



Governing Council of the Cat Fancy  
Australia & Victoria Inc  
Reg no A0043662C

# Code of Practice

GCCFV Guidelines for the care and management of  
breeding cats within the Applicable Organisation

These guidelines apply to GCCFV Breeder Members who have 10 or less fertile female cats.

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# 1 Introduction

These guidelines apply to all Recreational Breeder members of the GCCFV, and are made under the provisions of Section 59 of Division 4, Part 4, of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994 (the Act)*.

The purpose of the guidelines is to specify the minimum standards of accommodation, management, breeding and care that are appropriate to the physical and behavioural needs of cats housed.

Where a breeder member has either 11 or more fertile females or has 10 or less fertile females but has not registered them all with the GCCFV, then these members are not considered as Recreational breeders under the Act and must register as a Domestic Animal Business with their local council instead.

Breeders and rearers must be aware of their responsibilities under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1986) (PoCTA)* and Regulations; the *Domestic Animals Act (1994) (DAA)* and Regulations and all relevant legislation and codes of practice relating to the breeding, rearing and sale of cats including town planning, waste disposal etc.

## 1(1) Definitions

These definitions are provided solely for the purpose of interpreting this Code of Practice.

**Act:** means the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

**Animal:** means cat or kitten.

**Authorised officer:** means a person appointed as an authorised officer under section 71, 71A, 72 or 72A of the Act.

**Animal housing area:** includes all pens, cages, modules or colony cages used to house animals, where the animals sleep, eat and spend the majority of their time, including queening and lactating areas.

**AWV:** Animal Welfare Victoria

**Bed:** means an impervious structure, raised off the level of the floor, that is sufficiently large enough to allow the animal to lie comfortably when housed; the major component must not be made of concrete or metal.

**Breeder training course:** is the minimum education level for all animal attendants. DEDJTR offers free online training on [www.vic.gov.au/pets](http://www.vic.gov.au/pets)

**Business:** means a domestic animal business

**Cage:** means a structure designed to house a cat or kitten.

**Cat:** means any animal identified as *Felis catus*.

**Cattery:** means a series of cages designed to house multiple cats or kittens.

**Colony Cage:** means a walk in structure designed to house up to 8 cats or kittens over 16 weeks of age

**Council:** has the same meaning as in the *Local Government Act 1989*.

**DEDJTR:** Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

**Disinfectant:** means a chemical used on an inanimate surface to destroy micro-organisms likely to cause infection in cats.

**Domestic animal business:** as per the definition in the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

**Enclosure:** means a fully secure area preventing escape of animals from within and entrance of animals from outside the area.

**Enrichment:** includes practices that provide situations or activities for animals that are appropriate to meet their physical and psychological needs; includes requirements identified in the Code.

**Exercise:** includes practices/activities requiring physical activity and movement by animals appropriate to meet their physical needs; includes requirements identified in the Code.

**First aid:** means immediate care and treatment provided to an animal with an injury or illness; not including veterinary care.

**General health check:** means physical examination to assess the health of an animal, including assessments for:

- medical conditions
- infectious and zoonotic diseases
- parasites

- dental, eye, and ear issues
- genetic, breed and age considerations
- body condition scoring.

**Handling:** activities including grooming, soft patting/stroking, picking the animal up, turning the animal over, and doing a health examination by physically examining each animal's paws, ears, and teeth, providing exercise, enrichment and human socialisation.

**Heritable defect:** means a physical deformity, disease or disorder that is passed on genetically from one generation to the next.

**Hide:** a small enclosed area where the cat can remove itself to "hide" from other animals.

**Humane euthanasia:** means the animal is rendered immediately unconscious and does not regain consciousness prior to death.

**Impervious:** means materials or sealed materials that prevent water, urine or any other liquids penetrating the material or being absorbed and held by the material..

**Isolation housing:** means housing kept in a separate area to general animal housing and exercise areas, used specifically for animals suspected of having, or diagnosed with, an infectious disease.

**Kitten:** means a cat aged less than 9 months of age.

**Litter:** means all offspring born dead or alive from a single queening.

**Mating:** means the physical act of copulation between a male and a female animal.

**Mating period:** means the period of time when the series of mating events occur to achieve a pregnancy.

**Module cage:** means a walk-in cage designed to hold up to 2 cats and containing at least 2 levels.

**Monitoring:** includes observation and assessment of animals on a regular basis, including during routine management activities.

**Owner:** in respect of a cat, includes a person who keeps or harbours the animal or has the animal in his or her care for the time being whether the animal is at large or in confinement.

**Qualifications:** includes a minimum formal qualification provided by a registered training organisation covering the management and breeding of cats. Alternatively, completion of the DEDJTR Breeder Training Course will be viewed as a minimum level qualification.

**Recreational breeder:** mean a person who carries out the breeding of cats to sell, who is registered with an applicable organisation as a breeding member and has no more than 10 fertile female cats all of which are registered with their applicable organisation

**Sell:** as per the definition in the *Wildlife Act 1975* s.3(1) "sell" includes barter or exchange and also agreeing to sell or offering or exposing for sale or keeping or having in possession for sale or sending forwarding delivering or receiving for or on sale or authorizing directing causing suffering permitting or attempting any of such acts or things; this definition is subject to any changes to the *Wildlife Act 1975*.

**Socialisation:** means interaction between an individual animal and other animals and humans, with the intention of making the individual animal fit for a life in companionship with others; includes requirements identified in the Code.

**Veterinary practitioner:** means a veterinary practitioner registered under the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997*.

