

RALEIGH HOUSING AUTHORITY

PUBLIC HOUSING PET POLICY/AGREEMENT

This pet policy establishes clear guidelines for ownership of pets and to ensure that no applicant or resident is discriminated against regarding admission or continued occupancy because of the ownership of pets. Additionally, it establishes reasonable rules governing the keeping of common household pets.

This policy's aim is to balance the rights of pet ownership with the rights of all residents to a safe and sanitary living environment. Pets are a serious responsibility and risk. If not properly controlled and cared for, pets can disturb the rights of others and cause costly damages for which residents will be held liable. Pets may also pose a potential risk to other residents, visitors, staff, and contractors. Pets are only allowed with the prior written approval of Management.

EXCLUSIONS

Assistance and service animals that are needed as a reasonable accommodation to assist persons with disabilities are not considered pets and are not subject to the Pet Policy. Details regarding assistance and service animals can be found in Section 9.7 of the *Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy*.

Assistance and service animals are not subject to a pet deposit, although residents are liable for damages beyond wear and tear. While not "pets", a pet sticker may still be provided to help staff identify units where animals are present. Residents are to maintain their units and associated facilities in a decent, safe, and sanitary manner and animals cannot disturb neighbors.

PET LIMITATIONS

Pets will be limited to the common household pet kept in the home for pleasure rather than commercial purposes. A domesticated animal such as cats, dogs, birds, hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs and fish will be allowed. Only one pet will be permitted per household unless otherwise stated. Pets are subject to the following standards:

Type of Animal	Num. Allowed	Size Limits*	Additional Information
Dog	One	35 lbs	Dogs are not restricted by breed.
Cat	One	20 lbs	Domesticated cat breeds only.
Small Mammal	Two	20 lbs	Hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs etc.
Fish	Up to 10	Varies	Aquarium must not exceed 20 gallons.
Bird	Two	5 lbs	One cage allowed per household.

Effective January 1, 2023

*Animals actual/projected size at full maturity must not exceed the indicated limits.

Pets that do not comply with the standards above must be removed from the premises within 48 hours of notice from RHA. Failure to adhere to these limitations is grounds for lease termination.

Other pets are not allowed including but not limited to ferrets, rabbits, monkeys, reptiles including snakes and lizards, large birds and others. Other pets not specifically listed must be cleared in writing by RHA management prior to acquiring the pet as appropriate.

ADDING PETS/ANIMALS TO THE HOUSEHOLD

All households must receive prior approval to add a pet/animal to a household. Pets/animals will not be approved to reside in a unit until all necessary information is received. Upon receiving a request to add a pet/animal to the household:

- A. Residents will be required to complete and sign a Pet Policy/Agreement form.
- B. Registration documentation will be required from the family including:
 1. A current color photo of the pet/animal;
 2. Proof that shots are current and evidence it has been spayed or neutered;
 3. Certifications signed by a licensed veterinarian or state/local authority that the pet has received all inoculations required by state or local law, that the pet has no communicable disease(s) and is pest-free; and
 4. Verification of the actual or anticipated weight at full maturity.
- C. A copy of the pet policy will be provided and will act as certification that the family has read the policies and/or rules, understands them, and agrees to comply with them.
- D. A pet sticker will be issued to the resident that must be displayed on the top right corner of the front or back door of the unit.

REFUSAL TO REGISTER

RHA may refuse to register a pet if:

1. The pet is not a common household pet as defined in above;
2. Keeping the pet would violate any restrictions listed in this policy;
3. The pet owner fails to provide complete pet registration information, or fails to update the registration annually at recertification;
4. The requestor has previously been charged with animal cruelty under state or local law; or has been evicted, had to relinquish a pet or been prohibited from future pet ownership due to pet rule violations or a court order; or
5. RHA reasonably determines that the pet owner is unable to keep the pet in compliance with the pet rules and other lease obligations.

If RHA refuses to register a pet, a written notification will be sent to the pet owner within ten (10) business days of the decision. The notice will state the reason for refusing to register the pet and will inform the family of their right to appeal the decision in accordance with RHA’s grievance procedures.

PET DEPOSIT

A pet deposit will be required at the time of registering a pet and is due in advance of the pet entering the home. The deposit is refundable when the pet or the family vacates the unit, less any amounts owed due to damage beyond normal wear and tear.

Dogs	\$300 refundable fee for all units except townhomes and the single-family homes.
	\$500 refundable fee for townhomes and single-family homes
Cats	\$300 refundable fee for all units except townhomes and the single-family homes.
	\$500 refundable fee for townhomes and single-family homes.
Others	\$100 refundable fee.

