

## Pets

### Purpose

This policy sets out how Bridge Housing considers requests to keep a pet in your home.

### Scope

This policy applies to all tenants of Bridge Housing Limited and all its related entities (we, our, us).

### Policy overview

We understand that owning a pet brings many benefits to a tenant's life. These benefits must be balanced against the impact that keeping a pet has on your neighbours and the suitability of the property.

It is a requirement under the [Residential Tenancies Act 2010](#) that tenants seek written approval if they want to keep a household pet. Keeping a pet without our approval is considered a breach of the tenancy agreement.

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.

When considering applications to keep a pet we will adhere to the NSW Residential Tenancies Act to ensure compliance with all relevant regulations.

### Assistance Pets

Assistance animals are those registered under Section 59 of the Companion Animals Act 1998 or Section 9 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. If the pet fits the definition of assistance pet, only a formal notification is required. Bridge Housing will verify if the pet fits the definition under Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

### Household pets

All cats and dogs approved as pets in our properties must be microchipped 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](http://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.

## Approval to keep a pet

All tenants must seek written approval before bringing a pet into their home. In line with the Residential Tenancies Act 2010, all tenants are required to complete a [Request to Keep a Household Pet Form](#) and submit this to their housing provider.

To have a pet request considered, tenants need to complete the required form and submit it to Bridge Housing using one of the following methods:

- **Email:** Send your form to [customerservice@bridgehousing.org.au](mailto:customerservice@bridgehousing.org.au) with the subject line “Request approval to keep a pet”.
- **Mail:** Post your form to PO Box 20217, World Square NSW 2002.
- **In Person:** Deliver your form to one of our offices:
  - Central Office: Level 9, 59 Goulburn St, Sydney.
  - Northern Beaches Office: Level 1, 660-664 Pittwater Rd, Brookvale.

## 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](#).
- 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

Bridge Housing will respond to the application to keep a pet within 21 days after the application is given. Bridge Housing will specify whether the request is approved or declined. However, Bridge may specify reasonable conditions for the consent of keeping a pet.

## Condition of keeping pets

If your application to keep a pet is approved, there may be conditions set. These include complying with the Companion Animals Act 1998, Tenancies Amendment Act 2024 Division 8, any Local Government regulations and maintaining your property at an appropriate standard.

If approved, the tenant must agree to the following conditions:

- Pet owners are required to pay for carpet cleaning and, where appropriate, fumigation at the end of the tenancy in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 2010.
- Pet owners must ensure that they comply with the Companion Animals Act including:
  - Cats and dogs must be microchipped and registered.
  - The owner of the pet is responsible for ensuring the pet does not harm or threaten anybody or another animal nor should it cause a nuisance.
  - Dogs must be kept under effective control and not allowed to roam.
- Pet owners must pick up and dispose of their pet's waste safely and hygienically
- Any approval is provided with 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.
- If the pet interferes with the reasonable peace, comfort and privacy of neighbours, we may apply to the NCAT to address this breach.

If the request is declined, we will write to the tenant advising of the reasons for declining the request in line with legislation and their right to dispute the decision.

Failure to comply with these conditions 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.

## Review of Decision

If a tenant disagrees with our decision to decline approval, they have 28 days to lodge an application with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT).

If you are a tenant and think our reason for refusing a pet is not applicable, or a condition we have set is unreasonable, you can contact NSW Fair Trading to discuss the issue. Tenants can also apply to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal for a decision. To learn more about dispute options visit [nsw.gov.au/housing-andconstruction/renting-a-place-to-live/resolving-residential-tenancy-disputes](https://nsw.gov.au/housing-andconstruction/renting-a-place-to-live/resolving-residential-tenancy-disputes).

Additionally, 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](http://www.bridgehousing.org.au).

## Related Documents and Resources

Type	Title
Legislation	<a href="#">Residential Tenancies Act 2010</a>
Legislation	<a href="#">Residential Tenancies Regulations 2010</a>
Legislation	<a href="#">Companion Animals Act 1998</a>
Legislation	<a href="#">Companion Animals Regulation 2008</a>
Policy	<a href="#">Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy</a>
Resource	<a href="#">NSW Pet Registry</a>
Form	<a href="#">Request to Keep a Household Pet Form</a>
Fact Sheet	<a href="#">Keeping a Pet</a>

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