

6126 PET OWNERSHIP IN PUBLIC HOUSING

6126.1 Pets Generally Prohibited. Except as provided in § 6126.2 and § 6126.3, pets are generally prohibited at DCHA properties. This policy does not apply to Service or Assistance Animals that reside in public housing units as a reasonable accommodation under 14 DCMR § 7409.

6126.2 Prior Pet Ownership. Residents who own a pet at any DCHA property prior to May 1, 2005 may continue to own a pet that is otherwise not prohibited under § 6126.3, provided the resident complies with the requirements of § 6126.3(a), (b), and (c). Residents who currently own a pet as of February 8, 2017, at a senior and/or disabled-only property may continue to own the pet provided they are compliant with these regulations within ninety (90) days of implementation, excluding § 6126.3(a)(5).

6126.3 Elderly-only and Disabled Housing Properties. Residents residing at these properties shall be permitted to own pets in accordance with the following provisions:

(a) Animal Limitations.

- (1) Only domesticated animals that are commonly kept as household pets, such as a dogs, cats, birds, rodents, fish, or turtles, are permitted. The term “common household pet” shall not include reptiles, other than turtles.
- (2) A resident is permitted to own a maximum of two (2) pets. A reasonable number of fish or other animals appropriately kept in an aquarium or cage shall be considered one (1) pet. The two (2) pet maximum does not include Service or Assistance Animals that reside in the unit.
- (3) Aquariums that do not exceed twenty (20) gallons will be permitted if properly registered.
- (4) Residents with more than one (1) registered aquarium must keep the aquariums in separate rooms.
- (5) Residents may not own a dog that is expected to exceed forty (40) pounds and twenty (20) inches in height at maturity. Dogs expected to exceed this weight and height at maturity are only permitted if they are:
 - (i) Approved as a Service or Assistance Animal in accordance with Chapter 74 of this title as a reasonable accommodation; or

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- (ii) Otherwise are eligible under the prior ownership provisions of § 6126.2.
- (b) Registration Requirements. Residents must comply with and meet the following requirements to qualify for pet ownership:
 - (1) Maintain good standing with their lease;
 - (2) Register the animal or the contents of an aquarium or cage with the property manager;
 - (3) Provide updated registration for the animal annually;
 - (4) Provide proof that the animal has been inoculated in accordance with applicable local laws;
 - (5) Provide proof that an animal older than six (6) months has been spayed or neutered unless the resident provides certification from a licensed veterinarian that such procedure would jeopardize the medical well-being of the pet;
 - (6) Pay a refundable pet ownership fee in monthly installments, limited to cats and dogs, as reflected in the DCHA Schedule of Maintenance Charges; and
 - (7) Execute and abide by the Pet Policy lease addendum providing for the proper care and maintenance of the animal and the unit in accordance with DCHA rules and policies. Failure to abide by the Pet Policy will be considered a violation of the lease.
- (c) Ownership Responsibilities. Residents approved for pet ownership must abide by the following conditions, as well as DCHA's Pet Policy:
 - (1) The resident shall be responsible for paying for services related to any pet-related rodent and/or insect infestation, as well as any pet-related property damage, in their unit. The resident shall keep the apartment in a sanitary condition at all times and is responsible for keeping the surrounding areas free of pet odors, waste, and litter.
 - (2) The resident shall store all pet food in sealed containers.
 - (3) The resident shall be responsible for ensuring the rights of other residents to peace and quiet enjoyment, health, and/or safety are not infringed upon or diminished by a pet's noise, odors, waste or other nuisance.

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- (4) The resident shall continuously provide the proper maintenance and care for the pet.

SOURCE: Final Rulemaking published at 64 DCR 1747 (February 17, 2017).