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Housing Initiative**
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Pet-Inclusive Housing in New York City: A Guide on Best Practices

*Creating a City Where Everyone—
People and Pets—Can Thrive*

2025

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Introduction

The 2023 New York City Housing Vacancy Survey estimates that more than a quarter of New Yorkers have at least one pet.¹ Many other New Yorkers would likely share their home with a companion animal, if only that home allowed it.

Pet-Inclusive Housing in NYC: A Guide on Best Practices is designed to help rental housing providers, residents, and communities across the five boroughs adopt fair, practical, and compassionate policies that welcome pets and the people who love them. Such policies aren't just pet-friendly, but pet-inclusive.

Pet-inclusive housing isn't just a compassionate choice—it's a smart, sustainable one that's good for business. When communities remove unnecessary barriers, they create safer, healthier, and more welcoming environments for all New Yorkers, both two and four-legged. By adopting the principles and practices in this guide, housing providers and tenants can help ensure that no one has to choose between their home and their pet.

The guide, a joint project of the [Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative \(PIHI\)](#), a [Michelson Found Animals](#) program, and the [New York City Mayor's Office of Animal Welfare](#), draws from research by PIHI and offers actionable steps to strengthen community well-being, reduce housing barriers, and support engaged pet ownership.

Together, we can redefine what “pet-friendly” truly means and move toward a housing landscape that is fully and proudly **pet-inclusive**.

PARTNERS



¹ New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, 2023 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey, Public Use File (PUF).

OUR CORE BELIEFS

- **Pets are family.** Housing should reflect the integral role pets play in people's lives.
- **Housing stability is essential.** Arbitrary pet restrictions jeopardize both residents and their pets.
- **Pet-inclusive practices benefit all.** Inclusive housing fosters healthier, more connected communities while improving property performance.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide offers a flexible framework that can be tailored to different property types and community needs. While it's aimed at rental housing providers and renters, we urge co-op boards to adapt it to foster pet inclusive communities for their residents. The guide includes:

- **Guiding principles** that define what true pet inclusivity means,
- **Practical tools and templates** for implementation,
- **Resources and case studies** from PIHI's work with leaders in housing, policy, and animal welfare, and
- **Information** about requirements and resources for New Yorkers with pets.

By following these best practices, stakeholders can strengthen their communities and ensure that everyone—two- and four-legged alike—has a safe, stable home.

Why Pet-Inclusive Housing Matters




A Widespread Need

More than one in four New York City households include at least one pet,² yet many New Yorkers face restrictions that make finding housing challenging or impossible. The disconnect between pet ownership and housing access contributes to instability for residents and unnecessary surrendering of pets to already over-populated city shelters.

The transition from “pet-friendly” to “pet-inclusive” housing recognizes that allowing pets is not enough—it’s about removing inequitable restrictions and creating communities that work for all residents.

Keep in mind: Assistance animals, including [service and emotional support animals \(ESAs\)](#), are not “pets,” and tenants with them have protections under city, state and/or federal laws, including the U.S. Fair Housing Act and the NYC Human Rights Law (more information on p. 23).

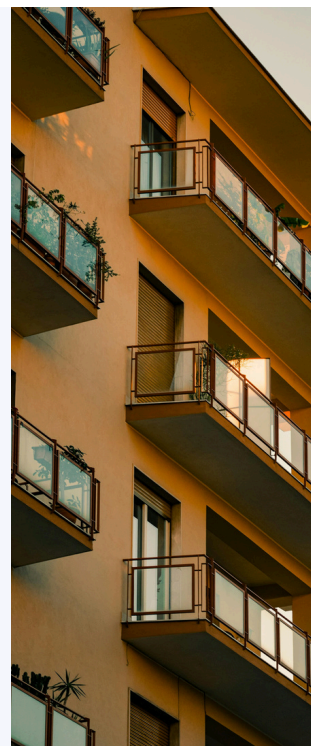
² Ibid.

