
From: Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010
Subject: FW: Renting with pets reform

From: Layla Pope
Sent: Monday, 29 July 2019 1:09 PM
To: Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010 <rtreg@finance.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Renting with pets reform

I support a positive approach to pets in rented homes that places responsibility for the decision to keep pets with tenants, gives access to the health and wellbeing benefits of pet ownership to tenants and reduces the number of animals abandoned each year. The Residential Tenancies Regulation should prohibit blanket 'no pets' terms from tenancy agreements except where another law prevents the keeping of pets (for instance a strata by-law) and additional terms in the standard form agreement should encourage responsible pet ownership.

1. A prohibition on 'no pets' clauses

Too many landlords issue blanket 'no pets' clauses in their tenancy contracts. These blanket terms are unfair and contribute to abandonment and loss of pets. The Residential Tenancies Regulation has the ability to restrict the kinds of additional terms from being placed into an agreement. Blanket 'no pets' clauses should be made a prohibited term unless pets are restricted by another law.

2. An additional term on the standard form agreement which lays out a responsible pet ownership model

Currently the standard form agreement starts with a negative default additional term against pets. This is not required by the Act and is not in keeping with modern community standards. I support a default additional term which encourages responsible pet ownership and makes clear to both tenants and landlords the responsibilities tenants have around keeping pets. This will avoid the majority of property care issue and nuisance to neighbours.

My cat has gotten my mum and I through some of the hardest times of our life and we cannot imagine life without him. We have struggled time and time again to find a rental property that will let us keep him, and have been told countless time to "get rid of the animal" to guarantee us approval of rental premises. No house can be considered a home without our beloved pet. He has lived in 4 rental properties in his life and never caused any damage; we have always had our full bond returned.

Despite this, we have been turned away from so many ideal properties due to the hypothetical risk our elderly, indoor cat imposes. We stayed in a property we could not afford, paying nearly 70% of our weekly income, just in order to keep our Henry with us. My mum will rent for the rest of her life and I hate to imagine her alone, unable to keep a pet for company in her older years. Please, consider reforming the current ability for landlords to enforce blanket 'no pets' clauses and make renting fair.

All the best,

Layla Pope.