**Weaned:** means a kitten that no longer receives a milk diet provided by their mother or an artificial source.

**Washable:** means an impervious surface that is capable of being cleaned.

**Weatherproof:** means protection from the wind, rain and extreme temperatures to safeguard the welfare of the animals housed.

**Zoonoses:** diseases of animals transmissible to humans

#### **Cat classifications:**

- fertile adult female, 9 months of age or older
- fertile adult male, 9 months of age or older
- retired and desexed female/male
- pregnant queen
- queening cat
- lactating queen
- pre-weaned kitten, less than 8 weeks of age
- orphaned kitten, less than 8 weeks of age, that is being provided milk or formula from an artificial source
- weaned kitten, 8–16 weeks of age
- adolescent entire cats, between 16 weeks and 9 months of age and may not be bred with.

## 2 Records

The enterprise must ensure that the records detailed below are collected and kept for a period of no less than 5 years after the animal has been sold, given away, or become deceased.

All records must be kept in a location that will allow for physical inspection by an authorised officer immediately upon request.

All records must be produced for physical inspection by an authorised officer immediately upon request, either electronically or in hard copy.

### 2 1 (a) Under 12 weeks of age

Animal record files must be established at birth for each individual kitten born and maintained according to the following requirements until the ownership of the kitten changes hands or the kitten is deceased.

For each kitten under 12 weeks of age the following records must be available:

- name (or other identification)
- microchip number (when implanted)
- sex
- breed
- birth date (or where the kitten was purchased from another breeder or private person and birthdate is unknown an approximate age based on veterinary assessment)
- distinguishing features
- dam breed and sire breed, birth date, microchip number and owner details
- a complete health care and veterinary history including:
  - vaccination records
  - internal and external parasite control
- disposal records including date and method of disposal, and the name and address of new owners
- a copy of the vaccination certificate and breeder health declaration for the kitten
- name, address and contact number of the purchaser
- return records, including date, reason for return and copies of supporting documentation, where applicable.

### 2 1 (b) 12 weeks of age or older

Kitten / Cat record files must be established at birth for each individual kitten born and maintained according to the following requirements until the ownership of the kitten changes hands or the kitten is deceased. Copies of records of kitten sold or retained must be kept for a minimum of 5 years.

For each kitten / cat 12 weeks of age or older, the following records must be available:

- council registration certificate
- name (or other identification)
- microchip number
- sex
- breed
- birth date
- dam breed and sire breed, birth date, microchip number and owner details (where known)
- acquisition date and details of previous owner (where applicable)
- a complete health care and veterinary history including:
  - vaccination records
  - internal and external parasite control
  - breeding status
  - complete breeding history for each fertile female including dates of mating and birthing, number of offspring born for each litter including weeks gestation at birth, number of offspring born alive, number of offspring born dead, any birth complications and a record of treatment administered; number of offspring alive at 8 weeks of age, and microchip number for all offspring alive at 8 weeks of age; any veterinary treatment provided post birthing and/or during lactation.
  - complete breeding history for each fertile male including dates of mating and identification of female mated with
- disposal records including date and mode of disposal, and the name and address of new owners
- return records, including date, reason for return and copies of supporting documentation, where applicable.

## 2 (2) Health management plan:

A health management plan must include protocols for:

- assessment for admission of new breeding cats
- protocols for quarantine and movement of cats, including introduction of new cats.
- provision of appropriate diet for all cats
- hygiene, disinfection and disease prevention
- vaccination programs
- external parasite prevention and treatment programs including ear mites, dermatophytes and ringworm
- internal parasite prevention and treatment programs
- investigation and treatment of cats showing signs of chlamydia
- procedure for the investigation and management of FIP (Feline Infectious Peritonitis). Repeated cases of diarrhoea leading to the suspicion of FIP must undertake investigation by means of autopsy of cats that die or are euthanised due to their symptoms. Cats showing clinical symptoms must be provided with palliative care prior to humane euthanasia. A management and breeding plan should be developed where multiple cases are confirmed.
- response to a general outbreak of disease
- grooming requirements
- approved methods of euthanasia for emergency situations
- birthing protocols
- environmental enrichment and socialisation programs
- assessment programs for the health and welfare of kittens being reared for sale or as replacement breeding cats
- health assessment for kittens for sale
- behavioural and welfare assessment of kittens / cats on a daily basis
- assessment for determining the suitability of breeding cats to continue in breeding program
- assessment for long term management, de-sexing and/or suitability for rehoming or euthanasia of retired breeding cats
- risk assessments of housing and exercise areas and risk management plan/s
- pest management protocols
- development and display of emergency response plans for both humans and cats including evacuation procedures (where necessary).

# 3 Sale of Kittens / Cats

All kittens / cats being sold must be accompanied with a breeder health declaration, including details of any known physical abnormality at the time of sale and how that abnormality may affect the short- and long-term health and welfare of the kitten / cat and a vaccination certificate stating the date of the last vaccination and due date of the next vaccination. When kittens / cats that have been vaccinated by the breeder, are sold, the new owner must be provided with a certificate signed by a veterinary practitioner (or a copy of the veterinary health notes) stating that the kitten / cat has had a general health check, the outcomes of that general health check and the date of the general health check.

All kittens / cats being sold must have current vaccinations in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and their vaccination, and parasite control records must be provided to the new owner.

All kittens / cats being sold or given away must be implanted with a microchip by an authorised implanter and must be accompanied by a signed transfer of ownership form which is provided to the new owner upon collection of the animal.

Purchasers of kittens / cats de-sexed prior to sale must be provided with a copy of the de-sexing certificate.