 **Resource:**
[What is the Difference Between Pet-Friendly and Pet-Inclusive?](#)

Where are you on your pet-inclusive journey?	
Pet-Friendly	Pet-Inclusive
Dogs or cats generally allowed	Dogs and cats allowed
Multiple breeds restricted	No breed restrictions
Dogs over a certain weight restricted	No weight or size restrictions
Pet fees required	No non-benefit fees
No pet amenities	Basic pet amenities
Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative	PRESENTED BY Michelson Found Animals 

BENEFITS FOR HOUSING PROVIDERS

- ✧ **Expanded applicant pool.** Removing breed, size, and weight restrictions attracts even more qualified residents.
- ✧ **Higher resident retention.** Pet-owning residents stay longer—on average, [21% longer](#) than non-pet-owning renters.
- ✧ **Improved community satisfaction.** [Residents with pets](#) report stronger feelings of belonging and community connection.
- ✧ **Reduced unauthorized pets.** Transparent, inclusive policies encourage compliance and accountability



BENEFITS FOR RESIDENTS

- ✧ **Stability and security.** Inclusive housing reduces pet-related move-outs, pet rehoming, and animal shelter and rescue surrenders.
- ✧ **Improved well-being.** Living with pets reduces stress, anxiety, and loneliness.
- ✧ **Stronger communities.** Pets encourage social interaction and mutual trust among neighbors.

BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITIES

Pet-inclusive housing strengthens and supports animal welfare and aligns with public health and equity goals by helping ensure that no one must choose between a home and their companion animal.



Core Pet-Inclusive Housing Principles

1

No blanket breed, size, or weight restrictions.

[Research shows no correlation between breed and threatening behavior](#); assessing pets individually is the fairest and most accurate approach.

2

Transparent, fair, and limited pet-related fees.

Fees should only reflect actual costs—never as a barrier to access—and refundable deposits should be the default.

3

Behavior-based policies that welcome all well-managed pets.

Encourage the use of pet behavior assessments or [Pet Personality Profiles](#) to evaluate each pet as an individual.

4

Clear and inclusive communication.

Use [people-centered language](#) and transparent policies that foster trust between housing providers and renters.

5

Collaboration with community partners.

Partner with local animal shelters, welfare organizations, and trainers to support engaged pet ownership and [provide resources for residents](#).

Best Practices for Housing Providers

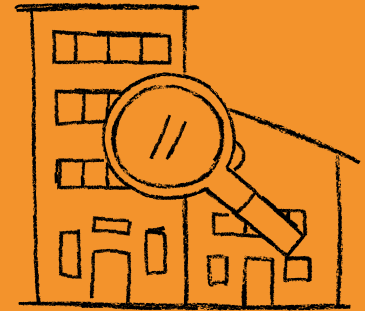


Creating a truly pet-inclusive community means shifting from “pet-tolerant” to pet-positive management practices that balance resident satisfaction, safety, and operational success. Housing providers who remove outdated restrictions and adopt inclusive, transparent policies not only open their doors to more renters but also strengthen their community and bottom line.

Section Contents:

1. Pet Policies & Lease Language
2. Behavior-Based Assessment:
The Pet Personality Profile (PPP)
3. Supportive Infrastructure
4. Resident Engagement &
Community Building
5. Risk Management & Insurance
6. Data-Driven Decision-Making
7. Implementation Roadmap
8. Housing Provider Checklist

Best Practices for Housing Providers



1. Pet Policies & Lease Language

Make policies transparent, equitable, and inclusive

Inclusive policies reflect the understanding that pets are family. Clear, consistent pet policies help ensure fairness for all residents, reduce unauthorized animals, and create accountability.

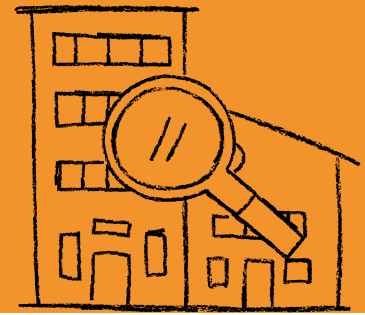
Key Steps:

- [Eliminate breed, size, and weight restrictions](#)—research shows these are not predictors of pet behavior or risk.
- Replace non-refundable fees with refundable deposits, or charge only when demonstrable costs occur.
- Clearly define expectations for accountable ownership, including supervision, vaccinations, and waste management.

Note that in New York City:

- Dogs are required to have a [license](#) issued by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.
 - Dogs and cats are required to have up-to-date vaccinations against rabies.
 - Dogs in public places must be leashed, and the leash cannot be longer than six feet.
 - Animals that are prohibited to be kept as pets are listed in the [NYC Health Code](#).
- Incorporate inclusive, standardized policy language across all properties to ensure fairness and consistency.

