



Why Should You Eliminate Pet Breed and Weight Restrictions?

To create marketing lift

Industry-typical weight restrictions rule out a significant number of potential renters - for example, 54% of pet dogs in the U.S. are over 30 lbs. Average restrictions not only rule out most restricted breeds, but also non-restricted golden retrievers, labs, standard poodles and many other dogs who are over the average weight restriction.

To make data-relevant decisions

There is no data to support that a dog's breed dictates its behavior; both the American Bar Association and the CDC do not support "aggressive breed" lists, looking rather to factors that may contribute to incidents in individual dogs.

To benefit financially

Pet-owning renters stay an average of 21% longer according to the PIHI report; greater retention leads to fewer turn costs and less vacancy loss, contributing significant dollars to NOI.

To decrease fraudulent ESA accommodation requests and non-reported pets on site

Breed and weight restrictions are a key contributing factor to fraudulent ESA requests, which costs your staff time and frustration and often creates ill will among renters; additionally, 11% of renters report bringing a non-reported pet on-site, making it more difficult for operators to hold residents accountable to pet policies.

To help keep families together

98% of pet owners consider their pet a member of the family, and 72% of renters say pet-friendly housing is hard to find. Easing or eliminating restrictions helps avoid pet surrender due to housing, one of the leading reasons for shelter surrenders.

To build stronger communities

Operators who have eliminated breed and weight restrictions see an increase in residents who connect and befriend each other through their common bond of a pet. The majority of pet owners are responsible, caring people who make communities better.



How to Successfully Lift Breed and Weight Restrictions

1 Create the right expectations for pet owners

Refine your written policies, making sure to include not only property rules (such as where dogs must be leashed, proper disposal of pet waste, etc.), but also any fees, what happens if rules are not followed, and repercussions of any incidents of aggression or failure to behave responsibly that may occur.

2 Determine what tools and/or technologies you will deploy to help manage more pets on site

- Consider utilizing a pet-screening service to help track any history of unwanted behavior as well as ESA eligibility.
- Weigh the various methodologies for dealing with pet waste, such as dog waste stations and DNA-screening services to discourage non-compliance.

3 Evaluate existing pet amenities and spaces

- Does your dog park have seating for owners? Shade? Is it large enough to accommodate more dogs?
- What are the most popular pet amenities in your area? Should you consider adding to your pet amenities (such as a grooming station or treats at the front desk)? Is there a pet-amenity supplier partner you may wish to engage as well?
- Consider the type and number of pet events you may want to have in order to enhance the pet experience and capitalize on building community among your residents.

4 Consider opportunities for partner-marketing

Help connect your residents to much-needed products and services via local veterinarians, trainers, groomers and pet stores. You may even have potential to provide free pet products for residents through local or national providers seeking to expand their reach. And don't forget about a possible pet insurance provider, one of the fastest-growing insurance segments.

5 Communicate, communicate, communicate

- Both pet-owning and non-pet-owning residents, as well as your staff, will appreciate over-communication from you as you update your policies.
- 92% of all renters consider pets to be an important part of the family and welcome pets on site; but for those renters or staff who may be reticent, be sure to help them understand that no restrictions does not mean no rules. Residents or pets who fail to comply with community standards of behavior will not be tolerated.