## Note

It is recommended that breeders obtain a signature on the microchip transfer form from the purchaser and submit the form on behalf of themselves and the purchaser. This will ensure that microchips are transferred into the new owner's name promptly. A photocopy of the signed form should be provided to the purchaser.

Kittens / cats may be sold at any time but must not permanently leave the property before 10 weeks of age. They may be transported away from the property for short periods for the purposes of veterinary care.

New owners must be provided with literature about:

- appropriate feeding
- de-sexing record
- parasite control
- health, including procedures for emergency treatment during the guarantee period
- housing
- responsible pet ownership, including current legislation covering the registration of cats.
- importance of socialisation for cats
- vaccination.

Literature is available free of charge on the AWW website, through local councils, or breeders may wish to develop their own.

## 3 (1) Guarantee

Where a kitten / cat is returned to the breeder within 3 days of sale, for any reason not supported by a statement from a veterinary practitioner, must take back the kitten / cat and refund 75% of the purchase price.

Where a kitten / cat is returned to the breeder within 21 days of sale, accompanied by a statement from a veterinary practitioner that the kitten / cat is unacceptable for health reasons, must take back the animal and refund 100% of the purchase price.

If a kitten / cat is diagnosed with, suffering from, dies of, or is euthanised from a physical defect or disease that is traceable to the point of sale within 3 years of purchase, must refund 100% of the purchase price where the owner of the animal provides supporting statements from a veterinary practitioner, including test results where a suitable test is available. Owners of the kitten / cat must make veterinary reports and test results available to the breeder for the breeder to obtain their own veterinary advice (second opinion) for the purpose of informing future breeding management.

If the reason for diagnosis, death, or euthanasia is a result of a heritable defect, the parents and any offspring from those parents still held by the breeder must be tested and managed for that heritable defect as per Section 4 (3) (a), and test results and death certificates linked with the cats microchip number.

## Note

The payment of refunds should be made upon presentation of:

- the kitten / cat for the 3-day return clause
- the kitten / cat and a signed veterinary certificate for the 21-day return clause.

For refunds being sought under the 3 years clause, breeders should be given sufficient time to have an independent veterinary assessment of any test results, veterinary statements, etc. It is reasonable to assume this independent veterinary assessment could be done within 6 weeks of the owner of the kitten / cat supplying the necessary documentation. Therefore, the refund should be made within a period of 6 weeks of initial presentation of veterinary statements and test results or as soon as practicable after that.

Under the 3-day and 21-day clauses, the owner cannot keep the kitten / cat and request a refund. Under the 3 year clause the owner may choose to keep the kitten / cat but request a refund to help cover veterinary/care costs.



# 4 Management of cats

## 4 (1) Nutrition

Food must be provided in sufficient quantity and nutritional quality; it must be feline appropriate and scientifically balanced to meet the daily requirements for the condition and size of the cat.

Minimum quantity and nutritional quality of feed must be detailed within the health management plan developed in conjunction with, and signed off by, a veterinary practitioner for each classification of cat.

All adult and adolescent cats must be fed a minimum of once daily from a clean food receptacle.

Pregnant and lactating queens must be fed at least twice daily, or under instruction from a veterinary practitioner, from a clean food receptacle.

Kittens between 3 weeks of age and weaning must be provided with a suitable food in accordance with the health management plan.

Fully weaned kittens less than 16 weeks of age must be fed a minimum of 3 times daily from a clean food receptacle, and must not be left without food for a period of more than 12 hours. Kittens may share a food receptacle.

Kittens between 16–24 weeks of age must be fed a minimum of twice daily from clean food receptacles.

Orphaned and pre-weaned kittens must be fed under the direction of a veterinary practitioner.

When multiply housed, each cat must be provided with sufficient water and food receptacles to ensure all cats can feed at one time, should they choose to. The proprietor must ensure all cats multiply housed are socially compatible to feed together and are able to eat a sufficient quantity of food without duress.

Food must be stored in sealed, vermin proof containers and refrigerated according to manufacturer's directions.

The preparation of food must be conducted in hygienic areas which must be cleaned and disinfected after food is prepared.

Food receptacles must be non-spill and made of a material that can be cleaned and disinfected.

Receptacles must not cause injury to the cats / kittens.

The main meal of the day must be provided in a food receptacle that has been cleaned of all uneaten food.

### 4 (1) (a) Water

All kittens / cats must have access, in their housing area, at all times, to a permanent supply of fresh, clean water daily. The recommended volume of water required daily is approximately 50 millilitres of water per one kilogram of body weight.

This amount may vary depending on a number of factors including health status, environmental temperature, amount of exercise, lactating animal, water content of diet, age, etc.

Water receptacles:

- must be non-spill and made of a material that can be cleaned and disinfected
- must be large enough to hold sufficient water for all cats to be able to drink at any one time
- must hold sufficient water for all cats in a cage
- for young kittens must be shallow enough to prevent injury or drowning.

## 4 (2) Health care

All cats, regardless of breeding status, must have a complete health check by a veterinary practitioner at least once per year, or more frequently as directed by a veterinary practitioner.

All cats must have a general health check by a veterinary practitioner prior to their first mating. Veterinary practitioners must provide a certificate to state that, at the time of examination, the cat was suitable to breed.

Any health issues identified must be recorded in the animal's individual health record and evidence provided that a treatment plan was devised in conjunction with a veterinary practitioner, and implemented.

All cats with medium and long coats must be groomed by brushing at a frequency sufficient to prevent coats becoming tangled and/or matted.

All catteries must have an internal and external parasite control program and screen regularly as per the health management plan.

