



Finding a Pet-Friendly Rental & Being a Good Renter with a Pet

Please, if you cannot immediately find housing that accepts pets, do NOT abandon your pet in the hope that someone else will find and care for him, or in the hope that you'll be able to come back later and get him. If you absolutely cannot find a pet-friendly rental, bring your pet to AVHS or another reputable shelter or rescue group.

Finding a pet-friendly rental has never been easier due to resources now available through the internet. Simply type "pet friendly apartments" into your search engine. The following common apartment-finding websites include filters for housing that accepts pets:

<http://www.apartments.com/pet-friendly-apartments>

<http://www.rent.com/pet-friendly-apartments>

<http://www.apartmentfinder.com/> - use the "Pets allowed" filter at the top of the home page

<http://www.apartmentguide.com/> - use the "Pet friendly" checkbox under Community Features

<http://www.rentlingo.com/> - under "More," select "Allow cats" and/or "Allow dogs"

<http://www.peoplewithpets.com/>

Download Seattle's DogSpot guide for a list of pet-friendly housing in your area here:

<https://www.seattledogspot.com/your-download-guide-to-dog-friendly-apartments/>

Preparing a Pet Profile for Landlords

Create a "resume" for each pet that includes a photo, favorite activities, certifications and even a short adoption story. Check out this [sample pet resume](#) to spark ideas. Extras could include:

- A letter of reference from a current or most recent landlord.
- Written proof that the dog has completed a training class.
- A letter from the vet showing each pet is up-to-date on vaccines and is spayed or neutered.
- Proof of proper pet licensing for your city.
- Consider having your dog certified through a Canine Good Citizen Program near you. This is especially helpful for larger dogs.
- If your pet provides an essential emotional assistance to a diagnosed mental disability such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, bipolar disorder, be sure to include that information.

*Tip: Even if a landlord advertises "no pets," some will make exceptions, especially when they are pet lovers themselves. It is worth asking over the phone or in person with friendly conversation.

After you find a potential rental

- Show an interest in cleanliness. Let the landlord or manager know that you share any concerns about cleanliness.
- Point out that your pet is housetrained or litter-box trained. Emphasize that you *always* clean up after your dog outdoors and that you *always* properly dispose of your pet's waste.
- Offer your new landlord the opportunity to visit you after you've moved in so they can meet your pet and see how well you care for your rental unit.
- Try to take a few days off when you move into a new place to help your pet adjust. It's new for your pet too, and sometimes even the most quiet and calm pets will get anxious in new surroundings and make excessive noise, disturbing the neighbors. It often helps if you can be there to help your pet adjust to the new home.
- Be a good neighbor. Make sure your pets don't disturb your neighbors, whether it's with noise, wandering loose or unsightly messes. Remember that your landlord has to deal with complaints and won't be happy if it keeps happening.
- Be diligent about addressing any concerns your landlord may have. If an issue arises about your pet, make sure you understand what the problem is and take immediate steps to address it.

Facing eviction because of your pet? Make sure you know your rights!

Have you been a good pet renter and have not received any previous notice of your pet causing a disturbance or issue and are suddenly threatened with eviction if you do not remove your pet? Don't panic. The law is your best friend. To start, the eviction process does not happen over-night. A landlord cannot have your pets removed or lock you out of your home without following a complex process that would allow you enough time to find a solution.

First, start with a calm conversation with your landlord and make sure they know you are here to solve any issues that may have come up. It is important to re-read your lease and to know your tenant rights before this conversation. Educate yourself at:

- <http://tenantsunion.org/en/rights>
- <https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/resource/your-rights-as-a-tenant-in-washington>
<https://www.hud.gov/states/washington/renting/tenantrights>

Second, if you and your landlord do not come to a solution that would allow you to keep your pet, consult professional legal advice. There are resources for people who need reduced or free legal advice. Find resources here:

- <https://www.kcba.org/For-the-Public/Free-Legal-Assistance>
- <https://www.kcba.org/For-the-Public/Free-Legal-Assistance/Neighborhood-Legal-Clinics>
- <http://www.tacomaprobono.org/>

Lastly, does your pet help you cope with a mental or physical disability or help alleviate its symptoms? If yes, you still have rights to keep your pet, regardless of no-pet policies or restrictive pet policies. There is a lot of confusion among landlords and tenants regarding Emotional Support Pets, Assistance animals and Service animals. PLEASE read this document that can help you navigate this process and understand how to register your pet appropriately:

[http://tenantsunion.org/pdf/Assistance and Service Animals for Tenants Who are Persons with Disabilities.pdf](http://tenantsunion.org/pdf/Assistance_and_Service_Animals_for_Tenants_Who_are_Persons_with_Disabilities.pdf)

You will have the best opportunity to keep your pet if you take the time to educate yourself.

Additional Resources

How to respond to a Pet Nuisance Complaint-

http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/resources/tips/pet-nuisance-complaint-tips.html?credit=web_id625421016