Best Practices for Housing Providers



Model Clause

“The property welcomes dogs and cats with no breed or size restrictions. Residents agree to maintain humane control of their pets at all times, ensure vaccinations and licensing are current, and comply with community rules regarding cleanliness, noise, and safety.” (adapted from the [Sample Animal Addendum](#))

Transparent communication about rules—like leashing, supervision, and waste disposal—sets expectations early and supports positive resident relationships.

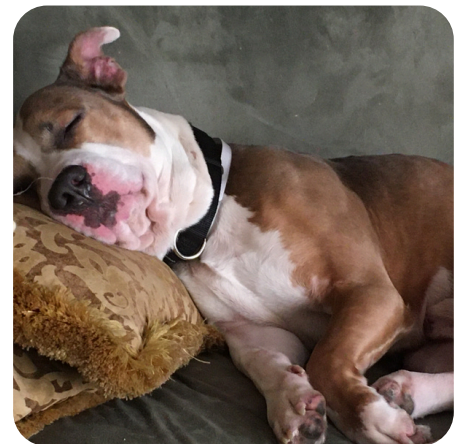
Benefits

Properties that adopt transparent, inclusive pet policies report [faster lease-ups](#), [higher retention](#), and [lower turnover-related costs](#).

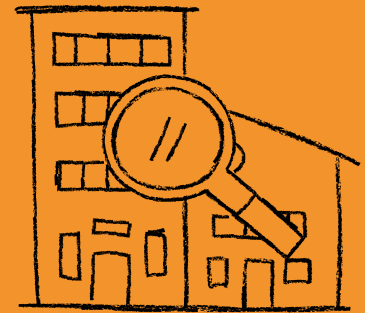
2. Behavior-Based Assessment: The Pet Personality Profile

Replace restrictions with understanding

The Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative’s [Pet Personality Profile](#) (PPP) offers housing providers a fair and effective alternative to breed and size bans. Instead of excluding pets based on stereotypes, the PPP invites residents to share information about their pets’ health, training, and temperament.



Best Practices for Housing Providers



How to Use the Pet Personality Profile (PPP):

- Provide the form during leasing to promote transparency and trust.
- Ask open-ended, behavior-focused questions (e.g., “*How does your dog react to new people or pets?*”).
- Evaluate responses as part of a holistic review—not a pass/fail test.
- Use the PPP conversation to build rapport with pet-owning residents and identify opportunities for proactive support.

Outcome

Communities using the PPP should experience smoother onboarding, fewer misunderstandings, and stronger resident engagement.

3. Supportive Infrastructure

Design for pets and people alike

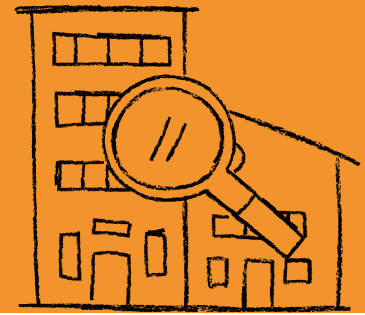
Small, intentional design elements, while not necessary, can make a big difference in both preventing wear and tear and fostering pet-inclusive communities.

Recommendations:

- Consider placing waste bag dispensers in elevators or near the exits to your property.
- Use pet-durable flooring (like luxury vinyl or tile), sound-dampening materials, and washable finishes.
- Ensure signage is positive and educational, emphasizing inclusion rather than restriction.

These measures not only improve property appeal but also reduce pet-related wear and tear through prevention and resident accountability.

Best Practices for Housing Providers



4. Resident Engagement & Community Building

Foster a sense of belonging

A thriving pet-inclusive community recognizes pets as bridges to connection. Events, communication, and education all reinforce the message that pets are welcome and valued.

Engagement Strategies:

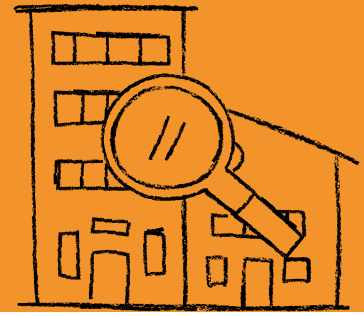
- Host pet-related events—like “Yappy Hours,” [adoption](#) fairs, or pet photo days—to strengthen community ties.
- Share resident resources on accountable ownership, [emergency preparedness](#), and [training tips](#).
- Partner with local shelters or veterinarians to offer educational sessions and low-cost [wellness clinics](#).