### 4 (2) (a) Vaccination and parasite prevention for cats under 12 weeks of age

Kittens must be vaccinated against and treated for the following, in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and administered by a veterinarian.

- Infectious Feline Enteritis
- Feline Respiratory Disease (Feline Calici virus and Feline herpes virus)
- Internal and external parasites (for example fleas and ticks).

First treatment/vaccine must not be given before 10 days of age.

Vaccination certificates, including dates of treatment, details of the treatment required, and the record as supplied by a veterinarian who administered the treatment.

Refer to Section 3 for pre-sale veterinary health check requirements.

#### 4 (2) (b) **Vaccination and parasite prevention for cats 12 weeks of age or over**

All animals 12 weeks of age or over must have current vaccination against and treatment for the following, in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, administered by a veterinary practitioner:

- Infectious Feline Enteritis
- Feline Respiratory Disease (Feline Calici virus and Feline herpes virus)
- Internal and external parasites (for example, fleas and ticks).

Vaccination certificates, including dates of treatment, details of the treatment required, and a record of who administered the treatment, must be signed by the person administering the treatment at each vaccination.

Refer to Section 3 for pre-sale veterinary health check requirements.

### 4 (3) **Breeding**

Breeding mates must not be closely related to one another. They must not be first degree (for example, father and daughter, mother and son, full brother and sister).

Coefficient of Inbreeding (COI) Chart – Pedigrees exceeding 26% may not be processed

COI Percentage	Level	Comments
0%	Low	Completely Unrelated Parents
1% to 10%	Low	COIs which fall within this low banding are ideal
11% to 20%	Fair	COIs which fall within this banding are reasonable and acceptable
21% to 25%	Close	COIs which fall within this banding represent close matings approaching the higher end of what breeders should normally consider.
26% to 40%	High	Matings producing higher COIs than the first-degree matings should only be undertaken by experienced breeders for very specific reasons. If offspring are retained for breeding, they should only be used for matings producing low COIs.
2 <sup>nd</sup> degree		grandfather and granddaughter; grandmother and grandson
41% +	Not Permitted / Not Acceptable	The welfare and health of cats with such high levels of inbreeding is highly likely to be compromised and such matings should not be undertaken.
1 <sup>st</sup> degree		father and daughter, mother and son, full brother and sister
100%	Not Permitted	Completely In-bred

A female cat must only be bred with one male cat per breeding cycle.

All new breeding cats must be isolated and confirmed free of Feline Leukaemia Virus (FeLV), Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV/Feline AIDS) in blood tests, prior to moving into the main housing facility. Partially tested or positive FeLV or FIV breeding cats must not share accommodation with negative status breeding cats.

All cats testing free must be vaccinated against FeLV in accordance with the manufacturer's directions before breeding.

Cats testing positive to Feline AIDS/FIV must be kept separate from all breeding cats and non-vaccinated cats and must not be bred.

#### 4 (3) (a) **Heritable defects**

All breeders must comply with the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*, particularly with respect to the *Code of Practice for the Responsible Breeding of Animals with Heritable Defects that Cause Disease*.

The breeder notified that a cat sold has been diagnosed by a veterinary practitioner to have a heritable defect, or provided with reasonable evidence of a heritable defect in such an cat, must stop breeding from the parents of this cats until the following have been completed:

- test the parents if they are still breeding where an acceptable test is available, or if a test is not available have the parents assessed by a veterinary practitioner for the defect, and
- test any existing offspring of those parents still currently residing at the cattery where an acceptable test is available.
  - If one or both of the parents have the heritable defect, genetic counselling must be obtained from a veterinary practitioner prior to continuing to breed those cats.
  - If any offspring have the heritable defect, a sale or euthanasia plan must be developed in conjunction with a veterinary practitioner and all details about the heritable defect and likely outcomes for the cats and their owners must be fully disclosed to prospective purchasers.

Any pair of cats, for whom any heritable defect that causes a disease has been identified by a veterinary practitioner, must not continue to be bred together.

#### 4 (3) (b) **Breeding males**

Male cats must be physically mature and at least 12 months of age prior to their first mating. Male cats that are fertile and considered physically mature may be bred prior to 12 months of age with veterinary certification stating they are in good health and breeding would not prejudice their health.

All male cats must have a general health check by a veterinary practitioner prior to their first mating. Veterinary practitioners must provide a certificate to state that, at the time of examination, the tomcat was suitable to breed.

Males must have an annual health check by a veterinary practitioner.

If evidence of heritable defects in the offspring produced by the male are identified the cat must not be used for further breeding, except where written approvals is given by a veterinary practitioner.

Male cats must only mate with one female at any given time and must have at least 2 days' rest between females.

#### 4 (3) (c) **Breeding females**

Females must have a general health check by a veterinary practitioner prior to first mating. Veterinary practitioners must provide a certificate to state that, at the time of examination, the queen was suitable to breed.

Female cats must be at least 12 months of age prior to their first mating. Female cats that come into oestrus prior to 12 months can be bred with if:

1. there is a risk of pyometra due to repeated calling (3 or more callings); and
2. the cat is not in her first oestrus; and
3. a veterinary practitioner has provided written approval that the cat is sufficiently mature to be bred with.

Females must have an annual general health check by a veterinary practitioner, or more frequently as directed by a veterinary practitioner.

If evidence of heritable defects in the offspring produced by the female are identified the cat must not be used for further breeding, except where written approval is given by a veterinary practitioner.

A female cat must not be allowed to have less than six months between the birth date of each subsequent litter. (eg: kittens from the current litter must be at least 17 weeks of age before the queen can be mated again)

A female must have no more than 8 litters in her lifetime, after which she must be retired.

