

# Pets Policy (HCWA)

Operations -WA

Document Owner

7

Version Number

13/08/2029

Next Review Date

13/08/2024

Date Published

5 Years

Review period

## 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain the circumstances and conditions under which tenants may keep a pet.

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to the activities of Housing Choices WA Operational Services irrespective of whether staff undertaking activities are employed by that entity or another entity within HCA, who are interacting with Housing Choices WA tenants and carers.

This policy applies to tenancy agreements made under the Residential Tenancies Act WA 1987.

This policy excludes Licence to Occupy occupants and tenants who have assistance dogs or other registered assistance animal. Where a tenant acquires an assistance dog during their tenancy and the property is not practical to keep a dog, the tenant will be offered a priority transfer to suitable alternative accommodation.

## 3 Policy Statement

Housing Choices WA understands the many mental health and well-being benefits that having a pet can provide and how they can be an important member of a family. Where there are no barriers to a tenant keeping a pet, we support the tenant's right to do so providing the tenant is the responsible owner of a well-behaved pet.

Our definition of being a responsible pet owner means complying with all council regulations, not allowing the pet to cause a nuisance to other residents, adequately training and caring for the pet, making sure all pet waste is cleared from the property and there are no parasites or damages caused by the pet.

### 3.1 Considerations for permission to keep a pet

Pets can range from a large dog to a small bird or rodent. Most properties allow some kind of pet to be kept, although the type and size of pet will be influenced by the type and size of the property.

The reasons for refusing a pet and the conditions that can be applied to tenants who have pets are limited.

Housing Choices may refuse a tenant requests to keep a pet if:

- There are legal restrictions relating to keeping particular animals (eg. biosecurity laws or restricted breeds),
- There are local government restrictions to keeping certain pets (eg. keeping roosters and certain numbers of pets in local government areas).
- There are restrictions in the strata by-laws of the particular property.

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Housing Choices can apply conditions to keeping pets related to:

- Number of pets
- Cleaning
- Maintenance
- Fumigation

If Housing Choices wishes to apply additional conditions or refuse a pet for other reasons, it will need to apply to the Consumer Protection for Commissioner for approval. Reasons Housing Choices may choose to apply for approval include:

- If a pet has been declared a dangerous dog by the local council.
- The suitability of the property for keeping a pet (eg. size, fencing, and capacity for the pet to be safe and secure).
- The number and types of pets already at a property.
- Likelihood of risks to neighbours in terms of health, safety or disturbances.

Tenants are expected to take responsibility for the care, control, behaviour and cleanliness of their pet.

### 3.2 Applications

Tenants must apply for written permission to keep a pet prior to obtaining the pet.

Tenants should apply to keep a pet using request form 25. A new form should be completed for each additional pet.

Housing Choices will provide an answer within 14 days of receiving the request. Housing Choices is responsible for applying to the Commissioner at the Department of Commerce if it wishes to apply additional conditions or refusal reasons other than those outlined on the form. This also needs to be completed within the 14-day timeframe.

Tenants who keep a pet without written permission will be considered a breach of their Tenancy Agreement.

### 3.3 Pet bonds

The Residential Tenancies Act 1987 allows a landlord to charge a pet bond of \$260 if a tenant is allowed to keep a pet capable of carrying parasites which can affect humans. As most pets can carry fleas and parasites, most pets are eligible to be charged a pet bond. However, we recognise that not all pets pose the same risk.

We will charge a pet bond of \$260 for all cats and dogs (excluding assistance dogs – see Policy Scope).

A pet bond is not required for caged rodents (such as rabbits, guineapigs, rats and mice), caged birds and fish in modest numbers. Other pets will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Where we consider the number of rodents, birds, fish or other type of pet to be great enough for the property to require fumigation at the end of the tenancy, a pet bond will be charged.

The Pet Bond is used to fumigate the property at the end of the tenancy. Only one Pet Bond will be charged, regardless of how many pets are approved to live in the property.

Tenants will be advised if a pet bond is payable. A pet bond must be paid within 14 days of written approval to keep the pet.

## 4 References

LEGISLATION & STANDARDS	RELATED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential Tenancies Act 1987</li> <li>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</li> <li>Strata Titles Act 1985</li> <li>Schedule 2 Conduct by-laws</li> <li>Animal Welfare Act 2002</li> <li>Cat Act 2011</li> <li>Dog Act 1976</li> <li>Dog Regulations 2013</li> <li>Local Government local laws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applications and Allocations Policy</li> <li>Bonds Procedure</li> <li>Transfer, Mutual Exchange and Relocation Policy</li> <li>Nuisance and Anti-social Behaviour Policy</li> <li>Licence to Occupy Policy</li> </ul>

