to reunite cats with their owners by checking registration and microchip details. If we're unable to find the owner, we take cats to our Veterinary Clinic.

Do I receive a warning, or are cats impounded straight away?

If we can't identify a cat's owner or get in touch with you, the cat will be taken to our Veterinary Clinic by our Ranger Services Team.

Are there any fees or fines if my cat is impounded?

If we can't reunite animals with their owners and they are taken to our Veterinary Clinic, there will be fees to have them released. These vary depending on whether the cat is registered, microchipped or desexed. Pound release fee will be applied.

Fines also can be issued Under the *Domestic Animal Act*, cats-at-large can cost their owners a fee of [1 penalty unit](#) for a first offence and [3 penalty units](#) for further infringements

What happens if someone makes a complaint about my cat?

If we can identify a cat's owner after a complaint, our Ranger Services Team will investigate and inform you. If not, the cat may be trapped and taken to our veterinary Clinic.

What can I do if a cat wanders onto my property or causes a nuisance?

We always recommend talking to the owner of the cat first to try and resolve the issue. If the issue can't be resolved and you wish to lodge a complaint, please contact our Ranger Services Team on 5261 0600 or email info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au