#### 4 (3) (d) **Retirement of cats**

Where:

- queens have reached their maximum number of litters; and/or
- cats are no longer suitable for breeding or no longer required, and the cat is suitable for rehoming, every effort must be made to rehome that cat to an appropriate home.

All retiring breeding cats must be de-sexed (unless advised otherwise by a veterinary practitioner for health reasons), microchipped, and

1. rehomed to a suitable home- where health and temperament of the cat have been assessed as suitable for rehoming; or
2. kept as a pet; or
3. when dictated by health and/or behaviour problems, or when an acceptable home is unable to be found, may be euthanised only via lethal injection by a veterinary practitioner.

#### 4 (3) (e) **Mating**

Mating pairs must be physically separated from other cats.

Mating pairs must be monitored at all times during mating and veterinary advice sought:

- if there is a risk of injury to either cat; or
- for any other concern.

Prior to returning to normal housing both cats must be physically separated, assessed for signs of injury, and treatment provided where necessary.

#### 4 (3) (f) **Queening**

Compatible pregnant females (lactating queens and their litters) can be housed individually or in pairs.

Each queen must be provided with a separate sleeping area for resting and privacy during birthing.

As soon as the queen shows signs of contractions she must be monitored every 30 minutes until birthing is complete.

Veterinary advice must be immediately sought if:

- the queen displays excessive or consistent contractions with no effect; and/or • there are prolonged intervals between the birth of each kitten; and/or
- there is excessive bleeding; and/or
- there are any other abnormalities observed during the birthing process.

Contractions should not become prolonged without the appearance of a kitten.

After birth is complete, the queen must be monitored every 6 hours until contractions have ceased. If contractions do not stop, veterinary advice must be sought and treatment provided as advised.

The birthing area must be completely cleaned and all bedding changed within 24 hours of the completion of birthing. This time frame for changing of bedding should be determined on an individual basis allowing for the queen's response to interference.

#### 4 (3) (g) **Lactating**

Queens and their kittens must be monitored every 6 hours until lactation and feeding is established.

Monitoring of lactating queens must include visual observation of all kittens feeding and confirmation that the queen is lactating.

If weight gain in kittens is not observed during the first 7 days of life, veterinary advice must be sought by the proprietor and action taken as directed by the veterinary practitioner.

For the first week post birth, queens must be examined twice daily for mastitis and treatment provided immediately upon diagnosis.

Soiled bedding must be removed and clean bedding provided on a daily basis during lactation.

Kittens must have a health check within 12 hours after birth.

Daily handling of kittens must begin within 7 days of birth.

#### 4 (4) **Enrichment, socialisation and handling**

Enrichment, socialisation and handling are essential elements to ensuring the welfare of cats.

All cats of all age and breeding status must be provided with a minimum amount of daily socialisation, handling and enrichment as detailed in Table 7.

An enrichment, socialisation and handling management plan must be established as part of the health management plan, in conjunction with a veterinary practitioner, specific to each breed/type of cat maintained (including retired animals).

**Table 7. Enrichment, socialisation and handling of cats**

Category	Environmental enrichment requirements	Socialisation	Handling
Kittens 0–4 weeks	Must be provided with exposure to a variety of textures/surfaces (such as hard surfaces, soft bedding, paper, etc.)	Must be provided with daily exposure to humans via daily handling from 7 days of age  Must remain with mother and other littermates unless under veterinary advice	Must be weighed daily from birth to ensure weight gain  Must be handled for a minimum of 5 minutes per kitten per day
Orphaned kittens 0–4 weeks	Must be provided with exposure to a variety of textures/surfaces (such as hard surfaces, soft bedding, paper, etc.)  May wish to provide noise simulation CDs	Must be provided with daily exposure to humans via daily handling from 7 days of age  Must remain with other litter mates where possible, except under veterinary advice	Must be weighed daily from birth to ensure weight gain  Must be handled for a minimum of 5 minutes per kitten per day
Kittens 4–8 weeks	Must be provided with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>climbing and perching areas</li> <li>scratch poles</li> <li>hide areas</li> <li>a variety of toys they can roll, pounce on, capture and bite</li> <li>exposure to variety of items that stimulate the senses (ie. catnip, cat grass, Feliway®, etc.)</li> </ul> Toys must be rotated weekly May wish to provide noise simulation CDs	Must be provided with daily exposure to humans via daily handling Must remain with mother and litter mates except under veterinary advice May begin socialisation with other animals/cats of appropriate vaccination status and temperament	Must be handled for a minimum of 15 minutes per kitten per day.
Kittens 8–16 weeks	Must be provided with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>climbing and perching areas</li> <li>scratch poles</li> <li>hide areas</li> <li>a variety of toys they can roll, pounce on, capture and bite</li> <li>exposure to variety of items that stimulate the senses (ie. catnip, cat grass, Feliway®, etc.)</li> </ul> Toys must be rotated weekly	Must be provided with daily exposure to humans through handling and interactive play using toys outside of daily cleaning/feeding routine  Must be provided with opportunity to socialise with other animals/cats of appropriate vaccination status and temperament	Must be handled for a minimum of 30 minutes per kitten per day
Adolescent and adult cat 16+ weeks	Must be provided with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>climbing and perching areas</li> <li>scratch poles</li> <li>hide areas</li> <li>a variety of toys they can roll, pounce on, capture and bite</li> <li>exposure to variety of items that stimulate the senses (ie. catnip, cat grass, Feliway®, etc.)</li> </ul> Toys must be rotated weekly	Must be provided with daily exposure to humans through handling and interactive play using toys outside of daily cleaning/feeding routine  Must be provided with the opportunity to exercise/socialisation with other socially compatible animals	Must be handled for a minimum of 30 minutes per kitten per day
Cats/kittens — injured, ill, or recovering from ailment	Under guidance of veterinary practitioner	Under guidance of veterinary practitioner	Under guidance of veterinary practitioner

## 4 (5) Housing

### Disinfection and hygiene

Maintenance of hygiene will prevent build-up of disease-causing organisms including bacteria, viruses and parasitic worm eggs.

