Pets in Public Housing

Fact Sheet

Can I keep a pet at my home?

Pets are generally allowed in public housing homes. The type and number of pets you can keep, will depend on the property you live in.

Do I need approval to keep a pet in my home?

If your home has a private, fully fenced yard and the fences are sufficient to stop a dog escaping, you can keep a dog, cat or any other small pet. In most cases, you do not need approval from Communities.

In some cases, you will need Communities consent to keep a dog:

- If your home does not have a fully enclosed, non-communal yard with fences sufficient to prevent a dog escaping, you will need Communities consent to keep a dog.
- If the dog is listed as a dangerous dog (restricted breed) in the *Dog Regulations 2013* (WA) or as a dangerous dog in the *Dog Act 1976* (WA), you will need consent to keep the dog.

- If you require a **registered assistance animal**, you do not need permission to keep it at your home, regardless of where you live. We may ask for proof that the animal is a registered assistance animal.

How do I apply for consent to keep a dog?

You will need to complete a request form. You can download the **Pet Request Form** from www.demirs.wa.gov.au/renting or visit your local Communities (Housing) office and ask a member of our team to provide a copy of the form. If you can't make it to one of our offices, we can post a form to you.

Once you return the completed form to us, a member of our team will review your request and let you know the outcome within 14 days.

Why can't I keep a pet?

You cannot keep a pet if there is a written law, local law or strata by-law that prevents you from doing so. For example, if your home is part of a villa or apartment complex, there may be a strata by-law that does not allow pets or restricts the type or number of pets you can keep. Communities staff will be able to provide advice on any restrictions.

Can I appeal if you tell me I can't keep a pet?

Decisions related to keeping a pet are not appealable under the Housing Authority Housing Appeal Mechanism.

Communities does not have the power to overturn a decision if a written law, local law or strata by-law, prevents you from keeping a pet.

If Communities decides it is not appropriate for you to keep a pet, or a particular type of pet for any other reason, we must advise the Consumer Protection Commissioner. The Commissioner will then decide whether Communities has provided a good reason for not allowing the pet.

Keeping pets

There are some important things to remember if you have a pet at your property, whether you live in a single dwelling or a villa or apartment complex.

- You are responsible for the behaviour of your pet.

- You are responsible for ensuring the behaviour of your pet does not cause a nuisance or unreasonable disturbance to neighbours or other residents if you are living in a complex.

- Where it is shown that a pet is causing an ongoing nuisance, unreasonable disturbance to other residents of a complex, or damage to your home, this may be a breach of your tenancy.

- Dogs must be on a lead when moving through communal areas of a complex.

- Dogs must not be left unattended in communal areas of a complex.

- You are responsible for ensuring you clean up after your pet and appropriate hygiene standards are maintained in your home and communal areas of a complex.

Other important information

If Communities consent is required for you to keep a dog, it is very important that you do not get a dog until you have consent. Keeping a dog without consent would be a breach of your tenancy agreement and could result in legal action to terminate your tenancy.

You should also check local government rules about the type and number of pets you can have. Most local Councils will limit how many dogs or cats you can have. Some Councils may have restrictions on other pets too.

Remember, the law also requires that dogs and cats are registered with the local Council, microchipped and in most cases, sterilised.