Why it matters

Research by the Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative shows that [93% of operators agree pets are important family members, and 71% of residents](#)—pet owners and non-owners—believe pets bring communities together.




Best Practices for Housing Providers



5. Risk Management & Insurance

Address liability proactively and fairly

Insurance concerns are often cited as a barrier to pet-inclusive policies—but many policies no longer include blanket breed or size restrictions, focusing instead on individual behavior. New York State actually prohibits insurance companies from denying or canceling homeowners' insurance based solely on the breed of dog owned by the policyholder.

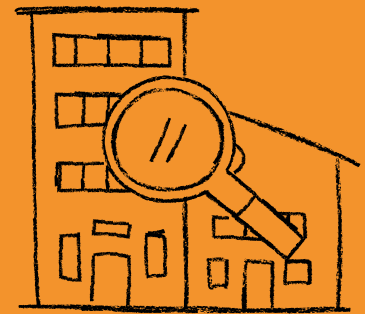
 **Resource:**
[Insurance](#)
[Discovery](#)
[Tip Sheet](#)

Action Steps for Providers:

1. Review your policy. Ask whether breed or size exclusions exist, and whether they're mandatory or advisory.
2. Request data. If restrictions lack actuarial support, request their removal.
3. Seek flexibility. Ask your insurer about riders or endorsements that allow full pet coverage.
4. Communicate expectations. Require renters to carry their own pet-inclusive insurance where appropriate.

Bonus Tip: Provide staff training on animal body language, de-escalation techniques, and positive resident communication to reduce conflict and risk.