All cages and modules used to house animals must be cleaned of soiled litter, soiled bedding and toys at least once per day (or more often as required) by appropriate means.

Soiled litter must be removed daily and litter trays disinfected weekly using a hospital grade disinfectant.

Phenol and pine oil derivative cleaning products must not be used.

All uneaten food must be removed daily.

Uneaten food must be placed in a waste disposal device.

Disposable bedding, food containers, and general waste must be placed in a waste disposal device.

Waste disposal must be in accordance with the requirements of the appropriate statutory authority.

Use of a trade waste service for collection and disposal of wastes is preferable.

Wastes must not be incinerated unless the incinerator is registered with the appropriate authority.

Must have an adequate water supply and must be sewered, on a septic system, or have some other adequate method of disposing of soiled litter which is approved by the appropriate authority.

All watering and feeding utensils must be rinsed daily and washed in hot soapy water or in a dishwasher at least once per week to ensure bowls are clean and free of food, mould, etc. Watering and feeding utensils must be disinfected if the cat/s using them is/are diagnosed with a disease or internal parasite infection before being used to feed or water another cat.

Enrichment toys must be washed in hot soapy water at least once per week or more often if soiled and disinfected when moved between litters.

Dishwashers are suitable for disinfection of water and feeding utensils, toys and washable enrichment items at a temperature of 65<sup>0</sup>C or above using the appropriate dishwashing detergent in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Utensils must be rinsed after disinfection to avoid poisoning.

Disinfection of pens, using hospital grade disinfectants, must be done weekly and:

- prior to the introduction of a new cat
- prior to queening
- upon the removal of kittens.

Manufacturer's instructions for the use of disinfection agents must be followed.

Pests including fleas, ticks, flies, mosquitoes and rodents must be effectively controlled.

Registered chemicals used for pest control must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and must be either prescribed by a registered veterinary practitioner or used in accordance with the appropriate authority.

Any pest traps used must be in accordance with the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* and Regulations.

Material Safety Data Sheets for all chemicals used must be kept on site and produced on request by an authorised officer.

### 4 (5) (b) Isolation

Must provide an area for isolation for animals suspected of having an infectious/contagious disease or must have a written agreement with a veterinary practitioner to provide isolation facilities off site at a veterinary practice.

Isolation housing must be physically separated by an impervious barrier or a distance of at least ten metres from other types of animal housing.

Drainage from the isolation area must not run through other animal housing.

Animals must be maintained in an area approved in the animal health management plan, with particular reference to the area's airflow, workflow and cage or pen design.

All animals confined in isolation housing must be under the supervision of a veterinary practitioner and a veterinary practitioner must determine when, and if, an animal can be returned to general population.

Cage items, such as bedding, food and water utensils, enrichment items, etc. from isolation areas must remain solely for use in isolation areas and not be used in other areas

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#### 4 (5) (c) **Small business**

Small businesses may house up to 5 compatible fertile cats.

Fertile male cats and female cats in or near oestrus must be housed separately to prevent unwanted breeding.

All fertile adult cats must be confined to the place of residence or an outdoor run area at all times to prevent breeding with other cats.

Tomcats must be housed individually or with a desexed female.

Each cat must be provided with its own litter tray.

Incompatible cats must be physically separated at all times to prevent fighting and injury.

All areas utilised by the cats must be cleaned daily of contaminated litter, wasted food, and soiled bedding.

#### 4 (5) (c) (i) **Housing areas**

Housing areas must be cleaned daily and disinfected weekly.

Each cat must be provided with a minimum area of 2 square metres which has a height of at least 1.8 metres and has 2 levels.

When multiple housed, each cat older than 12 weeks of age must be provided with a separate bed/hide/nest of sufficient bedding material that all animals can sleep comfortably.

Where cat housing is constructed indoors, but not inside a place of residence (such as a cattery building), natural daylight during daylight hours must be provided, and temperature, humidity and ventilation must be managed.

Ventilation must be adequate to keep animal housing areas free of dampness, noxious odours and draughts and must provide access to natural daylight during daylight hours.

Fully enclosed cattery areas must:

- have an air change rate of 8–12 changes per hour to prevent the build-up of foul odours
- have ventilation devices that avoid draughts and distribute fresh air evenly to all of the boarding areas.

Where forced ventilation is the only form of air, all of the following are required:

- air recirculation units incorporating effective air cleaning and filtration to ensure the removal of infectious organisms and chemicals
- a back-up and alarm system in case of power failures or breakdown of ventilation and temperature control mechanisms must be maintained
- temperature must be maintained in the range of 10–32°C.

Where sleeping areas are outdoors the following minimum standards must be met:

- weatherproof housing must be provided for each cat
- materials must be selected for ease of maintenance and cleaning, durability and non-toxicity
- beds/hides/nests must be protected from the weather (wind, rain, sun and extremes of climate), vermin and harassment from other animals
- beds/hides/nests must not be made of concrete or metal
- beds/hides/nests must be raised off the ground to prevent draughts
- soft, warm bedding must be provided in all housing and changed weekly or more often if required
- bedding must be able to be kept dry at all times
- housing must be cleaned daily and disinfected weekly.