PET RULES AND OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

RHA has established the following pet rules owner responsibilities as reasonable requirements for its families:

A. Pet Housing and Confinement

- A kennel or similar crate for securing pets is required.
- Pets must be confined in a kennel for housing inspections and work order completion.
- Residents are responsible for pet confinement and RHA will not assume responsibility for any pets that are not properly confined.
- Pet owners must not alter their unit, patio, premises or common areas to create an enclosure for any animal. Installation of pet doors is prohibited.
- Pets are not to be tied or confined on porches, decks, patios or stoops. They also should not be tied or chained to any landscape features such as fences, clothesline poles, railings, stairwells, trees, steps or electrical boxes.

B. Cleanliness

- Dogs and cats must be housebroken.

- The owner is responsible for cleaning up after and disposing properly of their pet's waste. Waste is to be removed by the owner and discarded in a plastic bag and then placed in an outdoor trash receptacle.
- In no case will pets be permitted to utilize porches, patios, or decks to relieve themselves.
- The resident's apartment must be kept clean and free of pet odors.
- When the pet is a cat, a litter box must be used. The box cannot be placed directly onto the floor, including carpet or tile. A piece of plywood at least as large as the litter box must be placed underneath the litter box. The litter must be replaced at least once per week to avoid odor, and cleaned daily. The litter must be disposed of in a plastic bag, secured at the top and placed in the trash. Inspections will include the litter box areas.

C. Pet Rules

- Each pet owner shall be responsible for appropriately training and caring for the pet to ensure that the pet is not a nuisance or danger to other residents and does not damage RHA property.
- Pets must be under the owner's control at all times.
- Pets are not to roam freely and must be on a leash at all times.
- No pet, other than the resident's authorized pet, will be allowed on the Housing Authority's property. Visitors are not allowed to bring pets onto the property.
- Household members are not allowed to walk pets in common areas unless they are able to maintain control of the animal at all times.
- RHA property is not to be used as part of a pet business including pet sitting, breeding, grooming or boarding.
- The owner must have at least one alternate caregiver for the pet on file with RHA to include name and contact information. This person will be responsible for walking, feeding, and otherwise caring for the pet in the event the owner should become ill or incapable of caring for the pet.
- Pets are not to interfere with other's peaceful enjoyment of the property.
- Barking dogs, abuse or neglect of the pets, aggressive behavior by pets including biting or attack postures will result in the termination of the pet agreement and force the removal of the pet from the premises.
- While not required, the Housing Authority highly recommends that owners obtain renters insurance with pet coverage.
- Pets must wear their collar and rabies registration tag at all times.

D. Associated Charges

- RHA applies the pet deposit to cover reasonable expenses directly attributable to the presence of a pet, including but not limited to the costs of repairs and replacements to, and fumigation of, the unit.
- A separate pet waste removal charge of \$10.00 per occurrence will be assessed against pet owners who fail to remove pet waste in accordance with this policy.
- Owner's failure to confine a pet may result in a nuisance charge as posted on Maintenance Charge list.
- If it is necessary for RHA to place the pet in a shelter facility, the cost will be the responsibility of the pet owner.
- Charges assessed for pet damages will become due and collectible 30 days after the Housing Authority gives written notice of the charges. Failure to pay for these damages will be grounds for termination.

E. Emergency Situations

- RHA will take all necessary steps to ensure that pets that become vicious, display symptoms of severe illness, or demonstrate behavior that constitutes an immediate threat to the health or safety of others, are immediately removed from the premises by referring the situation to the appropriate state or local entity authorized to remove such animals.
- Animal cruelty and animal bites will be referred to animal control or an applicable agency for investigation and enforcement.
- In the case of an attack made on residents, guests or staff, animal control will be called and the pet must be immediately and permanently removed.
- Pets that are removed as a result of any aggressive act on the part of the pet will not be allowed back on the premises.

If the death or incapacity of the pet owner threatens the health or safety of the pet, or other factors occur that render the owner unable to care for the pet, the situation will be reported to the responsible party designated by the pet owner. If the responsible party is unwilling or unable to care for the pet, or if the Housing Authority cannot contact the responsible party or alternate caregiver, the Housing Authority may contact the appropriate state or local agency and remove the pet at the owner's expense.

If the pet owner has failed to remove the pet or correct a pet rule violation within the time period specified by the Housing Authority, then the pet's approval may be revoked. A pet policy violation is sufficient cause to terminate the lease.