

Keeping animals

The Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities recognises the benefits to families and individuals by keeping animals as pets. This includes the importance of assistance animals to persons with disabilities.

This fact sheet provides information for anyone who is looking to keep pets and/or assistance animals in a Housing premises. This does not include housing programs managed by agents on behalf of the Department, such as affordable housing.

Notifying Housing

You must notify your local Housing office if you want to keep a pet or assistance animal at the premises by completing an Intention to keep a pet form.

The Department has 14 days to consider your notice. During this time, you cannot keep your pet at the premises. If the Department does not object to your pet, you will be notified in writing and you will be allowed to keep your pet at the premises.

If the Department objects to the pet, you will be notified in writing including the reason for the objection. The Department will apply to the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal to decide if the objection is reasonable and you will be notified of the outcome.

Pet owner responsibilities

As a pet owner there are a number of responsibilities you need to know to keep your pet healthy.

All animals must be kept in a manner that ensures the ongoing welfare and safety of the animal.

Restraining your pet

Animals kept on the premises must not stop access to the premises for appointments such as property inspections or repairs and maintenance work. This may mean you need to restrain your pet.

Alterations to premises and damage caused by animals

You are responsible for any damage your animal causes to the premises, including any costs for repairing the damage. This includes making sure your pet does not continue to cause damage to the premises.

To safely keep your pet at the premises you may have to make changes to the premises. The Department must approve any changes to the premises before you start any work and you will need to pay for the changes.

Body corporate rules

Some complexes have body corporate rules that you must follow. Where a premises has body corporate rules does not allow animals, you will not be able to keep a pet at the premises.

Another example of body corporate rules is removing and cleaning your pet's waste or mess from common areas. Ask your local Housing office for more information about body corporate rules that apply to your premises.

Council Bylaws

In some regions, there are local Council Bylaws you will need to follow. This includes registering your pet and keeping certain types or number of pets.

All pets and assistance animals living at the premises must be registered to you. You must also ensure you have certification to own the particular type of animal. Generally, certification applies to animals such as snakes, reptiles and native animals.

You can find more information about your local Council Bylaws by visiting their website or local office.

Nuisance or dangerous pet behaviour

Your pet must not cause a nuisance to others such as constant barking for no apparent reason. Dangerous behaviour from your pet is also not acceptable.

All complaints about nuisance or dangerous pets should be made directly to the local Council.

If your pet is causing a nuisance or danger to residents, this may be referred to the local Council, Animal Welfare Inspectors, or Police.

Burying your pet

You must not bury a pet or assistance animal that has passed away at your premises, without written approval from the Department. The Department will consider any requests to bury a pet or assistance animal, including consideration for any local Council Bylaws and environmental health laws.

Breeding pets

You must have written consent from the Department to breed or keep animals for commercial purposes.

Where can I find more information?

To find out more, visit the website nt.gov.au or contact your local Housing office:

Alice Springs	(08) 8951 5344
Arafura Region	(08) 8995 5122
Greater Darwin	(08) 8999 8814
Katherine	(08) 8973 8513
Nhulunbuy	(08) 8987 0533
Palmerston	(08) 8999 4767
Tennant Creek	(08) 8962 4497