

PETS IN TENANCIES FACTSHEET

New Zealand Pet Legislation

These rules aim to provide tenants with fair access to renting with pets, while also ensuring landlords can manage risk, protect their properties, and maintain clear expectations around pet care and property condition.

Pet Bond

- Landlords may charge a separate pet bond of up to two weeks' rent.
- This is in addition to the standard general bond (maximum four weeks' rent).
- A pet bond may only be collected when a new pet is approved after 1 December 2025.
- Pet bonds cannot be applied retroactively to existing lawful pets.

Pet Consent

- Tenants must have the landlord's written consent to keep a pet unless pets are already permitted in their tenancy agreement.
- Landlords can set reasonable conditions for pet ownership, for example:
 - Professional standard carpet clean at end of tenancy
 - Flea treatment
 - Pet kept outdoors/indoors in designated areas
 - Noise control expectations
 - Damage repair obligations

Reasonable Grounds to Decline a Pet

Landlords may decline a pet request if reasonable grounds exist, such as:

- Body corporate rules or apartment bylaws prohibit pets
- Property is not suitable (e.g., no fencing, high-end finishes, shared walls with noise sensitivity)
- Health or safety concerns for other occupants
- Animal type unsuitable for the property (e.g., large dog in a small unit)

Liability for Damage

- Tenants are responsible for any pet-related damage beyond fair wear and tear.
- Property managers document condition clearly at start, during inspections, and at end of tenancy.
- The tenant is liable for more than the usual 4 weeks rent amount or landlord's excess in the case of pet-related damage.

Assistance Animals

- Certified assistance animals (e.g., guide dogs) are not classified as pets.
- They do not require consent, and no pet bond may be charged.

Landlord Responsibilities

- Consider and respond to pet requests within 21 days of a request in writing.
- Provide decisions in writing with reasons, especially if declining.
- Lodge pet bond correctly with Tenancy Services.

Records & Documentation

Landlords and property managers should keep detailed records including:

- Written pet-consent forms or approvals
- Conditions imposed and agreed to
- Pet bond amounts and lodgement records
- Inspection notes, photos, and any damage reports
- All email or written communication related to the pet approval or decline
- Evidence supporting "reasonable grounds" for any declined pet request

Records may be requested by Tenancy Services, Compliance & Investigations, or the Tenancy Tribunal.

Find out more, Visit

- New Zealand Legislation www.legislation.govt.nz,
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development www.hud.govt.nz, or
- Tenancy Services www.tenancy.govt.nz