

Pets

Purpose

This policy explains what Bridge Housing considers is a companion pet and sets out the conditions under which we will usually grant written permission for a tenant to keep a pet in their home.

Scope

This policy applies to all tenants of Bridge Housing (we, our, us).

Policy overview

It is a requirement that tenants seek our permission if they want to keep a household pet. Keeping a pet without our approval is considered a breach of the tenancy agreement.

We recognise that pets can enrich the lives of their owners. We understand that refusal to keep a pet may cause distress to tenants and will follow the policy set out below when granting permission to keep a pet. This is why we have developed a fair, consistent and transparent process for granting permission to keep a pet.

In line with the [Companion Animals Act 1998](#), we consider a household pet to be a companion animal that helps relieve stress, provide psychological support or serve a more active role such as a guide or assistance dog.

Household pets

We consider a household pet to be a small, domesticated animal such as a small dog (less than 10kgs), a cat, caged bird/s, fish in a small tank, or a small mammal like a rabbit or guinea pig.

We do not consider poultry (chickens and other fowl), livestock or exotic animals to be household pets. Therefore, tenants are not permitted to keep these types of animals in their properties.

All cats and dogs approved as pets in our properties must be micro chipped and registered on the NSW Companion Animals Register with the local council. Further details on this requirement can be found at www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au.

Restricted and dangerous dogs as defined by the Companion Animals Act 1998 and local councils are not permitted by us.

We do not encourage the ownership of reptiles and insects due to the specialised nature of their care and living conditions. Tenants approved to keep such animals must have, where applicable, the required licence. They must also demonstrate that they have adequate knowledge to meet the care and welfare needs of the animal, including the provision of a suitable environment.

Request Permission to keep a pet

Tenants must request permission to keep a pet in their home. They can do so by completing our [Request to keep a household pet form](#).

Given the variety of household pets and the range of properties and tenures that we offer, we will individually consider each request to keep a pet on its merits. We will take into account:

- Any legal or regulatory requirements,
- The size and type of property and tenure type,
- The size and type of pet; and
- The potential for any damage to the property or interference with neighbours.

Types of properties and pets

We manage a range of properties and not all of these are suitable for pet ownership.

We will make each assessment based on the type and size of pet, the size and type of property, and any strata or by laws that may restrict the keeping of pets.

We will usually grant approval in capital properties (properties we own) for a tenant to keep a small household pet in their home if the following conditions are met:

- The tenant has sought permission to keep a pet and the type and size of property is suitable.
- The pet is unlikely to interfere with the reasonable peace, comfort and privacy of neighbours in accordance with the [Residential Tenancies Act 2010](#).
- The approved pet complies with what we have identified as a household pet.
- Dogs and cats are registered and microchipped to fully comply with the *Companion Animals Act 1998* and [Companion Animals Regulation 2008](#).
- The approved pet complies with any licencing requirements and any relevant local council regulations or other legislation that restricts the keeping of certain types of animals.

If a tenant lives in a leasehold property, we cannot approve requests unless the landlord/owner has provided permission to do so.

Responding to requests to keep a pet

We will write to the tenant to advise whether their request to keep a pet has been approved or declined.

If approved, the tenant will be required to complete and agree to a pet contract that sets out their responsibilities as a pet owner in one of our properties and note the following conditions:

- Pet owners are required to pay for the cost of any property damage caused by their pet and for carpet cleaning and, where necessary, fumigation at the end of the tenancy in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 2010.
- Any approval is provided the understanding that this is for the current property. If the tenant moves to another of our properties, they will need to seek re-approval as not all of our properties are suitable for pet ownership.
- If the pet interferes with the reasonable peace, comfort and privacy of neighbours, we may withdraw approval to keep a pet if in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 2010.

If the request is declined, we will write to the tenant advising of the reasons for declining the request and their right to appeal the decision.

Failure to comply with this policy will result in action being taken. This may include working with the tenant to resolve any problems caused by pet ownership, withdrawing permission to keep a pet or seeking an order from the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) if there has been a breach of the Residential Tenancy Agreement.

Appeals and Review of Decision

Tenants can appeal decisions made under this policy.

If a tenant is not satisfied with a service we have provided or does not agree with a decision we have made, they can ask for a formal review. Our [Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy](#) outlines the many ways for tenants to make an appeal. This policy, and a helpful information brochure, is available from our office or they can be downloaded from our website www.bridgehousing.org.au.

If a tenant is unhappy with the outcome of the appeal, they can lodge a second level appeal with the Housing Appeals Committee. The Housing Appeals Committee is an independent agency that reviews certain decisions made by staff of Community Housing organisations and Housing NSW. For information on the Housing Appeals Committee call 1800 629 794 or go to www.hac.nsw.gov.au.

Related Documents and Resources

Type	Title
Legislation	Residential Tenancies Act 2010
Legislation	Residential Tenancies Regulations 2010
Legislation	Companion Animals Act 1998
Legislation	Companion Animals Regulation 2008
Policy	Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy
Resource	NSW Pet Registry
Form	Request to keep a household pet form
Fact Sheet	Keeping a Pet

English

If you need help to understand this letter please contact the Telephone Interpreters Service on 131450 and ask them to contact on 8324 0800 for you at no cost. You can also come to the Bridge Housing office and ask for assistance in your language.

Simplified Chinese

如果您理解这封信有困难, 请拨打电 话传译服务 131450 要求电话传译 服务替您拨打 Bridge Housing, 电话 8324 0800。这项服务是免费的。您也可以到 Bridge Housing 的办公室来。 要求用您的语言来协助您。

Spanish

Si necesita ayuda para entender esta carta, por favor comuníquese con el Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes al 131450 y solicite que lo contacten sin cargo con Bridge Housing al 8324 0800. También puede dirigirse a las oficinas de Bridge Housing y solicitar asistencia en su idioma.

Russian

Если для понимания содержания этого письма Вам необходима помощь, свяжитесь, пожалуйста, с Телефонной переводческой службой по номеру 131450 и попросите соединить Вас с Bridge Housing по номеру 8324 0800. За соединение платить не нужно. Кроме того, Вы можете лично посетить офис Bridge Housing и попросить об услугах переводчика.

Greek

Εάν χρειάζεστε βοήθεια για να κατανοήσετε την παρούσα επιστολή, παρακαλώ επικοινωνήστε με την Υπηρεσία Τηλεφωνικών Διερμηνέων στο 131450 και ζητήστε τους να επικοινωνήσουν με το 8324 0800 για εσάς χωρίς καμία χρέωση. Μπορείτε επίσης να επισκεφθείτε το γραφείο Bridge Housing και να ζητήσετε βοήθεια στη γλώσσα σας.

Vietnamese

Nếu cần người giúp để hiểu thư này xin quý vị liên hệ với Dịch Vụ Thông Ngôn Điện Thoại số 131450 và nhờ họ liên lạc với Bridge Housing qua số 8324 0800 cho quý vị một cách miễn phí. Quý vị cũng có thể đến Văn Phòng của Bridge Housing và xin giúp đỡ bằng ngôn-ngữ của quý-vị.

Arabic

إذا احتجت إلى مُساعدة في فهم هذه الرسالة رجاء الاتصال مع خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية على رقم 131450 واطلُب منهم أن يتصلوا لك بمكّتب على رقم 8324 0800 بدون تكلفة عليك. ويُمْكنك أيضا الحضور إلى مكّتب Bridge Housing وطلب المُساعدة بلُغتك.