Where small businesses choose to construct colony cages or walk-in modules they must meet the minimum requirements set out for large businesses, including the provision of exercise colony cages for cats housed in walk-in modules.

#### 4 (5) (c) (ii) **Mating areas**

When cats are mating, they must be provided with an area physically separated from all other animals.

#### 4 (5) (c) (iii) **Queening/kittening/lactating areas**

Kittening/queening facilities, separate from general housing, must be provided for each queen and her kittens. Compatible queens and their kittens may be housed in pairs.

Each queen requires an area of at least 2 square metres, with a vertical height of at least 1.8 metres, containing two levels joined by a non-slip climbing plank or pole. Care must be taken in the construction of these areas to prevent young kittens from climbing to higher levels and falling.

Queening and lactating housing must be maintained at a temperature between 10 and 32°C at all times.

#### Note

Newborn kittens prefer an ambient temperature of 31°C up until about 1 week of age. Between 1 and 3 weeks of age, the temperature can be gradually reduced to about 27°C. During colder weather it is important to provide a heat source for the kittens to ensure they can maintain their body temperature as their internal temperature regulations systems do not begin to work until about 3 weeks of age.

Breeders may consider installing lamps over bedding areas (25 watt globe is sufficient) for kittens, however it is important to provide an alternative cooler area for the queen.

Queening areas must be physically separate from all other animals.

Queening areas must contain a fully screened bedding area to allow the queen visual separation from all other animals.

Sleeping areas must be raised off the floor and constructed so that if kittens were to fall out of the bed they would not tumble to the floor.

Queening areas must contain bedding that is soft, absorbent and easily disposed of or cleaned and disinfected when soiled.

Queening areas must have access to natural daylight.

#### 4 (5) (d) (i) **Housing areas**

Housing must provide protection from the weather (wind, rain, sun and extremes of climate), vermin and harassment from other animals.

A minimum of one bed/hide/nest per cat must be provided.

A minimum of one litter tray per cat must be provided.

Colony cages and modules must be designed, constructed, serviced and maintained in a way that ensures the good health and wellbeing of the animals, while preventing escape or injury to humans.

Construction materials must be selected for ease of maintenance and cleaning, durability and non-toxicity.

#### 4 (5) (d) (ii) **Module cage construction**

Walk-in modules must have a minimum floor area of 1.5 square metres, a width of 0.9 metres and a height of 1.8 metres, and contain at least two levels including draught-free sleeping quarters.

This size is for **one** cat only and an additional one square metre floor space is required for a second cat.

No more than two cats may be housed together in this type of accommodation.

Cats housed in module cages must have access to an external exercise cage, similar to a colony cage in size and dimension, for at least half a day.

The exercise cage can be connected to exercise areas via tunnels or doors and may serve up to 8 compatible cats at any one time.

There must be one exercise cage for every 8 cats, 16 weeks or older.

#### 4 (5) (d) (iii) **Colony cage construction**

Cats may be multiple housed in colony cages.

A colony cage must be a minimum height of 1.8 metres with a minimum width of 2 metres.

Each cat housed must have a minimum floor area of 2 square metres and an individual raised sleeping area.

A maximum of 8 cats may be housed in each colony cage.

Colony cages must incorporate a scratching pole and be designed to provide cats with at least two levels joined by non-slip climbing plank or pole.



#### 4 (5) (d) (iv) **Sleeping areas**

Sleeping areas:

- must be weatherproof
- must be constructed of materials selected for ease of maintenance and cleaning, durability and non-toxic
- beds/hides/nests must not be made of concrete or metal
- beds/hides/nests must be raised off the ground to prevent draughts
- soft and warm bedding must be provided and changed weekly or more often if required
- must be cleaned daily and disinfected weekly.

#### 4 (5) (d) (v) **Indoor cattery areas**

Where modules or colony cages are constructed natural daylight during daylight hours must be provided and temperature, humidity and ventilation must be managed.

Ventilation must be adequate to keep animal housing areas free of dampness, noxious odours and draughts and must provide access to natural daylight during daylight hours.

Fully enclosed cattery areas must:

- have an air change rate of 8–12 changes per hour to prevent the build-up of foul odours,
- have ventilation devices that avoid draughts and distribute fresh air evenly to all of the boarding areas.

Where forced ventilation is the only form of air, all of the following are required:

- air recirculation units incorporating effective air cleaning and filtration to ensure the removal of infectious organisms and chemicals
- a back-up and alarm system in case of power failures or breakdown of ventilation and temperature control mechanisms must be maintained
- temperature must be maintained in the range of 10–32°C.

#### 4 (5) (d) (vi) **Mating modules**

Mating modules must be physically separated from all other animals.

Mating modules must be at least as big as the housing area for one adult cat.

Mating modules must be weatherproof, have a non-slip floor and ramps that can be disinfected easily.

#### 4 (5) (d) (vii) **Queening/kittening/lactating areas**

Separate kitting/queening facilities must be provided for each queen and her kittens.

Each queen must have an area of at least 2 square metres with a vertical height of at least 1.8 metres, containing two levels joined by a non-slip climbing plank or pole. Care must be taken in the construction of this area to prevent young kittens climbing to upper levels and falling.

Queening and lactating housing must be maintained at a temperature between 10 and 32°C at all times.