### 4.1 Glossary

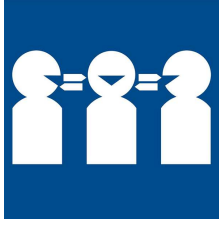
Pets	<p>Pets are common domesticated animals such as dogs, cats, guinea pigs, rabbits, birds and fish etc.</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy, pets are <b>not</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Livestock such as horses, goats, pigs and sheep etc.</li> <li>Bees.</li> </ul>
Assistance dogs	<p>Assistance dogs have been trained by an accredited animal training organisation to alleviate or manage the effect or a person's disability or medical condition.</p> <p>Types of assistance dogs include guide dogs, hearing dogs, diabetic alert dogs, mobility assistance dogs, seizure response dogs, psychiatric assistance dogs.</p>
Restricted Breeds	<p>The following breeds are classified as restricted in Australia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dogo Argentino</li> <li>Fila Brasileiro</li> <li>Japanese Tosa</li> <li>American Pit Bull Terrier</li> <li>Pit Bull Terrier</li> <li>Perro de Presa Canario or Presa Canario.</li> </ul>

Declared  
Dangerous Dogs

A dog that has been declared by the local council to be a dangerous dog and the owner must ensure the dog wears a special collar, muzzle, is leashed at all times, is enclosed and Dangerous Dog signage must be displayed at all entrances to a property.

## 4.2 Version Notes

Version	Date	Details	Author	Approver
1	27/06/07	Policy ratified and implemented	U/K	Board
2	01/06/11	Review - Increase of pet bond to \$260.00	M. Shaw	A. Wilkerson
3	24/05/17	Policy review & re-formatting. Merged Pet Bonds and Pet Policy.	S. Groome	Policy Committee
4	1/11/18	Insertion of review & reference table	M. Shaw	K. Moorey
5	10/02/21	Business name change from Access Housing Australia to Housing Choices Western Australia (Housing Choices WA) and minor re-formatting. No change of policy content.	R. Cavanagh	M Shaw
6	30/06/2022	Review & re-write to simplify.	M. Shaw	N. Sangalli
7	13/08/2024	Updated due to rent reforms	C Quinn	



**English:**

If you need an interpreter, please call TIS National on 131 450 and ask them to call **Housing Choices Australia** on **1300 312 447**. Our business hours are **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**.

You can also visit the TIS National website for translated information about the service TIS National provides. Visit: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**Arabic:**

وأطلب منهم الاتصال بـ 131 450 الوطنية على الرقم TIS إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مترجم، يرجى الاتصال بـ ساعات العمل الخاصة بنا **1300 312 447** على هاتف رقم Housing Choices Australia 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. الوطنية. قم TIS الوطنية للحصول على معلومات حول الخدمات التي تقدمها TIS يمكنك أيضا زيارة موقع: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**Farsi (alt Persian):**

با تماس بگیرید و از آنها بخواهید 131 450 اگر به مترجم نیاز دارید، لطفا با شماره تلفن تیس نشنال Housing Choices Australia 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. است. شما همچنین می توانید به وب سایت تیس نشنال برای اطلاعات در مورد خدماتی که تیس نشنال فراهم می کند مراجعه کنید. به [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**Vietnamese:**

Nếu quý vị cần thông dịch viên, xin hãy gọi cho Dịch vụ Thông Phiên dịch Quốc gia (TIS Quốc gia) theo số 131 450 và yêu cầu họ gọi cho **Housing Choices Australia** theo số **1300 312 447**. Giờ làm việc của chúng tôi là **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**. Quý vị cũng có thể vào thăm trang mạng của TIS Quốc gia để có thông tin về các dịch vụ mà TIS Quốc gia cung cấp. Hãy vào thăm [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**Somali:**

Haddii aad u baahan tahay turjumaan, fadlan ka wac TIS National taleefanka 131 450 waxaad ka codsataa inay kuu wacaan **Housing Choices Australia** iyo **1300 312 447**. Saacadaha Shaqadu waa **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**. Waxaad kaloo booqan kartaa website-ka TIS National ee macluumaadka turjuman oo ku saabsan adeegga TIS National ay bixiso. Ka eeg: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**Simplified Chinese:**

如果您需要口译员，请拨打TIS National 的电话131 450，请他们打电话给Housing Choices Australia，电话号码：1300 312 447。我们的营业时间是 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday。你也可以访问TIS National 的网站，了解TIS National提供的服务。网址：[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**Traditional Chinese:**

若你需要口譯員，請撥打TIS National電話131 450並請他們轉接 Housing Choices Australia 的電話1300 312 447。我們的工作時間是 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday。你也可以瀏覽TIS National 網站瞭解TIS National 的服務資訊，網址：[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**Spanish:**

Si necesita un intérprete, por favor llame a TIS National en el 131 450 y pida que lo comuniquen con **Housing Choices Australia** en el **1300 312 447**. Nuestro horario de oficina es **9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday**.

También puede visitar el sitio web de TIS National para obtener información acerca de los servicios que provee TIS National. Visite [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

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Puoi visitare anche il sito web TIS National per informazioni tradotte sul servizio che TIS National fornisce. Visita il sito: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

For other languages, access to an interpreter is available by contacting Housing Choices Australia on 1300 312 447.