Best Practices for Housing Providers



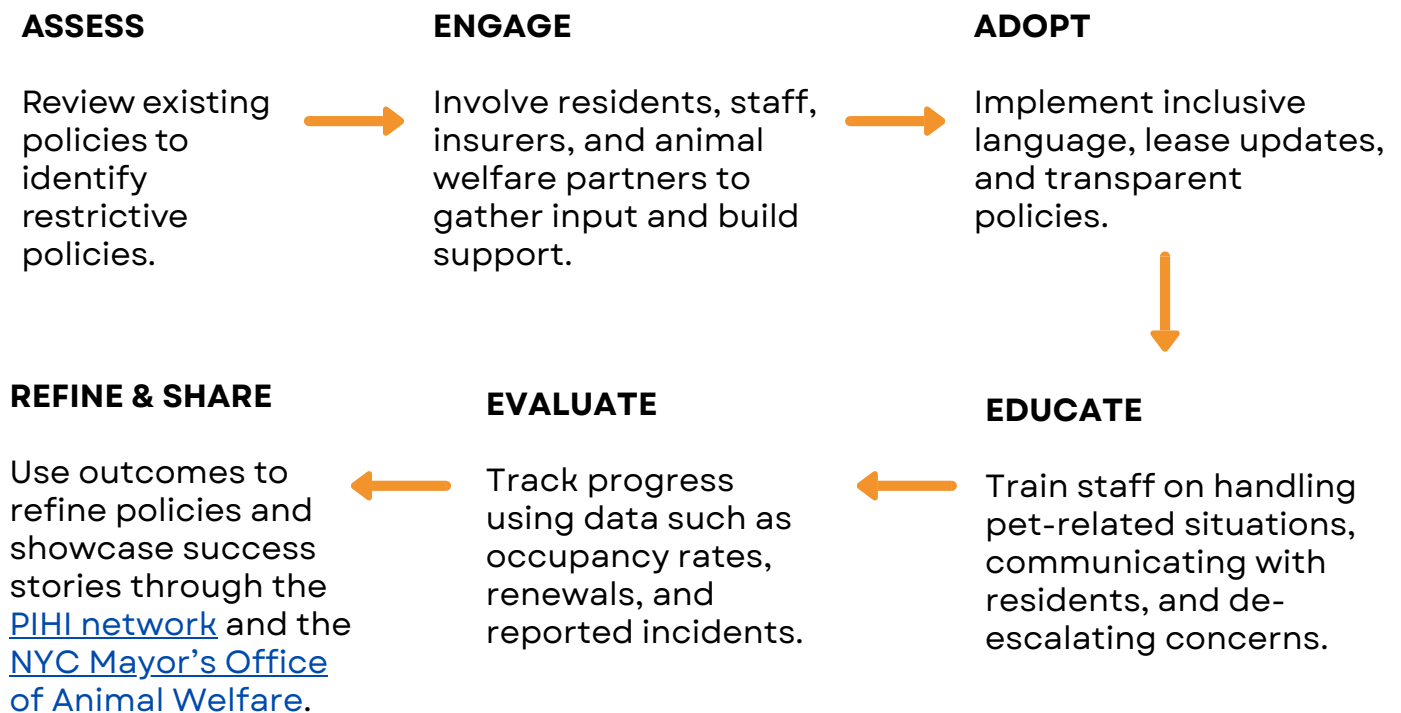
6. Data-Driven Decision-Making

Use facts to overcome myths

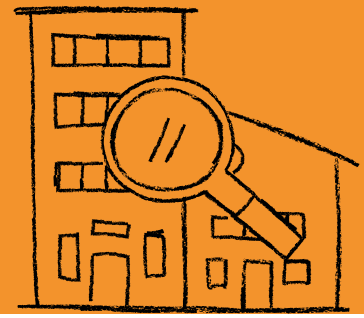
- Residents with pets stay an average of [21% longer](#) and fill vacancies faster than those without.
- [Pet-inclusive units attract Millennial and Gen Z renters](#), who make up nearly 80% of all pet-owning households and are more likely to rent.

These insights demonstrate that pet-inclusive housing isn't a risk—it's a *competitive advantage*.

7. Implementation Roadmap



Best Practices for Housing Providers



8. Housing Provider Checklist

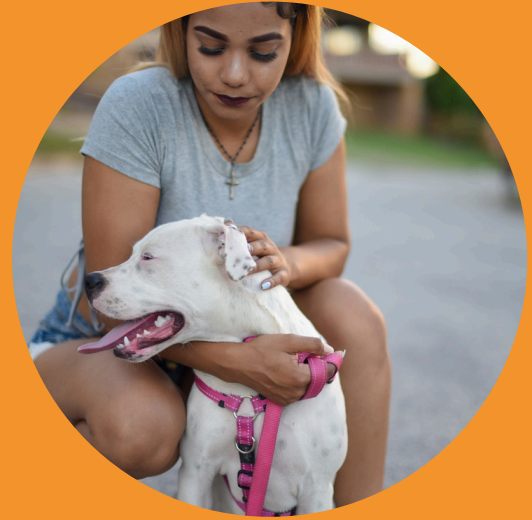
Use this checklist as a starting point for evaluating your property's pet-inclusivity:

- ☐ Lease or [addendum](#) includes inclusive, transparent pet policies
- ☐ Breed, size, and weight restrictions removed
- ☐ Refundable deposits replace non-refundable fees
- ☐ [Liability insurance](#) reviewed and inclusive of all breeds and sizes
- ☐ Waste stations installed and maintained
- ☐ Staff familiar with animal behavior and communication
- ☐ [Pet Personality Profile](#) used for individual pet assessment
- ☐ Regular pet-friendly community events hosted
- ☐ Partnerships with local shelters or trainers established
- ☐ Data collected on occupancy, retention, and satisfaction metrics

Summary

Pet-inclusive housing is built on fairness, transparency, and empathy. When property teams adopt these best practices—embracing inclusive policies, individual assessments, thoughtful design, community engagement, and informed risk management—they create spaces where everyone feels at home. As research demonstrates, being pet-inclusive isn't just good for pets—it's good for business.

Best Practices for Renters with Pets



Engaged pet residents strengthen their communities.

Pet-inclusive communities thrive when renters are proactive, informed, and accountable pet guardians. Renters play a crucial role in demonstrating that pets and high-quality housing go hand-in-hand. The following best practices support accountability, communication, and care—helping ensure that residents and their pets are valued members of their rental communities.

Section Contents:

1. Finding Pet-Inclusive Housing
2. Accountable Pet Residency
3. Conflict Resolution
4. Renters Insurance
5. Pet Health, Safety, and Enrichment
6. Renter Checklist

Best Practices for Renters with Pets



1. Finding Pet-Inclusive Housing

Be proactive and prepared

Finding the right home for you and your pet takes planning, transparency, and preparation. Many property managers are open to negotiation when residents present themselves as engaged and communicative pet owners.