#### Note

Newborn kittens prefer an ambient temperature of 31°C up until about 1 week of age. Between 1 and 3 weeks of age, the temperature can be gradually reduced to about 27°C. During colder weather it is important to provide a heat source for the kittens to ensure they can maintain their body temperature as

their internal temperature regulations systems do not begin to work until about 3 weeks of age.

Breeders should consider installing lamps over bedding areas (25 watt globe is sufficient) for kittens, however it is important to provide an alternative cooler area for the queen.

Queening areas must be physically separate from all other animals.

Queening areas must contain a fully screened bedding area to allow the queen visual separation from all other animals.

Sleeping areas must be raised off the floor and constructed so that if kittens were to fall out of the bed they would not tumble to the floor.

Queening areas must contain bedding that is soft, absorbent and easily disposed of or cleaned and disinfected when soiled.

Queening areas must have access to natural daylight.

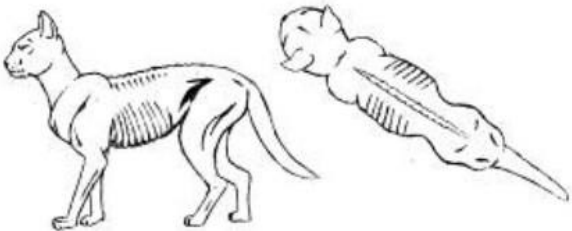
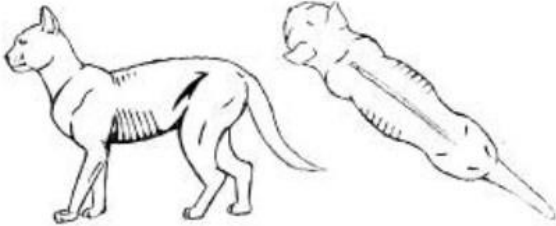
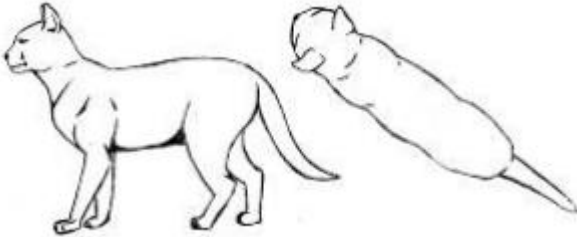
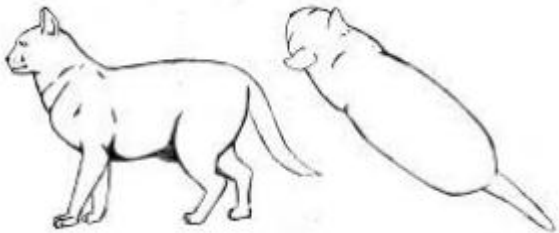
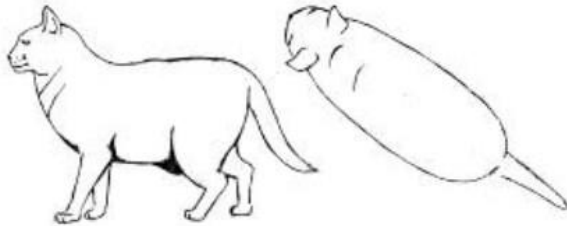
## 4 (6) Euthanasia

Euthanasia must be by barbiturate overdose carried out by a veterinary practitioner, except in emergency situations.

Any method of emergency euthanasia must be humane. Such euthanasia must only be carried out under the direction of a veterinary practitioner, and a written certificate or letter must be provided to be kept on file stating that permission was given, when the permission was given, why permission was given and the approved form of euthanasia used. Blunt force trauma is not considered a humane form of euthanasia for cats.

Euthanasia must be performed in an area that is separate from any animal housing areas and must not be carried out in view of any other animals

# Body condition score chart – Cat

<p><b>Emaciated</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual ribs, spine and pelvis prominent and evident from a distance.</li> <li>• Lack of muscle mass.</li> <li>• Little or no body fat.</li> <li>• Rump hollow.</li> <li>• Waist prominent when viewed from above.</li> <li>• Neck thin.</li> <li>• No flank fold (under belly), abdomen very tucked up.</li> </ul> <p>Veterinary advice must be sought.</p>
<p><b>Thin</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribs, spine and pelvis bones visible and easily felt.</li> <li>• Little body fat.</li> <li>• Neck thin.</li> <li>• No flank fold (under belly), abdomen tucked up.</li> <li>• Obvious waist when viewed from above.</li> </ul> <p>Increase feeding and worm cat if not wormed recently (ensure all-wormer used – some products do not cover all worms). Seek veterinary advice if cat remains underweight or unsure of feeding or worming regime</p>
<p><b>Ideal</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribs and spine can be felt, last few ribs may be visible.</li> <li>• Flank fold (under belly) maybe visible from side.</li> <li>• Cat should have a waist when viewed from top.</li> <li>• Good muscle mass</li> </ul>
<p><b>Overweight</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribs and spine not visible but can be felt.</li> <li>• Little or no waist when viewed from above, rounded appearance.</li> <li>• Flank fold (under belly) clearly visible and will wobble when cat moves. Belly and chest rounded.</li> <li>• Large ventral fat pad covering hind legs.</li> </ul> <p>Reduce feed intake or provide lower calorie feed. Consider options to increase exercise level of cat.</p>
<p><b>Obese</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribs and spine not visible and difficult to feel.</li> <li>• Tail has obvious fat deposit.</li> <li>• No waist and back broadened when viewed from above.</li> <li>• Flank fold (under belly) hangs down and will sway when cat moves, belly and chest very rounded</li> </ul> <p>Seek veterinary advice on diet and exercise regime</p>