

# Pet Policy

---

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the circumstances under which tenants are able to keep pets at a Housing Trust property, in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Companion Animals Act 1998 (referred to as 'the Act' in this Policy).

## Policy

All tenants must have written approval to keep a pet or pets at any property managed by Housing Trust. Tenants applying to have a pet at the property must do so in writing noting the type and size of the pet(s) they wish to keep.

Tenants are not permitted to have a pet at the property until they have received written approval from Housing Trust.

Housing Trust will abide by legal requirements in relation to companion animals in accordance with the Act.

## Approval to keep a pet

A tenant who lives in a property that is owned or managed by Housing Trust is able to keep a pet under the following circumstances:

- The tenant has written permission from Housing Trust to keep a pet at the property
- The pet is a 'Companion Animal' as defined in the Act
- The property is suitable for the animal
- The pet does not interfere with the reasonable peace, comfort and privacy of neighbours
- The pet complies with the requirements of the Act
  - the tenant is responsible for ensuring the animal does not harm or threaten any other person or animal or cause a nuisance
  - the tenant ensures their animal does not cause a nuisance by persistently making a noise, straying or interfering with other people's property
- The pet complies with any relevant council requirements
- If the pet is a dog, the tenant ensures the dog is properly contained on the property
- The tenant agrees to keep the pet on a lead at all times when in the common area of a Housing Trust complex

## **Approval to Keep a Pet - Leasehold Properties**

In addition to the circumstances outlined above tenants who reside in a property leased from the private market must be permitted by the property owner to keep a pet at the property and must agree to any conditions set by the property owner. Pets are often prohibited by private property owners and strata by-laws.

## **Restricted Breeds or Dangerous Dogs**

Approval to keep a restricted breed or dangerous dog at a Housing Trust property will not be provided. Restricted breeds or dangerous dogs are not to be kept at a Housing Trust property under any circumstances.

For the purpose of this policy restricted breeds are as defined in the Act and include dangerous dogs which are described by the Act as those that have been declared dangerous by a local council or local court.

This includes dogs that attack without provocation, or kill a person or animal, or repeatedly threaten to attack or chase a person or animal. The Tenant must comply with court or council orders regarding action to be taken in relation to a dangerous dog.

## **Tenant Responsibilities**

In accordance with the Act, pet owners have a number of obligations and responsibilities to their pet and to the community. It is a tenants' responsibility to ensure that they are aware of their obligations and responsibilities and that these are fulfilled at all times.

## **Nuisance and Annoyance**

Under the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 a tenant must not:

- Cause or permit a nuisance
- Interfere, or cause or permit any interference, with the reasonable peace, comfort or privacy of any neighbour of the tenant
- Intentionally or negligently cause or permit any damage to the residential premises

Where it is found that a tenant has breached their Tenancy Agreement or this Policy, Housing Trust may issue a Breach Notice or attend the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) to seek a Compliance Order or Termination and Possession of the Tenancy.

## Right of Appeal

If an applicant believes Housing Trust has made a wrong decision a formal review of the decision should be requested. To do this, the tenant is required to complete a Housing Trust Appeals Form stating why they disagree with the decision. Housing Trust's Appeals Policy and form is available by contacting the Housing Trust office or alternatively, may be downloaded from our website: [www.housingtrust.org.au](http://www.housingtrust.org.au)

If the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal they can make an appeal to the Independent Housing Appeals Committee (HAC). HAC is an independent appeals agency for all NSW Social Housing clients.

Housing Trust will advise the appellant on how to lodge an appeal with HAC. Alternatively HAC may be contacted directly by visiting [www.hac.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hac.nsw.gov.au) or by calling 1800 629 794.

## Reference or Related Documents

### Internal

#### Policy

1. Privacy Policy
2. Appeals Policy

#### Letter:

1. 107015 Pet Agreement

### External

1. Residential Tenancies Act 2010
2. Companion Animal Act 1998
3. Companion Animals Regulation 2008
4. Local Council Regulations
5. Office of Local Government Restricted Dogs [www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/dogs-and-cats/information-for-the-community/restricted-dogs](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/dogs-and-cats/information-for-the-community/restricted-dogs)

## Policy Version Control

Version	Details of Improvements	Release Date	Approval/Release Details
V 1.0	Original Policy	20.09.2016	Approved for release by GM:C&C
V 2.0	Policy reviewed and updated in line with current business practices. Reviewed and endorsed by Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) on 14.08.2019 and Executive Leadership Team (ELT).	19.08.2019	Approved for release by Amanda Winks Chief Housing Officer