Best Practices:

- **Create a Pet Resume** – Include details about your pet’s temperament, training, health, and routine. Attach veterinary records, photos, and references from prior landlords or pet sitters. The [PIHI All About My Pet Template](#) offers a simple, one-page version you can print or share digitally.
- **Prepare a [Pet Personality Profile](#) (PPP)** – Complete this before applying to show that your pet is well-socialized, well-cared-for, and an ideal resident.
- **Use Data to Advocate for Your Pet** – Share facts from PIHI’s research and [myth-busting statistics](#).
- **Request an Exception for Your Pet** – Consider adapting this [Sample Pet Accommodation Request](#) if you’re seeking an exception to pet rules for legitimate reasons.

Tip: Always review the lease and ask questions about pet policies before signing. Transparent communication builds trust with your property manager.

Best Practices for Renters with Pets



2. Accountable Pet Residency

Set the standard for engaged ownership

Accountability means maintaining your home and respecting shared spaces so that your property manager, neighbors, and future renters see the value of pet-inclusive housing.

Core Responsibilities:

- **Keep your pet healthy.** Maintain up-to-date vaccinations, licensing, and microchipping. **Note that in New York City:**
 - Dogs are required to have a [license](#) issued by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.
 - Dogs and cats are required to have up-to-date vaccinations against rabies.
- **Follow local ordinances.** Understand leash laws, noise rules, waste disposal, and other requirements. **In New York City, these include:**
 - Dogs in public places must be leashed, and the leash cannot be longer than six feet.
 - Certain animals are prohibited to be kept as pets, per the [NYC Health Code](#).
- **Train humanely.** Use positive reinforcement and consistency—never punishment—to address behaviors like barking, scratching, or meowing.
- **Maintain cleanliness.** Regularly vacuum, clean litter boxes, and control odors. A clean home helps protect your deposit and your reputation.
- **Communicate early.** Report pet-related issues—such as minor damages or noise complaints—within 72 hours to build trust and demonstrate accountability.



Best Practices for Renters with Pets



Resources:

[A Guide for Renters with Cats & Dogs](#)

[A Pet Parent's Guide to Cat-Friendly Living](#)

[A Pet Parent's Guide to Dog-Friendly Living](#)

[Support for New Yorkers with Pets](#)

[Behavior Resources from Animal Care Centers of NYC \(ACC\)](#)

Bonus Tip: Think like a community member, not only a renter. Pick up after your pet, keep noise low, and model engaged ownership for neighbors.

3. Conflict Resolution

Resolve issues respectfully and transparently

Even in pet-inclusive communities, conflicts can arise—whether between neighbors or with property staff. Clear communication, empathy, and documentation can prevent small issues from escalating.

Strategies for Success:

- **Be proactive.** If a neighbor raises a concern about your pet, listen without defensiveness. Acknowledge and address it quickly.
- **Document your efforts.** Keep notes of conversations, photos of resolved issues, or copies of communication to ensure clarity.
- **Collaborate with management.** If a misunderstanding occurs, share your pet's profile, training records, or professional evaluations as evidence of good behavior.
- **Provide solutions.** Offer to adjust routines, use calming products, or work with a trainer if necessary. For example, if neighbors have severe allergies, avoid bringing your pet in common areas whenever possible.

Best Practices for Renters with Pets



4. Renters Insurance


Protect yourself and your pet

Many landlords require renters insurance—and it’s a best practice even when not required. Renters insurance covers loss of personal property and provides liability protection for potential pet-related incidents.

Considerations:

- Choose breed-neutral insurers which offer policies without breed bans.
- Ask about adding your landlord as an “Additional Insured.” This shows accountability and transparency.
- Review policy limits and exclusions annually.

Renters insurance provides peace of mind for both residents and property managers—and strengthens your credibility as an accountable renter.

 **Resource:**
[Renters Insurance](#)



**IS YOUR
ROOMMATE
AN ANIMAL?**

Best Practices for Renters with Pets



5. Pet Health, Safety, and Enrichment


Ensure your pet thrives in rental living

Healthy, enriched pets are happier, quieter, and less likely to exhibit destructive behaviors.

Tips for Dogs:

- Use a 6-foot leash and avoid retractables in shared spaces.
- Choose gentle gear (no prong or choke collars) for comfort and safety.
- Provide [daily enrichment](#) with toys, puzzle feeders, and sniffing games.
- Ease [separation anxiety](#) through short practice absences and consistent routines.



 **Resource:**
[A Pet Parent's Guide to Dog-Friendly Living](#)




Flyers on dog and cat behavior are available from [Animal Care Centers of NYC \(ACC\)](#).

Tips for Cats:

- Provide scratching posts, perches, and boxes for stimulation.
- Keep one litter box per cat, plus one extra, and clean daily.
- Offer sunny resting spots or heated beds for comfort and stress reduction.



 **Resource:**
[A Pet Parent's Guide to Cat-Friendly Living](#)

Happy, well-cared-for pets are great neighbors—and the best ambassadors for pet-inclusive living.

Best Practices for Renters with Pets



6. Renter Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure you and your pet are ready for successful, pet-inclusive rental living:

- ☐ [Pet resume](#) or [Pet Personality Profile](#) prepared
- ☐ Vaccinations, [licenses](#), and microchip up-to-date
- ☐ [Renters insurance](#) with pet liability coverage in place
- ☐ [Emergency plan](#) for pet care and evacuation ready
- ☐ Pet supplies stocked (waste bags, litter, leashes, cleaning tools)
- ☐ Pet trained in basic manners; noise control plan established
- ☐ Landlord and neighbors informed of pet policies and contact info
- ☐ Behavioral enrichment activities scheduled daily
- ☐ Documentation ready for accommodation of [assistance animal](#) (if applicable)

Summary

Engaged residents are essential partners in making pet-inclusive housing work. By maintaining open communication, practicing engaged ownership, and caring for pets thoughtfully, renters help demonstrate that inclusive policies benefit everyone—residents, property managers, and communities alike.

Pet-inclusive living isn't just a policy—it's a partnership built on trust, empathy, and care.

Laws Protecting Animals in Housing



Resources:

- [Animals and Housing, Evictions](#)
- [Service and Emotional Support Animals](#)
- [FAQ: Emotional Support Animals in Housing](#)
- [Keeping Animals in NYC Housing flyer](#)
- [Tenant Rights in NYC](#)
- [Sample Emotional Support Animal Notification](#) – a respectful, standardized way to notify landlords of an ESA, including a supporting treatment provider letter

In some situations, New Yorkers have the right to keep an animal, even if their lease prohibits pets.

Assistance Animals: Residents with disabilities who have assistance animals have protections under city, state and/or federal laws, including the U.S. Fair Housing Act and the NYC Human Rights Law.

- Housing providers—including shelters and other forms of temporary and supportive housing—must provide a reasonable accommodation to permit [service animals or emotional support animals \(ESAs\)](#) unless doing so would cause an undue hardship.
- Policies that: (1) limit pet sizes or breeds; (2) impose pet fees/deposits; or (3) indicate that no pets are allowed, are not applicable to these animals.

Three-Month Rule: Residents who live in a private building with three or more units and have kept a pet visibly, clearly, and without trying to hide the pet (i.e., "openly" and "notoriously") for three or more months before the landlord began a court case to enforce the no-pet clause may have the right to keep their pet, per [§ 27-2009.1](#) of the Administrative Code of the City of New York.

Generally, tenants, including pet owners, have the right to remain in their home unless evicted by an NYC marshal or sheriff after the landlord has gone through the housing court process. Immigration status and lease terms do not affect these rights.

New Yorkers who are facing housing discrimination or need advice about their tenant rights can call 311 and ask for the “Tenant Helpline.”

Residents should:

- Provide accurate documentation from a treatment provider, if applicable.
- Maintain their animal’s good behavior and hygiene.
- Respect common spaces and follow community guidelines.

Case Studies & Success Stories

Real-world examples of pet-inclusive housing that works.

Here are three illustrative case studies that highlight how inclusive pet policies and practices have benefited housing providers, renters, and communities alike. Each example shows the steps taken, outcomes achieved, and lessons learned.

Case Study #1 – [The Management Group](#) (TMG)

TMG, an Atlanta-based multifamily property management firm, aimed to become one of the most pet-inclusive operators in the Southeast. At the time, TMG’s standard pet policy included breed and weight restrictions for dogs. The leadership recognized that the restrictions were creating friction—such as residents trying to pass off dogs as service animals—and that these rules did not appear to be supported by their insurance provider. In response, TMG eliminated breed and weight restrictions and elevated its “pet-positive” culture.

Outcomes

- Renewal rate among pet-owning residents reached ~ 80%.
- By offering more inclusive pet policies, TMG was able to forgo charging pet rent in some cases, while capturing the value of stronger retention and occupancy.
- The elimination of breed/weight restrictions helped avoid confusion around residents mislabeling pets as service animals, increasing policy clarity and consistency.

Lessons Learned

- Removing breed and weight restrictions can be done responsibly with proper tools rather than relying on blanket bans.
- Inclusive pet policies can deliver measurable business benefits (retention, occupancy) that may offset or exceed any incremental cost of pet-related wear/tear.
- It is important to review insurance terms and claims history rather than relying on assumed restrictions from insurers—TMG discovered that its provider didn’t require a breed list after all.
- Effective communication with property owners and stakeholders is key when shifting policy, especially for gaining buy-in for more inclusive approaches.

Case Study #2 – [Oculus Realty](#)

Oculus Realty, a multifamily operator in the metro Washington, D.C. area, decided in Spring 2019 to implement a “no pet restrictions” policy—dropping breed and weight restrictions for dogs and welcoming both cats and dogs. The operator recognized that pet-owning residents often contribute to community building, and that lifting restrictions aligned with the company’s values (care, integrity, community). To support the change, Oculus worked with its insurance carriers and partnered with third-party vendors and local pet-service businesses to enhance pet amenities and services.

Outcomes	Lessons Learned
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oculus positioned itself as a competitive leader in the metro D.C. market for pet-inclusive housing.• The approach reportedly strengthened community engagement and resident retention via a more inclusive pet policy culture and pet-centric amenities.• The “no pet restrictions” policy became a differentiator in marketing and leasing for the operator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopting a “no pet restrictions” stance can be a strong market differentiator—and not just a “nice-to-have”—in a competitive rental landscape.• Implementation needs more than policy change—it benefits from operational support (amenities, partnerships, insurance coordination) to fully deliver the inclusive experience.• Providers should proactively engage insurance carriers and vendors to ensure the policy change is supported by risk-management infrastructure.• Building a pet-inclusive culture helps not only pet-owning residents but the broader community, reinforcing overall resident satisfaction.

Case Study #3 – [Milhaus](#)

Milhaus, a mixed-use development and property-management company overseeing ~5,000 apartment homes across 20 Class A properties, recognized a growing gap: although ~76% of rental operators described themselves as “pet-friendly,” ~72% of pet owners still found it difficult to secure housing that accepted their pets. Seeing an opportunity to meet tenant demand and differentiate its portfolio, Milhaus chose to eliminate pet restrictions and build a “pet-positive” culture rather than merely being “pet-friendly.”

Outcomes

- Milhaus improved its value proposition and became a preferred choice for pet-owning renters and adopters alike.
- Local shelters began recommending Milhaus properties to adopters, knowing the units would accept pets–this helped the company tap into a source of responsible pet-owning residents.
- The inclusive policy aligned with Milhaus’s growth strategy and positioned the company as forward-looking in amenity design, marketing, and resident experience.

Lessons Learned

- Pet-inclusivity can create tangible synergies with adoption and welfare communities–e.g., shelters recommending properties–which expands the applicant pool.
- The shift from “pet-friendly” to “pet-inclusive” often requires culture change, not just policy change: from marketing messaging to operational execution.
- Providing a truly welcoming environment for pets and their people reinforces brand differentiation and long-term resident loyalty.

Key Takeaways from the Case Studies

- Inclusive pet policies can boost occupancy and retention, making business sense for housing providers.
- The benefits extend beyond property performance to animal welfare, housing stability, and community cohesion.
- Data collection and tracking (applicant pools, renewals, incident rates, shelter intake) are critical to demonstrating impact.
- Partnering with animal welfare organizations and leveraging community resources strengthens implementation and resident experience.

Tools & Resources



The Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative offers a robust library of tools to help providers and residents create inclusive, thriving communities:

- **Model Lease Clauses & [Animal Addendum](#)** – Ready-to-use templates for equitable pet policies.
- **[Language Guide](#)** – A quick-reference sheet for using inclusive, person-first terms in all communications.
- **[Pet Personality Profile \(PPP\)](#)** – An assessment tool to understand each pet as an individual.
- **Comparative Framework: [Pet-Friendly vs. Pet-Inclusive](#)** – A visual guide to evaluate and advance policy inclusivity.
- **[Educational Resources](#)** – Research briefs like [Breed ≠ Behavior](#), explaining why inclusivity supports safety and fairness.

The New York City Mayor’s Office of Animal Welfare provides information on [resources for New Yorkers with pets, animals and housing issues in NYC](#), and more.